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Beating the Odds! Build theory from emerging markets phenomenon and the emergence of case study research—A “Test-Tube” typology

Kotapati Srinivasa Reddy^{1*}

Abstract: The extant social sciences and management theoretical concepts and empirical literature have mostly determined based on western (developed) economies institutional context. In the recent past, a number of researchers have argued that the western theories are inadequate to study the emerging markets phenomenon and described the problems relating to data collection, data analysis, and theory development. I also (experience) confirm that major problems are relating to the research data collection, especially primary data (interview and survey methods). With this in mind, I develop a new case study research design, that is, “Test-Tube” typology, to build theory from emerging markets behavior as well as to add new knowledge to the mass of disciplines, particularly social sciences, medicine, travel, tourism and hospitality, sports, management, and information systems, and engineering. I design a typology that consists of eleven steps: case development, case selection, relatedness and pattern matching, case analysis, cross-case analysis, theoretical constructs, pre-testing and development, adjusting theoretical constructs, theory testing, building theory and testable propositions, and

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Kotapati Srinivasa Reddy received his full-time PhD in *International Management and Finance* from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee, Department of Management Studies, Uttarakhand (January 2010–September 2014). His research interests include cross-border mergers and acquisitions, foreign market entry, internationalization, emerging markets, securities laws and compliances, and case study research. His doctoral work has appeared in referred international journals and case collections: *Journal of Policy Modeling*, *International Strategic Management Review*, *International Journal of Commerce and Management*, *International Journal of Law and Management*, *Nankai Business Review International*, *Asia-Pacific Journal of Management Research and Innovation*, *Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies*, and *Journal of the International Academy for Case Studies*, among others. At graduation level, he did B.Com from Acharya Nagarjuna University and Company Secretary (Inter), then obtained Masters in Business Administration from Andhra University and qualified the UGC-NET in Lectureship.

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Drawing attention to the problems of research data collection (interview and survey methods) in emerging markets, this paper develops a new qualitative case study research design, that is, Test-Tube typology. It primarily helps qualitative researchers in five tasks—to develop case studies using archival (secondary) data, to perform cross-case analysis, to test extant theory, to improve extant theory, and to suggest new theory. The eleven-step typology aims at generalizing to other disciplines as well. I also recommend few guidelines on research quality and research rigor in case study environment.

suggesting strategic swap model. Further, I suggest a set of few guidelines on how to measure the research quality and how to strengthen the research rigor in case study settings.

Subjects: Accounting; Business History; Business, Management and Accounting; Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management; Human Resource Management; International Business; Marketing; Organizational Studies; Research Methods in Management; Strategic Management

Keywords: case study research; theory testing; theory development; theory building; research quality; research rigor; management research; emerging markets

1. Introduction

Research is a continuous action performed by a person, group of people, organization, or group of organizations in order to find most possible solutions for the existing problems in the given field. The term “research” is defined differently in different disciplines; for example, the purpose of research in medical sciences may not be the same in case of engineering or social sciences. Technically speaking, academic research is an action by human commitment to explore, invent, discover, or study a person, group, organization, state, nation, event, or activity both for betterment of human life and for new knowledge creation. By and large, the objective of research should be a multilevel, multidiscipline “unified” theory (Buckley & Lessard, 2005, p. 595). Further, matching the methodology to the research question is central to any research effort (Punch, 1998 in Nicholson & Kiel, 2007). For instance, “business” or “management” subject is one of the youngest disciplines in social sciences that aims to study business organizations, people, work-culture, environment, and technological implications, just to mention a few.

