

## **Syllabus: Qualitative Research Studies II- Advanced course (15 hours)**

### **Course Instructor:**

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### **Course Description:**

This course builds upon previous research courses, namely Qualitative Research Studies I and Research Methods in Management and Economics. It uses the framework of case study research to provide an in-depth understanding of the issues that qualitative researchers encounter when conducting fieldwork. It seeks a balance between practice and theory, and between action and reflection. In the context of case study research, issues of ontology, epistemology and methodology will be discussed and explained. This course is divided into five main parts focusing on the following topics: (1) the theoretical objectives and motivation of case study research, (2) the sampling processes employed throughout the case study design; (3) the collection of primary and secondary data on the field; and (4) the analysis and synthesis of qualitative data in the writing process; (5) the role of the research in fieldwork.

### **Course Objectives:**

By the end of the course doctoral candidates are expected to have an understanding on the following elements:

- 1.** Identify and explain the range of problems addressed by qualitative case study research. What is a case study? What are the different ways it is conceptualized? What are the theoretical objectives that case study research serves? What is the motivation/rationale for embarking on case study project?
- 2.** Understand that case study sampling involves multiple decisions: specify the units of analysis in case study research, select case study sampling strategies and sources of evidence.
- 3.** Develop an understanding on how to collect data from different (conventional and innovative) sources of evidence: conducting interviews, researching the visual, identifying and analysing archival records.
- 4.** Employ different approach to the analysis of qualitative data e.g. content analysis, narrative analysis
- 5.** Understand the notion of contingent criteriology for evaluating case study evidence
- 6.** Examine ethical dilemmas and issues related to the case study research process.
- 7.** Reflect on your own presuppositions of and subjectivities on the case study research processes.
- 8.** Manage fieldwork as a relationship process; reaching closure.

### **Topical Outline of the Course:**

Case Studies and different ontological orientations: positivism, critical realism and interpretivism; Case study sampling as a multilevel process: key issues and

misconceptions; Conductive interviews under different ontological orientations; The reflexive interview; Researching visual data; Analysis of qualitative data; Enhancing trustworthiness of case study evidence: contingent criteriology; Dealing with ethics and managing fieldwork.

Indicative Course Schedule (Schedule includes dates, key topics and class tasks)	
Seminars	Key Topics
Seminar 1: Case Study Research and its Theoretical Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The case study methodology as a “pluralistic” research methodology.</li> <li>• Case study research and different methodological orientations: positivism, critical realism and interpretivism.</li> <li>• The theoretical objectives of case study research; the role of theory in case study research; theory building vs. theory testing.</li> <li>• Motivation for conducting case study research: characteristics of the research phenomenon and its context</li> </ul>
Seminar 2: Case Study Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study sampling: a multilevel process.</li> <li>• What to select: Differentiating between the empirical unit and the unit of analysis.</li> <li>• How to select: Purposeful sampling and its variations.</li> <li>• When to select: temporal and emerging dimensions of case study research.</li> <li>• How many cases to select: single vs. multiple case study design; dual track case study design.</li> </ul>
Seminar 3: Understanding Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealing with “conventional” and “innovative” sources of evidence.</li> <li>• Types of data associated with sources of evidence.</li> <li>• Conducting interviews under different ontological orientations; theorising the interview; the reflexive interview.</li> <li>• Researching the visual: two-dimensional, three-dimensional, lived and living visual data.</li> <li>• Organising archival research: discovery, access, assessment, sifting and cross-checking of archival records.</li> </ul>

Seminar 4: Analysing qualitative data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emic and etic approaches to reporting qualitative data.</li> <li>• Activities of inference from qualitative data: Analysis and interpretation.</li> <li>• Analysis of qualitative data: categorisation; abstraction; comparison; dimensionalisation; integration; iteration; refutation.</li> <li>• Interpretation of qualitative data: understand and represent meanings by studying (1) the meanings that others attach to their experiences, and (2) how those meanings cohere and form patterns.</li> <li>• Development of narrative accounts from qualitative data: identifying ways in which people make and use stories to interpret the world.</li> <li>• Developing “better stories and constructs” from qualitative data.</li> <li>• Theorising from qualitative case study: use qualitative case study data to confront theory.</li> </ul>
Seminar 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contingent criteriology: employing quality criteria under different ontological orientations.</li> <li>• Managing fieldwork: a relational approach: negotiating access; conducting fieldwork; exiting the field and reaching closure; re-entering the field.</li> <li>• Preparing case study reports.</li> <li>• Ethical issues in qualitative research.</li> <li>• Reflexivity and qualitative research.</li> </ul>

