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<http://usimr.org/IMR-2-2012/v8n212-art6.pdf>

Designing case studies from secondary sources – A conceptual framework

Abstract

Purpose: Liberalization and globalization had risen the opportunity to third world nations for the development of industry and educational standards. This paradigm inspires us to suggest a conceptual model for writing case studies, and encourage the faculty and instructors likely to apply the case learning method in management programs.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This paper has prepared from the viewpoint of faculty and researchers, and developed a conceptual framework for case writing.

Findings: The framework for writing Type II Case Studies would be great helpful to faculty, doctoral scholars and research consultants while teaching management theories effectively in a lecture theater. Exclusively, authors suggest case structure, and a list of reputed case publishing journals.

Research limitations: The conceptual study is written from the perspective of management studies and the same may apply for possible results in other areas like engineering, medical, political sciences, etc. with requisite modifications.

Practical implications: Faculty, senior researchers and budding scholars may apply the suggested conceptual framework while designing case studies from secondary sources. It also helps them in publishing literary work.

Originality/Value: This is an original attempt, to develop a conceptual framework for writing Type II Case Studies from the availability of authenticated secondary sources.

Keywords: Case study, secondary data, learning, teaching note, management education, management studies

Paper type: Conceptual paper

1. Introduction

Management is an art, which design policies and guidelines; on the other hand, management is a science that deals with systematic decision-making (Burton & Thakur, 1995; Koontz & Weihrich, 2010). A well repute, and valuable contributors, like F.W. Taylor, Henry Fayol, and Peter F. Drucker and other well-known scholars define the word “management” in various contexts with different approaches, and explore multiple definitions (Ivancevich, Donnelly, & Gibson, 2003). Nevertheless, decision-making is a crucial aspect in management era, which affects the organization fortune. Most of the business decisions are typical in nature and decisive, however these are in the hands of human beings. Growing importance of management education, and rapid changes in industry with respect to products, technology, markets structures and so on, have been risen an opportunity that prone to be academia, consultants, researchers, and industry personnel in crafting course structure and teaching pedagogy, which would be suitable for industry requirements. Alternatively, businesses are crossing boundaries of nations, and continentals to establish and create a universal market consisting of vendors and customers.

Global business transactions and changing customer preferences have given likelihood to teach management theories, concepts and models through real life case studies. Historically, case method was born in medical studies and research that deals with human beings and animals. Thereafter, the focus of case method represents in behavioral, social and political sciences. Most of the contributors like Isidora, Dorde and Milovan (2010), Pamela and Susan (2008), and Yin (2003) have suggested different frameworks for conducting a case study research (CSR) in diverse subjects. CSR applies exclusively to build subject foundation, develop theories and concepts as a token of contribution to the existing literature. In the present scenario, companies are reserving, protecting, hiding, and un-disclosing the real facts of their business to the consultants, analysts and academic researchers. Hence, a media (e.g., tele, print, and web) has greater potential to grasp firm information, also relevant to industry and country. Taking this is an opportunity; our conceptual framework is suggested to design case studies form the available secondary based non-copyrighted and copyrighted information as well. These types of case studies are very well fitting with management notions and models. Therefore, we define these cases are *Type II Case Studies*. Contextually, case studies that have been written through face-to-face interviews are classified as *Type I Cases*, which are more realistic and expediency compare to Type II Cases. We also define that the case study has designed through field research is sorted as *Field Cases*. Field cases

are time consuming, and then require pragmatic research data that is more familiar in sciences.

To understand the inside citation (also called, in-text citation), readers may go through the following published cases in *Emerald Emerging Markets Case studies Collection*.

Bick, G., Luiz, J., & Townsend, S. (2011). MTN South Africa: one group, one vision and one brand. *Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies (Marketing)*, Emerald Publishers.

Nangia, V. K., Agarawal, R., Sharma, V., & Reddy, K. S. (2011). Conglomerate diversification through cross-continent acquisition: Vedanta weds Cairn India. *Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies (Strategy)*, Emerald Publishers.