In this paper, I focus on case study research, which is a legitimated method of qualitative research in social sciences. Good theory is one that will be practically useful in the course of daily events, not only to social scientists but also to laymen (as mentioned in Shah & Corley, 2006). For instance, Buys (2007) defined the theory as “a statement of scientifically acceptable principle(s) offered to explain observed phenomena” (p. 6). In other words, “a set of propositions that explain, predict, and interpret events or phenomena of interest; identify possible levers for affecting specific outcomes and guide further empirical testing of explicit hypotheses derived from theory” (Curry, Nembhard, & Bradley, 2009, p. 1447). On one hand, the extant social sciences and management theoretical concepts and empirical literature are largely determined on the basis of developed markets context. On the other hand, a number of researchers have argued that the western theories are inadequate to examine the emerging markets phenomenon, while described some problems relating to data collection, data analysis, and theory development. I have also (experienced) found that major problems exist in emerging markets (e.g. China, India) are relating to the research data collection, especially primary data (interview and survey methods) (Dhanaraj & Khanna, 2011; Dieleman & Sachs, 2008; Hoskisson, Eden, Lau, & Wright, 2000; Malik & Kotabe, 2009). With this in mind, I build a new case study research design, that is, “Test-Tube” typology, to build theory from emerging markets behavior and add new knowledge to the mass of disciplines, particularly social sciences, medicine, travel, tourism and hospitality, sports, management, and information systems, and engineering. I design a typology that consists of eleven steps: case development, case selection, relatedness and pattern matching, case analysis, cross-case analysis, theoretical constructs, pre-testing and development, adjusting theoretical constructs, theory testing, building theory and testable propositions, and suggesting strategic swap model. Further, I suggest a set of guidelines on how to measure the research quality and how to strengthen the research rigor in case study settings. Altogether, I consider that the initiative, idea, and new case study research design would add significant contribution to the methodological perspectives, which facilitate future scholars to initiating theory-building research as well as empirical research. Specifically, it would motivate and guide emerging-markets based scholars in various levels of research activities, for example, post-graduation and doctoral degree.

Herewith, I discuss important theoretical concepts relating to qualitative research. It is a form of scientific inquiry, which is aimed at understanding complex social processes ... and characterizes organizational processes, dynamics, and describes social interactions and elicits individual attitudes and preferences. Simply, the purpose of qualitative research is to investigate a complex phenomenon that is difficult to measure quantitatively (Curry et al., 2009, pp. 1442–1443). According to Stake (as cited in Conrad & Serlin, 2006),

Qualitative research is *holistic* (concerns with process and context rather than simply outcomes that include differences and comparisons); *empirical*; *interpretive* (focuses on building concepts and theories); and *empathetic* (concentrates on the frames of reference and values ... during the course of research).

It is vital, stimulating and a greatly rewarding experience (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Besides quantitative tools, it is useful for “discovering unspoken assumptions and probing new relationships, concepts and definitions” (as cited in London & Hart, 2004), and it allows the researcher to “discover new variables and relationships, to reveal and understand complex processes, and to illustrate the influence of the social context” (Shah & Corley, 2006, p. 1824). I also found other observations, such as, qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand “real world setting where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest” (Patton, 2002). The forms of qualitative research include interviews, historical research, phenomenological research, ethnography, feminist research, grounded theory¹, narrative research, critical research, case survey method, participatory action research, focus group research, case study research and longitudinal study, among others (Bitsch, 2005; De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Meyer, 2001; Ridder, Hoon, & McCandless Baluch, 2014; Rainer, 2011; Welch, Plakoyiannaki, Piekkari, & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2013; Zoogah, Zoogah, & Dalaba-Roohi, *in press*). Qualitative techniques involve the systematic collection, data organization, coding, analysis and interpretation of data using various scientific tools, for example, NVivo (Ghauri & Firth, 2009). Researchers use various research strategies include experiment and observation data, survey data, interview data and archival (secondary source) data, and thereby triangulating them for both validity and generalizability, which is also essential in management research (Fendt & Sachs, 2008). Importantly, it helps in business research to understand critical issues that have remained unclear in quantitative research (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). However, it has been underutilized in the discipline of social sciences, i.e. management research. For instance, international business is still depicted as an “empirically driven, a theoretical field that fails to go much beyond the descriptive” (Shenkar, 2004, p. 165). While supporting this, Werner (2002) examined 20 top journals during 1996–2000 and found that 13% of the studies were theoretical, mathematical modeling (2.5%), case study method (6.3%), and other qualitative methods (2.2%); and 8.5% of the empirical papers used a qualitative research strategy.

From the aforementioned observations, I have understood that a great extent of social science researchers have used quantitative tools in their productive research setting, and the same mythology is being adopted to emerging markets. By contrast, knowledge and use of qualitative research tools (e.g. case study research) by scholars is scanty due to their personal dilemma where it needs more efforts for data collection, analysis, writing, and publishing the results compare to empirical research. It is also a fact that qualitative researchers receive less attention and respect in various academic events. Altogether, the problem is not the question of “quality or rigor and publication opportunity”, but it is the context of “application of qualitative research, data collection and analysis and particularly the presentation of results”. In this vein, I wish to quote an interesting experience from emerging markets like India. A management researcher was aimed to examine a few “delayed” cross-border acquisitions using case study research. It is well cited in the literature that case study research is the best strategy to build theory and offer testable propositions (Hoon, 2013; Stake, 1995; Vissak, 2010; Wadham & Warren, 2014; Yin, 2003). Due to difficulties in primary data collection, the researcher tested few theories (originally propounded by scholars based on developed markets phenomenon), and proposed a new theory and suggested some propositions. From this case, one may seek two basic questions. Firstly, the researcher developed new theory, because

