

Managing a case study approach in VET research to address the funding agency's criteria

Doug Hill and Sarojni Choy

A case study approach has great potential where qualitative data can inform the fabric of linkages between various factors underpinning a research topic. This is particularly important where other forms of data are limited or relatively discrete. Case studies require the interpretation of results in the context of the data collected. Therefore, the findings have limitations in terms of generalisability and replicability. In the VET sector, the selection of case study sites often depends on the willingness of participants to permit the researchers to enter the site, to observe and document key interactions and to analyse policies and practices.

Sometimes the selection of case studies is constrained by external funding agency requirements. This paper discusses issues for a case study methodology in VET research that arose from specifications set by NREC compared with sites which might otherwise have been chosen. An analysis of, how some of these issues were addressed during a recent project on the place of staff development in the VET sector follows. The authors propose some guidelines for the selection of case study sites.

Contact details:

dhill@csu.edu.au