Thaker, K. (2011). General Motors India (2009). *Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies (Strategy)*, Emerald Publishers.

The remaining study is organized as follows. Section 2 portrays the conceptual framework for designing the case studies, section 3 describes unique structure to write a teaching note, section 4 presents both pros and cons of secondary based case studies, and finally conclusions depict in section 5.

2. Conceptual framework – Designing case studies from secondary sources

To achieve the objective of study, this section presents a conceptual framework for designing case studies from secondary sources. It suggests the process in a sequence, and describes various tips to be taken care while preparing Type II case studies. Figure 1 portrays the suggested notion in a flowchart.

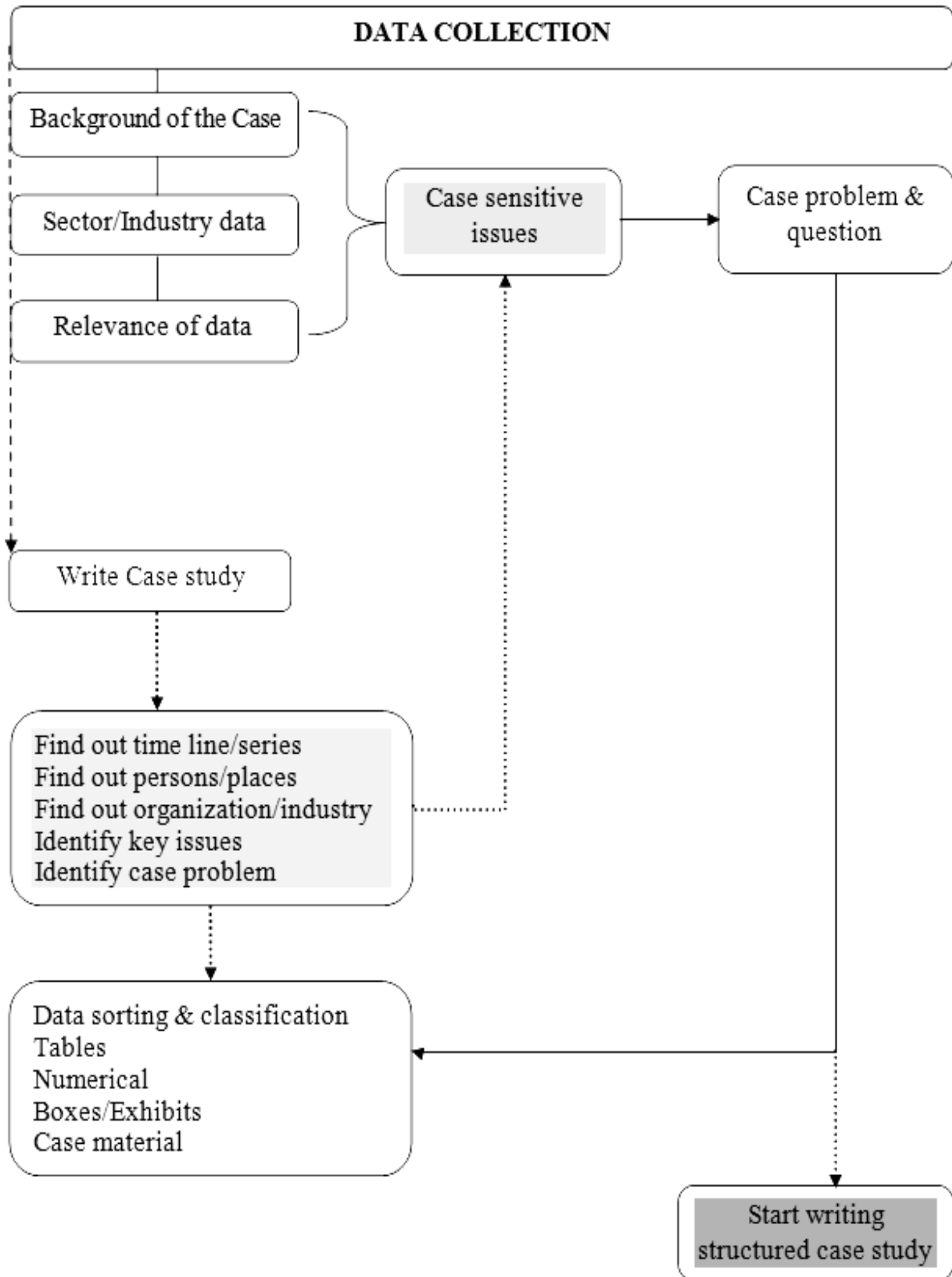


Fig 1. Designing case studies from secondary sources

2.1 Select an area/elective:

It is suggestible to pick any area of management, or others like political science, economy, industry, country news, culture, (or) it can be buzz topic/discussion of the week news. In few instances, interdisciplinary area topics are relevant that would act as a guide.

2.2 Collection of secondary data

It is an extreme area and main course while designing Type II cases.

- Authors should inquire about secondary information whether it has copyrighted or freely accessible. If it is copyrighted, authors must quote the right citation.
- Further, they should also care about the quantity and quality of information that would be collected (*see Figure 2 for secondary sources*).