the existing theories are inadequate to explain the behavior of emerging markets' institutional authorities and firms participating in acquisitions. Secondly, the researcher used archival data (e.g. media text, company annual reports) instead of primary data (e.g. interviews) as the part of data triangulation. To do so, the researcher designed a new typology, that is, Test-Tube, particularly for building theory from emerging markets perspective, and then advocated few guidelines to strengthen the quality and rigor aspects in case study settings. Therefore, I aim to generalize this Test-Tube typology to other disciplines, especially medicine (health services) and hospitality (hotels and resorts). The strong motivating factor behind generalizing this method to other disciplines is that scholars face many problems in research data collection when the sampling place is emerging markets. It infers that one can build theory or model from health services and hotels. For example, a researcher could use patient records available with hospital (lodging and boarding data available with hotel) as an archival data to perform various tasks suggested in the Test-Tube typology, and develop some theoretical constructs within the given context.

The remaining paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 explains the rationale to the emergence of case study research. Section 3 discusses the need to build theory from emerging markets setting. Section 4 presents Test-Tube typology. Section 5 describes research quality and rigor. Section 6 elucidates limitations and suggestions. Finally, Section 7 concludes the paper.

2. The rationale: Emergence of case study research

In this section, I present the application and importance of qualitative case study research. Case study research (hereinafter, CSR) has a predominant record of use across various disciplines, namely medical sciences, political sciences, law, sociology, psychology, anthropology, teaching and education, other social sciences (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008), and information systems, and engineering. CSR aims to investigate and analyze the unique nature of organizational environment in a real-life setting, based on single or multiple cases that carefully bounded by time and place (Conrad & Serlin, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994, 2003). It is the best-recognized and highly motivated approach that allows a researcher to deeply study and “lookup” critical and complicated business transactions, for instance, failure M&A deals in business discipline, failure operations in medicine, etc. It is one of the lawful tools in qualitative research to bridge the nomothetic-idiographic research gap and using previous empirical findings (Larsson, 1993). Specifically, Payne and Payne (2004) mentioned “while no study can prove something, a single case can disprove a general statement”. In the recent past, it has become an increasingly popular and relevant research strategy in business management studies (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 30). Nevertheless, it has been one of the most criticized [used] tools of social science research (Willis, 2007). For instance, it is a “qualitative” often means more rather than less rigor (Shenkar, 2004, p. 168). I hereby present a few definitions of CSR.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary,²

An attempt to understand a particular person, institution, society, etc. by assembling information about his or its development.

A well known researcher in social sciences, Yin (1994, p. 13) defined as

An empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear evident, and it relies on multiple sources of evidence.

Payne and Payne (2004) suggested as

A very detailed research enquiry into a single example (of a social process, organization or collectivity) seen as a social unit in its own right and as a holistic entity.

In a recent study, Piekkari, Welch, and Paavilainen (2009, p. 569) described as

A research strategy that examines, through the use of a variety of data sources, a phenomenon in its naturalistic context, with the purpose of confronting theory with the empirical world.

More commonly, “theory-building research using cases typically answers research questions that address ‘how’ and ‘why’ in unexplored research areas” (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 26; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). In other words, it is “an inquiry that focuses on describing, understanding, predicting, and/or controlling the individual (i.e. process, animal, person, household, organization, group, industry, culture, or nationality), also useful for theory testing and development” (Woodside, 2010, p. 1; Yin, 2003). Furthermore, CSR “involves investigating one or a small number of social entities or situations about which data are collected using multiple sources of data” (Easton, 2010, p. 119). It also supports to test theories that require the specification of theoretical propositions derived from an existing theory (as cited in Darke, Shanks, & Broadbent, 1998, p. 275). For instance, Eisenhardt (1989) described that case studies provide rich and in-depth evidence to build theories, and to offer theoretical constructs and testable propositions in an emergent research area, and subsequent studies have advanced his idea (e.g. Bengtsson & Larsson, 2012; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Hoon, 2013). It is advised that theory building require the rich knowledge while theory testing is a basis of the scientific method; however, theory development and refinement are of equal importance (Shah & Corley, 2006, p. 1822). Likewise, Tsang (2013) proposed that when the emphasis on theory development is strong and the emphasis on contextualization is weak there would be stronger “theory building and testing”. By and large, it is a comprehensive research strategy, which includes conceptual model development, research design, data collection and data analysis (Barkley, 2006), and is a different application compared to other qualitative research methods including case survey method.³ I thus forward to present different types of case studies defined by various scholars.