Analysis of Course Schedule: Suggested Readings and Class Preparation
Seminar 1
<p><b>Suggested Readings:</b></p> <p>Dyer, W.G. and Wilkins, A.L (1991). Better stories, not better constructs, to generate better theory: A rejoinder to Eisenhardt', <i>Academy of Management Review</i>, 16 (3): 613-619.</p> <p>Easton, G. (2010), Critical realism in case study research, <i>Industrial Marketing Management</i>, 39: 118-128.</p> <p>Easton, G. (1998), Case study research as a methodology for industrial networks: a realist apologia, in P. Naudé and P. Turnbull (eds), <i>Network Dynamics in International Marketing</i>, Oxford: Pergamon, pp. 73-87.</p> <p>Eisenhardt, K.M. (1989). Building theories from case study research, <i>Academy of Management Review</i>, 14 (4): 532-550.</p> <p>Gummesson, E. (2003). All research is interpretive!, <i>Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing</i>, 18 (6/7): 482-492.</p> <p>Platt, J. (1988) What can case studies do?, reprinted in <i>Qualitative Research</i> Alan Bryman and Robert Burgess, eds., Sage Publications, London, pp. 160-179.</p> <p>Ragin, C.C. (1992), Introduction: cases of 'what is a case?', in C.C. Ragin and H.S. Becker (eds), <i>What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry</i>, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-17.</p> <p>Stake, R.E. (1995). <i>The art of case study research</i>. Thousand Oaks: Sage.</p> <p>Sutton, R.I. (1997). The virtues of closet qualitative research. <i>Organization Science</i>, 8: 97-106.</p>
<p><b>Class Preparation:</b> Write a 2 page (~1000 words) individual reflection paper, positioning yourself as researcher; your view of the world (objective – subjective); your relationship with the subject of your study (emic/etic) and your proposed methodology for your PhD topic. (the paper will be submitted in Seminar 2)</p>
Seminar 2
<p><b>Suggested Readings:</b></p> <p>Coppedge, M. (1999). Thickening thin concepts and theories: Combining large N and Small in Comparative Politics', <i>Comparative Politics</i>, 31(4): 465-476.</p> <p>Fletcher, M. and Plakoyiannaki, E. Case study selection in international business: key issues and common misconceptions forthcoming in Piekkari, R. and C. Welch (eds), <i>Case Study Research for International Business</i>, Edward Elgar.</p> <p>Mahoney, J. and G. Goertz (2004), 'The possibility principle: choosing negative cases in comparative research', <i>The American Political Science Review</i>, 98: 653-669.</p> <p>Patton, M.Q. (2002), <i>Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods</i>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Thousand Oaks, London: Sage.</p>
<p><b>Class group exercise:</b></p> <p>Select one of the following articles and analyze briefly the sampling decisions taken by the authors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Covello, N. (2006). The network dynamics of international new ventures, <i>Journal of International Business Studies</i> 37: 713-731.</li> <li>2) Leonard-Barton, D (1990). A dual methodology for case studies: Synergistic use of a longitudinal single site with replicated multiple sites, <i>Organization Science</i>, 1: 248-266.</li> </ol>

3) Svejenova, S. (2005). The path with the heart: Creating an authentic career, *Journal of Management Studies*, 42(5): 947-974.

### Seminar 3

#### **Suggested Readings:**

- Alvesson, M. (1993). Beyond neopositivists, romantics and localists: A reflexive approach to interviews in organizational research, *Academy of Management Review*, 23(1): 13-33.
- Huber, G. P. and Power, D. J. (1985). Retrospective reports of strategic-level managers: guidelines for increasing their accuracy. *Strategic Management Journal*, 6: 171-80
- Kumar, N., Stern, N. and Anderson, J (1993). Conducting interorganizational research using key informants. *Academy of Management Journal*, 36(6): 1633-1651.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Interviewing*, Thousand Oaks, Sage.
- Piekkari, R., Plakoyiannaki, E. and Welch, C. (2010) 'Good' case research in industrial marketing: Insights from research practice. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 39: 109-117.
- Welch, C. (2000). The archaeology of business networks: The use of archival records in case study research, *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 8: 197-208.
- Welch, C., Marschan-Piekkari, R., Penttinen, H. and Tahvanainen, M. (2002). Corporate elites as informants in qualitative international business research, *International Business Review*, 11(5): 611-628.
- Yeung, H-W.C. (1995). Qualitative personal interviews in international business research: Some lessons from a study of Hong Kong Transnational Corporations, *International Business Review*, 4(3): 313-339.