- While collecting data, authors are suggested to write each citation in any order (e.g., references style) and save in the separate file, for example, date wise and type of data.
- The final step in data collection helps the contributors to save time, which is presented in a data sorting and classification section. It is suggestible to keep the order of data by person, organization, time, location, and activity.

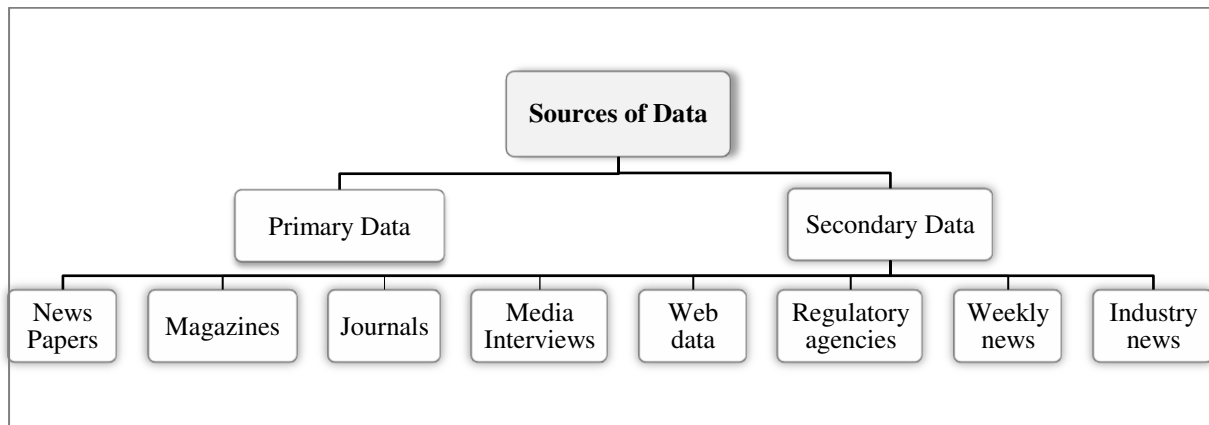


Fig 2. Data collection – Secondary sources

2.3 Data sorting and classification

Case contributors are required to read the collected data, and mark the important lines by any shaded color for an easy understanding, conversely, it helps in a classification. After selecting the crucial data, the data can be classified as introduction part, body part, crucial part, additional information, teaching question, and case analysis. Generally, classification depends on the profundity, and broadness of the case.

2.4 Writing first draft of the case

According to data classification, authors must keep the select information in order, i.e. paragraph wise. Second, divide the entire text into paragraphs, multiple sentences, boxes, tables, graphs wherever it is necessary. Third, arrange the information in new file, and then name as a case-second draft. Fourth, it is necessary to read the entire case for more than twice or thrice to understand the case inputs. Finally, the case writer can proceed to write a case-final draft.