Stake (1995) explained three categories of cases, namely the *intrinsic* (examines the case for its own sake), the *instrumental* (studies certain pattern of behavior in a small group of subjects), and the *collective* (collects data from multiple sources to solve the specific issues of an individual case). Stake also mentioned that both instrumental and collective cases permit a researcher for the generalization of his or her findings to a larger populace (e.g. Gerring, 2004; Sayre, 2001). Whereas, Yin (2003) explained case studies are explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive; also described the differences between single, multiple, and holistic cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008). In Willis’s (2007) view, cases are particularistic, naturalistic, thick descriptive data, inductive, and heuristic (based on data: descriptive and interpretive). Broadly, Thorpe and Holt (2008) suggested that case studies are “inductive, deductive, exploratory, descriptive or explanatory; empirical or conceptual; and more or less objective, inter-subjective or subjective”. On the other hand, Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) mentioned two types of methods for using case study research. First, *intensive case study method* allows a researcher to understand and explore the case from “the inside” and develop understanding from the perspectives of the people involved in the case. Second, *extensive case study approach* aims to test the theoretical constructs (common patterns, mechanisms and properties) by comparing a number of cases. In the literature, I also found the unit of analysis (when a researcher uses small cases as part of a big case), and embedded cases that are parts or sub-cases of unit of analysis in the chosen big case (Carson, Gilmore, Perry, & Gronhaug, 2001). In a recent survey, Piekkari et al. (2009) depicted various forms of cases based on theorizing, case selection, and data sources. They found considerable lack of clarity in the published articles concerning theoretical purpose, with authors struggling to explain how (and, why) they were theorizing through case studies (p. 579).

Regarding sampling, Yin (1994) suggested that CSR could be used on single case or multiple cases that varies from researcher to researcher because it depends on the purpose of research whether theory is testing or theory is developing. Hence, single case is suitable when it satisfies all the guidelines for theory(ies) testing, or developing new ideas or theories (Dyer & Wilkins, 1991, Ghauri, 2004; Siggelkow, 2007; Yin, 2003). A single case or multiple cases could help in sharpening the previous

theories by identifying gaps and filling them in a closure (Siggelkow, 2007). The problem of single cases is limitations in generalizability and several information-processing biases. While, multi-case research provides better inference to identify pattern variations and enhances the likelihood of inter-linking the findings across cases where multiple cases could be used a minimum of four and maximum of 10 (Eisenhardt, 1989).

I hereby understood that case study research is a strategic framework that aims to deeply study the people, organizations or events in a chosen setting thus to test or develop theories by comparing common patterns of a number of cases. Further, it is a down-to-earth format, has the ability to study complex business issues in an accessible and understanding format (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Wilson & Vlosky, 1997; Woodside & Wilson, 2003). It involves analytical and logical thinking and conceptualization rather than empirical and statistical findings (Gomm, Hammersley, & Foster, 2009). It provides unique setting to study the complex phenomena, which deals with multiple stakeholders based on longitudinal data from multiple sources for emergent theory (Mickelson & Worley, 2003). Simply, it is a story told for the purpose of understanding and learning (Thyer, 2001), and is a diagnostic tool that is increasingly used in management research (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin & Heald, 1975). Importantly, it allows a researcher to perform in-depth case analysis at different levels using single case or multiple cases by comparing previous research results, and contribute for the development of management lessons (Cambra-Fierro, Hart, Polo-Redondo, & Fuster-Mur, 2012; Collinson & Rugman, 2010; Dooley, 2002; Ghauri, 2004; Walton, 1972; Yin, 2003). Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) described that CSR is the best qualitative research tool providing rich qualitative evidence and an alternative to the nomothetic research. Baxter and Jack (2008) also described that CSR likely to be a valuable method to build theory, evaluate programs, and develop interventions. Multiple-case studies typically provide a stronger base for theory building (Yin, 1994). As such, theory building from multiple cases typically yields more robust, generalizable, and testable theory than single-case research (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

3. The need: Build theory from emerging markets phenomenon

I have chosen “mergers and acquisitions research” as a rationale to support the previous scholars’ views wherein emerging markets behave differently from development markets, and therefore scholars should build new theories based on behavior of these markets. For example, a special issue of the *Academy of Management Journal* on “strategy research in emerging economies” by Hoskisson et al. (2000, p. 257) mentioned

Theory development in emerging economies can be problematic. There are major issues ... to the replication of tests of hypotheses and research instruments developed and used in developed markets in emerging markets context ... the mix of quantitative and qualitative data can be particularly useful in yielding novel, relevant and reliable insights.