#### **Class Group exercise:**

- 1) PhD candidates will be presented with the award winning article of Isabella (1990) published in the Academy of Management Journal, which is a qualitative study based on interviews. Doctoral candidates are invited to deconstruct the methodology of the paper and propose alternative ways of conducting the research.
- Isabella, L. (1990). Evolving interpretations as a change unfolds: How managers construe key organizational events, *Academy of Management Journal*, 33 (1): 7-14.
- 2) PhD candidates will be presented with an interview guide and invited to comment on its structure and style.

### Seminar 4

#### **Suggested Readings:**

- Blair, J.D. and Hunt, J.G. (1986). Getting inside the head of the management researcher one more time: Context-free and context-specific orientations in research, *Journal of Management*, 12(2): 147-166.
- Boje, D. M. (2001) *Narrative Methods for Organizational & Communication Research*. Sage Publications Ltd: London.
- Pratt, M. (2009) From the editors: For the lack of a boilerplate: Tips on writing up and (reviewing) qualitative research, *Academy of Management Journal*, 52 (5):

856-862.

Sinkovics, R.R., Elfriede, P. and Ghauri, P. (2005). Analysing textual data in international marketing research, *Qualitative Research and International Journal*, 8 (1): 9-38.

Spiggle, S. (1994). Analysis and interpretation of qualitative data in consumer research, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2: 491-503.

Tsoukas, H. (1989). The validity of idiographic explanations, *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4): 551-561.

**Class Group exercise:**

Doctoral candidates will be invited to work in groups and identify key themes in a transcribed interview using the process indicated by Spiggle (1994).

**Seminar 5**

**Suggested Readings:**

Gibbert, M and Ruigrok, W. (2010). The “what” and “how” of case study rigor three strategies based on published work, *Organizational Research Methods, forthcoming*, 1-28.

Healy, M. and Perry, C. (2000). Comprehensive criteria to judge validity and reliability of qualitative research within the realism paradigm. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 3 (3): 118-126.

Johnson, P., Buehring, A., Cassell, C and Symon, G. (2006), Evaluating qualitative management research: Towards a contingent criteriology, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 8 (3): 131-156.

**Glass Preparation:**

Doctoral candidates are invited to produce a methodological essay, which builds on the assigned readings and your personal learning during the course. The idea is to apply methodological literature to methodological decisions linked to the PhD thesis. The essay can, hence, address methodological choices and aspects of case study research ranging from the theoretical objective of the case study to reporting case study evidence and reaching closure. The length of essay is 8 pages (~2500 words).

**Suggested Criteria for Evaluation**

- Regular class attendance.
- Mastery of the assigned readings and active participation in classroom activities including satisfactory completion of the written class preparations and group works
- Satisfactory completion of the final course paper

**Instructor Profile**

Dr. Emmanuela Plakoyiannaki is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. She holds a PhD in Marketing from the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. Immediately after her PhD studies, she received a post-doctoral fellowship award by the Economics and Social Research Council (ESRC) in order to pursue further research at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. Dr. Plakoyiannaki is a Visiting Professor at the Business School of Aalto University (Mikkeli) and an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow, UK.

She teaches Qualitative Methods, Case Study Research as well as marketing-related modules including Principles of Marketing, Strategic Marketing, Services Marketing, International Marketing, Advertising and Consumer Behaviour at undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Greece, Finland and the UK.

Her research interests refer to qualitative research, case study methodology, philosophy of science, international marketing, consumer behaviour and entrepreneurship. She has published in various academic journals including the Academy of Management Review, Journal of International Business Studies, Journal of Management Studies, Journal of World Business, International Business Review, Industrial Marketing Management, Journal of Business Ethics, European Journal of Marketing, and Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing.