

iSAGE Training
3rd-4th December 2019 – York, United Kingdom

Case study research design and methods

Dr Stefano Orsini

The Organic Research Centre (ORC)



Innovation for Sustainable
Sheep and Goat
Production in Europe



THE ORGANIC
RESEARCH
CENTRE

ELM FARM

What is a case study?

A case study is an empirical inquiry that

- Investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the “case”) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when
- The boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident

(Yin 2014)

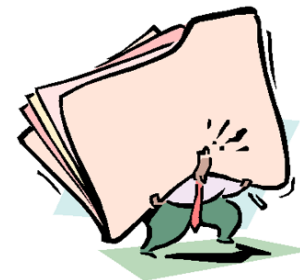


What is a case study?

- Is a survey a case study?
- Can an interview be a case study?



- A case study may be
 - Explanatory
 - Exploratory
 - Descriptive



How to conduct a case study?



Conducting case study research

Step 1: Designing case studies



Step 2: Preparing to collect case study evidence



Step 3: Collecting case study evidence



Step 4: Analysing case study evidence



Step 5: Reporting case studies

Designing case studies

- Research questions
 - Use literature to narrow your interest
- Identifying units of analysis
 - Select the case(s)
 - One or multiple case studies?
 - Replication, not sampling logic
- Identifying data collection 'tools'
 - Qualitative, quantitative, mixed



Preparing to collect case study evidence

- Case study protocol
 - Overview of the case study
 - Data collection procedure
 - Gaining access to key organisations or interviewees
 - Who to interview?
 - Data collection questions
 - Guide for the case study report
 - The pilot case study

Collecting case study evidence

- Overlapping data collection with data analysis is often advisable
- Triangulation



Collecting case study evidence

- Dairy sheep and goat cooperative “Voskos” (Greece)
 - Interviews with: the President, a farmer, a worker in the dairy factory, the manager of the retail store
 - Main themes: collaboration and branding
- CoP contract between Tesco and farmers
 - Interviews with four farmers and the lamb buyer at Tesco
 - Main themes: buying on cost of production, establishment of key learning points, continuous negotiation



Analysing case study evidence



- Relying on theoretical propositions
- Working your data from the 'ground up'
- Examining plausible rival explanations

Cross-case analysis

- First, analyse each individual case as a individual case
- Identify patterns across cases
- Grouping and pattern matching to reduce the amount of data



E.g. inventory of practices that have contributed to improving the supply chain performance

Generalisation?



Analytic generalisation versus statistical generalisation

Statistical generalisation is used to extrapolate probabilities from sample/population

Analytic generalisation is used to generalise theories as well as generalise to other concrete situations

Some conclusions (as an example of iSAGE SC case studies)

- Marketing and branding strategies require strategic sourcing to reduce lamb meat supply inconsistency and uncertainty
- Working relationship between downstream and upstream actors is recommended to identify quality specification of lamb, develop and market a range of products that optimise the use of that specification and reduce waste
-



Thank you!



iSAGE Training
13th- 14th January 2020 – Thessaloniki, Greece