Because of short record of economic reforms ... and the weak institutional control create a situation where such “*data are unavailable*”... even when data are available, *these can be biased or noisy, and interpretation may need a lot of context*. Similarly, Dhanaraj and Khanna (2011, pp. 691–692) argued that emerging markets information comparable to that available in the developed markets is hard to come by, and such information has to be generated to be actionable. I agree that the information acquisition problems are due to less mature and more unstable that marked in emerging markets (Dieleman & Sachs, 2008). In one of the recent studies, it was mentioned that obstacles in data collection, unavailable firm/industry list, firms are hesitant to share any data (particularly, financial performance ... due to serious tax evasion); hence, the mail survey is unreliable in countries like India (as cited in Malik & Kotabe, 2009). Varma (2011) also mentioned that data collection problems include low response rate, subjective bias, and a lack of research culture. Captivating this, I have chosen an emergent method of data collection, that is, archival data (e.g. media texts).

Furthermore, an entry-mode research by Canabal and White (2008) found 58 cases of primary data use and 68 cases of secondary data use. They also pointed that IB scholars use secondary

sources or media-texts due to both availability and convenience; at the same time, it is due to difficulty in conducting interview-method or survey across multinational firms, countries or continents. Therefore, it is also my primary concern to review and support the previous studies that have used archival data, secondary sources or media reports/news for various purposes including case analysis, theory testing/development. For example, in a recent empirical study appeared in the *Journal of Finance* by Serdar Dinc and Erel (2013) used media-texts (e.g. quotes from government representatives include prime ministers and cabinet ministers—and their spokespersons) to “identify a government’s reaction to a merger bid as support, opposition, or neutral/no reaction”. Likewise, Kim and Lu (2013) also used media news, law review ... about legislative activities to better understand the circumstances, contents, outcomes, experts’ opinions, scope of relevant reforms, etc. While examining the case empirically, Wan and Wong (2009) used media news (The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and The Washington Post) to collect news about CNOOC’s (China) unsuccessful takeover of Unocal (USA). Referring to institutional and political issues in emerging markets: China and Taiwan, Child and Tsai (2005) conducted a multi-case research using media-texts (besides, interview data) to study various strategies in relation to environmental protection. Based on [fully] secondary data, Geppert, Dörrenbächer, Gammelgaard, and Taplin (2013) conducted a multiple case study using 12 large acquisitions of four MNCs in the global brewery industry, and compared the institutional and ownership influences whilst risk-taking and managerial decision-making in foreign deals. A theory-building paper appeared in the *Journal of Management Studies* by Riad and Vaara (2011) examined two cases based on extensive media coverage to explore varieties of national metonymy in international M&As. In a different manner, Conklin (2005) examined few Canadian acquisitions based on cases accessed through Ivey Publishing (Richard Ivey School of Business) where these cases were written based on interviews, media reports, and relevant documents.

In this vein, I have found an emergent lasting research interest in global strategy of international managers involving in multinational business after the recent financial crises, particularly emerging markets setting (e.g. Apfelthaler & Vaiman, 2013; Reddy, Nangia, & Agrawal, 2014b; Rugman, Verbeke, & Nguyen, 2011). For instance, a recent article by Xu and Meyer (2013) found that a total of 161 emerging economy-related papers published during 2006–2010, compared to 99 published in 2001–2005 (63% overall increase). They also reported that 122 out of 260 studies focused on China, followed by other Asian nationals (68), Central and Eastern Europe (37), Latin America (13), and the Middle East and Africa (3). They revealed that Latin America region (450%) is a rising diversity of host contexts, ... India (160%); papers published on India (China) during 2001–2005 are five (50), increased to 13 (72) during 2006–2010. Interestingly, these bibliometric results infer that there is a great extent of theoretical and empirical research is required in India, which may be related to diverse aspects, for instance, strategies of emerging market firms, mergers, acquisitions, internationalization, and direct international investment, just to name a few. With this backdrop, I discuss a new form of qualitative case research design.