2.5 Beautification of the final draft of the case

Before finalizing the case/final editing, contributors may follow the suggestions given below.

- Give a case-second draft to any two of your colleagues, one should be good in language, and other one in domain knowledge (we strongly recommend that this is an important action for first time case writers).
- Read the case, as you are a reviewer, and check the proper connection between the lines and paragraphs. If the connection is lacking, then link those sentences.
- Check the language grammatical mistakes because the information has collected from various sources, and it could possibly affect the soundness of words.
- Do not construct the case like a research article, commentary, or literature review. Therefore, case writers must design the case in a structured compartment (*see Appendix I*).
- Implement the suggestions recommended by internal reviewers, if any
- Read the case at least twice and point yourself, modifications if any
- Last but not least, beautify the case – coloring lines, pictures, graphs, boxes, tables and exhibits. However, formatting should not be overly fashioned.

3. Teaching note

The simplest way of teaching management/business case is to avoid unwanted theory, notes and over discussions. As noted, it is suggested to accommodate the case while preparing teaching or session plan for the next semester. Teaching note (TN) is the second facet of writing management case studies. In previous days, we observe that the business cases are accompanying by case discussions and questions. Changing time and environmental progress and its effect on business, remark the contributors to restructure the teaching note.

Thus, a student could enhance practical functions while sitting in the lecture auditorium. Moreover, the following teaching note has written from the outlook of management literature. Besides, it would be a wallet to academic scholars and individual contributors in other disciplines.

TN must be well referred and written from the instructor’s point of view. A good teaching note must inspire the faculty, and motivates him to deliver key points in the given case through diverse management theories and concepts. If the case belongs to finance, accounting, or any other technical subject, then the teaching note must provide case discussion, case analysis, and exercises with answers. As a result, faculty can deliver the case in good time with poise as well as answer the student queries. Figure 3 presents the outline that how to write an advanced teaching note. Subsequently, important elements have been discussed for an auxiliary inquiry.