4. Beating the Odds! A Test-Tube typology

Prior to introduce the new case research design in the view of emerging markets, I present some novel observations on research design. Case researchers agree that no part of the CSR is conceivable to ignore or to avoid until reaching the final step, that is, theory development. Thus, research design is the best evaluation and critical step in the CSR. In fact, research design could change the whole result of a study and disapprove the quality of a study, for instance, generalization of findings. I also agree that research design likely to be “flexible in order to go advance and backward to discover possible insights” in the given context (Liu & Zhang, 2014; Yin, 2003). I have undertaken special care in designing and implementing the research process. The special care includes collecting extant literature (e.g. articles, chapters, and books) especially on CSR and its rigor that used in various disciplines ranging from medicine, political sciences, nursing to business management. Thereafter, I have carefully selected a number of studies that defined and used CSR design, and then completed the readings of them. Herewith, I present different kinds of research procedures propounded/used by case researchers.

Yin (2003) defined that the case study should answer how and why questions from the thick description of the case ... where the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context. It is mainly involved in three forms, namely exploratory (descriptive), evaluation, and hypotheses testing. Yin suggested few steps where a scholar should follow in his or her case research. The steps include develop theory—select cases, design data collection protocol—prepare individual case report—draw cross-case conclusions—modify theory—develop policy implications—and wide cross-case report. While, a paper published by Eisenhardt (1989) in the *Academy of Management Review* has changed the ground-reality of case research method and its importance in management discipline. Eisenhardt suggested a process of “building theory from case study research” includes getting started, selecting cases, crafting instruments and protocols, entering the field, analyzing data, shaping hypotheses, enfolding literature, and reaching closure (p. 533). Likewise, Larsson (1993) presented the procedure of case research design refers to (i) select a group of existing case studies relevant to the chosen research questions, (ii) design a coding scheme for systematic conversion of the qualitative case descriptions into quantified variables, (iii) use multiple-raters to code the cases and measure their inter-rater reliability, and (iv) statistically analyze the coded data (pp. 1516–1517). Similar to Yin, Gerring (2006) suggested a few important steps, such as, research questions, propositions, unit(s) of analysis, linking the data to the propositions, and develop the criteria for interpreting the findings. In a recent study, Hoon (2013, p. 523, 529) proposed eight steps of synthesizing existing case research findings to build theory: framing the research question, locating relevant research, inclusion criteria, extracting and coding data, analyzing on a case-specific level, synthesizing on an across-study level, building theory from meta-synthesis, and discussing the rigor limitations. Hence, it is also a fact that different researchers in different disciplines (e.g. medicine, business studies) have proposed and discussed, and defined the method by contrast to alternatives specific to their intellectual traditions (Outhwaite & Turner, 2007). While supporting this streak, Easterby-Smith, Golden-Biddle, and Locke (2008, p. 422) cited that the special issue of the *Administrative Science Quarterly* had focused on reclaiming qualitative methods for organizational research, in which the “guest editor pointed out the need for organization researchers to pursue approaches that would allow them to portray more closely the phenomena they wished to understand”.

I therefore perceive that case researchers have extensively used the Yin’s (1994, 2003) research procedure (based on primary data), and few scholars have developed different kind of research steps in particular research settings to achieve research objectives. With this in mind, I develop a set of “new case-research steps”, and conduct and infer the research implications using “archival data” (Figure 1). I define these steps as “Test-Tube typology” that has initiated and motivated by three key issues. First, the growing importance of management research in emerging economics and its implications to the real business world. Second, a number of senior scholars have pointed the thrust and emergence of theory development in emerging markets because they behave differently compared to developed markets. Finally yet importantly, the impracticality of primary data (e.g. interviews) has captivated me to think and design new strategies as well as to overcome research inadequacies in emerging economies like India. I strongly believe this kind of research strategy would suit research areas that shed light on interdisciplinary (e.g. mergers, joint ventures, and post-merger integration), and generalize research outcome to a larger population (e.g. service industries like hospitals and hotels).