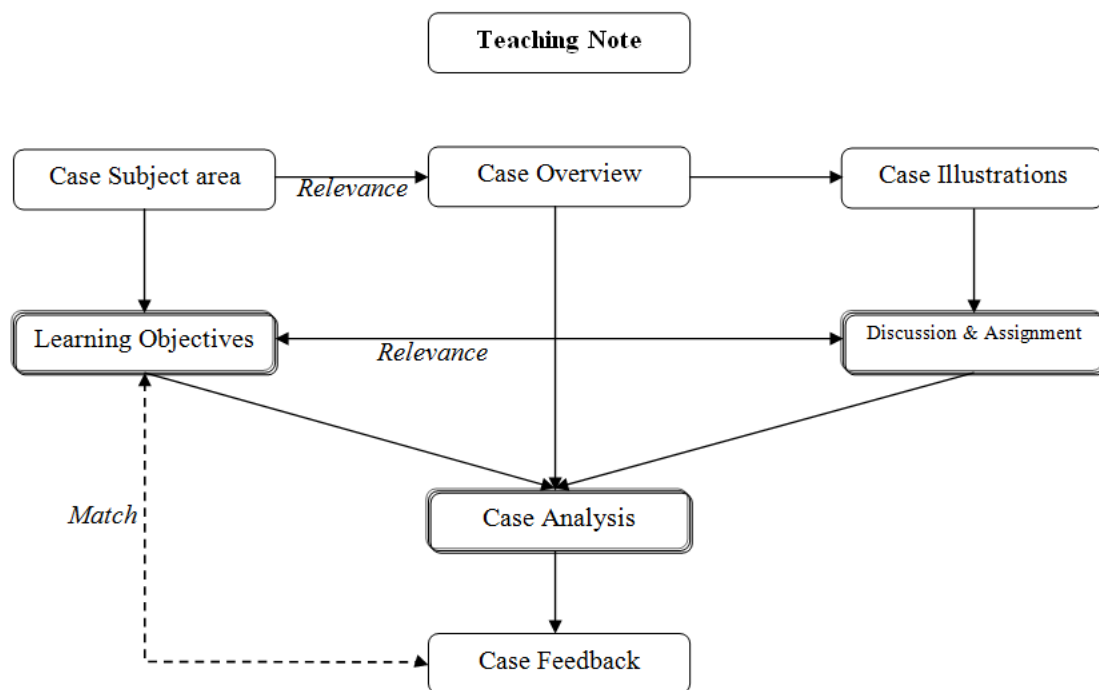


Fig 3. Conceptual framework – Teaching note

As discussed above, it is proposed to use a triangular support while writing teaching note for case studies. TN is generally a mechanism for mock discussion, which is written on the paper. On the other hand, it is training capsule to the faculty and case instructors. The following steps are part of the TN.

3.1 Case overview

Usually, this section should be prime step in TN. It covers case subject area, relevance of data, facts and crucial aspects. It does not cover any additional information other than the case disclosure. Simply, it is case a description/case synopsis.

3.2 Case learning objectives

Each case should be accompanied by learning objectives. Because, these objectives motivate the faculty, and then comes to know that what would be the learning from the given case. It is also suggested that these points must be present in bullets format.

3.3 Case illustrations, discussions and assignments

A good case must pinpoint the faculty and students via giving assignments. Normally, it depends on the subject area of case, for example, finance, accounting and operations – assignments would be in workout/exercises. On the other hand, Marketing and HR – assignments would be in theoretical questions and conceptual discussions (for example, brainstorming, presentations, etc).

3.4 Case analysis

This section helps the faculty/instructors while discussing the given case in the lecture theater. Therefore, Case writers are required to analyze the case from the viewpoint of instructors, i.e. if you are a fresh academic instructor, how do you discuss the case among students in the lecture hall?

For example,

- First 15-20 minutes teaching plan (see, *additional readings*)
- Mechanism of case analysis and discussion of questions with in a time frame
- Question yourself and answer them
- Tabulation, graphs, using blackboard, and other teaching materials

3.5 Case feedback

After the case assignment and discussion, faculty is suggested to take feedback on the given case. The feedback report helps him while selecting cases, teaching pedagogy or any other improvements for prospect growth. On the other hand, faculty comes to know that what difficulties, which students have faced during case analysis. The feedback report improves communiqué and interaction between the faculty and students in the lecture hall. It can be

oral or written, and may collect through online submission/email. Box 1 presents the suggestive feedback mechanism for case studies discussion. Students normally give their feedback on case learning using five point Likert's scale. This feedback assists the faculty member for progress in teaching pedagogy that would lead to their career advancement.

Box 1. Case feedback form						
	Factor	Likert's scale				
		Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
1	Case title/synopsis					
2	Relevancy of the subject					
3	Case learning					
4	Case inputs to students					
5	Area/elective I					
6	Area/elective II					
7	Area/elective III					
8	Overall opinion on the case					
9	Practicality and decision					
10	Teaching method					

4. Pros and Cons of Type II Case Studies

The present conceptual study has both merits and limitations like theoretical studies in management and other sciences. The following observations have been made as critiques about the Type II case studies (see *Box 2*).

Box 2. Pros and Cons of Type II Case Studies	
Pros	Cons
Coding and timing of the case collection data.	Limited availability of authenticated secondary information.
Case release form, i.e. permission is not required from any person, firm or entity to publish Type II teaching cases. Because of case release form, many young case writers get disappointed, even not interested to write cases for publication. In this setting, Type II cases are more suggestible and appropriate for publication.	In some instances, it is difficult to sort and classify the raw data.
Easy to write and edit the raw data.	Getting relevant data is a difficult task.
Learning objectives are clear and indicative.	Data lost and alteration is a tragedy.
Opportunity to present at seminars and conferences, and publish in case journals (see <i>Appendix II</i>).	Writing Type II case studies require more time.
	Linguistic mistakes, editing and clarification.