4.1. Case development

Generally, a researcher is allowed to use CSR design depends upon research question, research objectives, and research situation in the given context (Ghauri & Firth, 2009). Case development is the foremost step of Test-Tube research design. It depicts that a case researcher should select few business events and make out whether the event or mix of events can help in writing an interesting story. Further, researcher should make sure whether the story fits to any theoretical framework in the existing literature (e.g. merger motives, internationalization, and market entry strategy). When such business event(s) fulfills these conditions, then researcher can collect all relevant information from various authenticated secondary sources (Reddy & Agrawal, 2012). Thus, authenticated source means company’s official website, annual reports, top-level management interviews broadcasted in

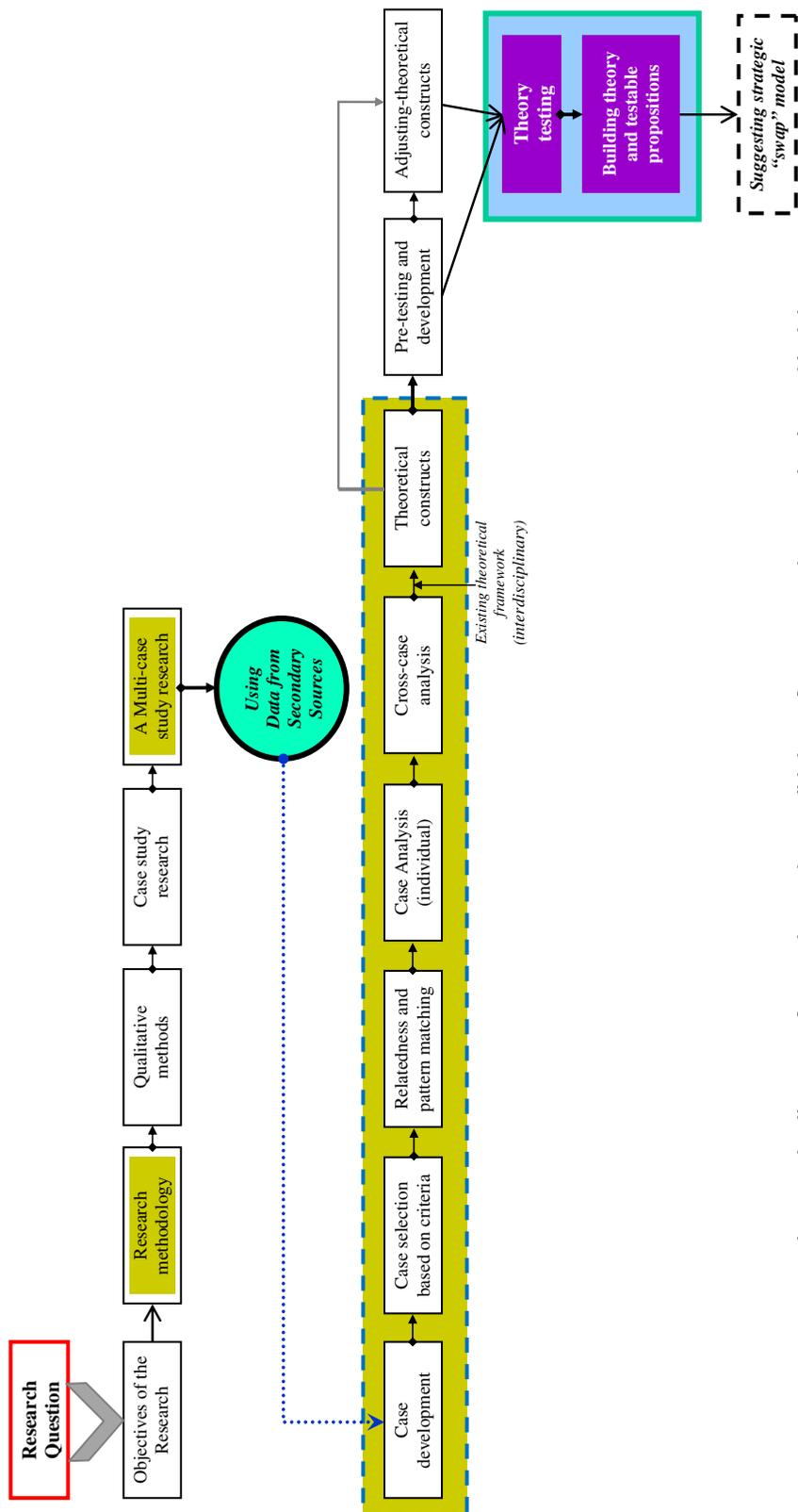


Figure 1. The discovery of Test-Tube typology: Build theory from case study research using archival data.