5. Concluding remarks

A good case study supposes to fulfill the learning objectives and feed the practical applications, or managerial decisions through theories, concepts, models and principles.

Further, the case should be flexible to teach or insert a theme in different areas of study. A case encloses multiple faces would guide faculty and students in effective manner. Teaching theory through case learning is an interesting task, and it gives a meek confidence and opportunity to insight the issues more in depth rather than broad coverage. The changing business scenario and environment is a remarkable, and requires both soft and hard pedagogy to achieve objectives by the student peer groups. This conceptual framework suggest that how to design case studies from the secondary sources, which may facilitate faculty, instructors, senior researchers, authors and young scholars in their publications. Additionally, they shall not require waiting for case permissions to write Type II case studies. We believe that the study would inspire budding researchers and fresh faculty while applying case learning method in a lecture theater.

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Additional Readings

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APPENDIX

Appendix I. Case-study Structure	
I	<i>Opening paragraph (300-400 words):</i> Case background, timing, location, person, organization, important issue, and subject area.
	II
	<i>Case side Tracks (300-400 words):</i> It may include - before the crucial issue, action taken, after the action accomplishment.
III	<i>Background of the case (500 words):</i> Brief introduction about the case, key personnel, milestones of an organization, time line, key facts, firm structure.
	IV
	<i>Case relevant data (400-500 words):</i> Nature and current trends of industry, state or country and global issues on the crucial aspect in the case.
V	<i>Case conclusion (300-400 words):</i> Should explain the case in brief, for example, <i>what it would be, if not, on the other hand, in the next chance, etc.</i>
	VI
	<i>Case Exhibits:</i> This section is a collection of supported tables, figures, pictures, and editable spreadsheets (in case of accounting and finance).

Appendix II. List of Case Publishing Journals in Business and Management studies			
	Journal/Collection	Publisher/Institute	Web address
1	Asian Case Research Journal	World Scientific	www.worldscinet.com/acrj/
2	Asian Journal of Management Cases	Sage Publications	http://ajc.sagepub.com/
3	Business Case Journal	Society for Case Research	www.sfcr.org/bcj/
4	Emerging Markets Case Studies	Emerald Publishers	www.emeraldinsight.com
5	European Case Clearing House	ECCH	www.ecch.com
6	IIMS Journal of Management Science	IIM Shillong, India	http://www.iimshillong.in/iims-journal.asp
7	IIUM Journal of Case Studies in Management	Graduate School of Management, International Islamic University Malaysia	http://managementcentre.com.my/journal/?title=home
8	IMA Educational Case Journal	Institute of Management Accountancy	http://www.imanet.org/resources_and_publications/ima_educational_case_journal.aspx
9	International Journal of Case Studies in Management	HEC – MONTREAL	http://web.hec.ca/revuedecas/en/index.cfm
10	International Journal of Management Cases	CIRCLE Research Centre	http://www.ijmc.org/IJMC/Home.html
11	Ivey Cases	Ivey Collections	www.iveycases.com
12	Journal of Business Case Studies	The Clute Institute	www.cluteinstitute.com/journals/JBCS.html
13	Journal of Case Research in Business and Economics	AABRI	www.aabri.com/jcrbe.html
14	Journal of the International Academy for Case Studies	Allied Academies	http://www.alliedacademies.org
15	The Management Case Study Journal	International Graduate School of Management, University of South Australia	http://www.informit.com.au/products/ProductDetails.aspx?id=MCSJ&container=business
16	Vikalpa	IIM Ahmedabad, India	http://www.vikalpa.com/
17	Vision	MDI Gurgaon, India	http://www.mdi.ac.in/intellect_capital/vision.asp?id=3

Note: We have not been suggested any local case publisher either in India or elsewhere. However, the above list may help case authors in finding a suitable outlet for their case.