licensed national or international channels (e.g. audio and video), industry or trade association reports where the firm is a member of such non-profit organizations that are registered or formed with due government permission (e.g. Nasscom), registered national finance dailies (e.g. Financial Times), regulatory bodies or associations at both national and international (e.g. WTO, WHO, UNCTAD, ASEAN, SEBI), data providers include data warehouses (e.g. Factset, Compustat, CMIE), and registered stock brokers' news and reports, and referred journals or magazines. In some instances, researcher is allowed to access stock and company financials from registered stock exchanges and their affiliated institutions (e.g. NYSE, NASDAQ, BSE), leading finance websites (e.g. Financial Times, Bloomberg, Yahoo Finance), and consultancy firms (e.g. McKinsey, KPMG). Hence, it is very difficult to classify the secondary information because the wideness of secondary sources is vast compared to primary sources. Nevertheless, one should check whether the source is trustworthy or not, for example, researcher should not accept the data or news available on social sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blogs, and other self-websites. Thereafter, researcher should read and understand the information extracted from various sources, followed by writing a first draft of the case, cross-check the sources, and incorporate the peers' comments, if essential. After, one can publish the case study in referred case journals (e.g. Harvard Cases, The Case Centre; Nangia, Agarawal, Sharma, & Reddy, 2011; Reddy, Nangia, & Agrawal, 2012). Lastly, one should prepare case development table as part of the case study protocol in which it confirms the stylized facts on data collection, data sources, and time line of case writing, submission, and publication. Research quality and generalizability would enhance if sampling cases were published in referred case journals before being used them in CSR due to reviews and revisions, which is a part of investigator triangulation strategy (Stake, 1995). In special events, researchers may use published teaching cases in management research (Ambrosini, Bowman, & Collier, 2010). In sum, case researcher can develop cases based on archival data, which is an important strategy in CSR, that is, data triangulation (see Yin, 2003).

4.2. Case selection

Case selection plays a vital role in this method. One should select relevant or reaching closure case studies based on theoretical framework, and then check whether select cases are adequate to extend and advance the existing knowledge. In this vein, Eisenhardt (1989) suggested that researcher should remember two issues, namely when to stop adding cases, and when to stop iterating between theory and data. Eisenhardt also highlighted that one should stop adding cases when theoretical saturation is reached (p. 545). In fact, one should recognize the research question and objectives, because they strongly influence the number and choice of cases to be included (Ghauri & Firth, 2009, p. 32). It is also a fact that case selection is open to researcher interest that differ from one discipline/setting to other disciplines/settings. I admit that one should select cases, thereby make sure that established research objectives will be achieved, and help to generalize research outcome to the greater extent. At the same time, one may develop selection criteria to select relevant cases from the pooled number of cases. This process is commonly referred as "sampling cases".

4.3. Relatedness and pattern matching

It is worth stating that a researcher needs more efforts, time, and sound theoretical knowledge in order to find the "relatedness and pattern matching" across sampling cases. Thus, it will help a scholar in all the subsequent steps that are mandatory in this research design. Eisenhardt (1989) described that researchers should "look for the subtle similarities and differences between cases", and pointed that the "search for similarity in a seemingly different pair also can lead to more sophisticated understanding" (pp. 540–541). Likewise, Larsson (1993) suggested that one could draw a pool of managerially relevant findings through systematic analysis of patterns across cases (p. 1516). In a different way, Meyer (2001) mentioned that one should do "coding the data into phases and themes reflecting the contextual factors and features of integration". However, my approach is different from previous research designs, where in Miles and Huberman (1994) and Yin (1994) suggested that pattern-matching logic is one of the best strategies for comparative or cross-case analysis, which usually performed through coding (Matthyssens & Pauwels, 2000). Hence, I did it differently from the rules suggested for inductive case research (Yin, 1994). Following Maguire and

Phillips (2008) and Liu and Zhang (2014) approaches as well as using case development reports, I have organized the case information and other relevant data into a time-line or event history (chronologically: year-wise), followed by finding relevance and pattern matching in organized data (e.g. within case/across cases), emerging meaningful patterns, and refining patterns based on extant literature. While performing this action, I have incorporated the research supervisors' directions (e.g. Ghauri, 2004), which is an important task discussed in the investigator triangulation. Thereafter, I have used these patterns both in single-case analysis and in cross-case analysis (Bengtsson & Larsson, 2012; Geppert et al., 2013). In addition, few media-texts have directly used in case analysis and theory testing for meaningful synthesis (e.g. Halsall, 2008), and a great extent of media-texts have used for case development and publication task. Importantly, these patterns have helped me to test different management theories/theorems and find knowledge gaps in the existing literature for building new theory and offering testable propositions.

I define what relatedness and pattern matching are. First, relatedness means, "a process one adapts to conceptually intersectionalize the theoretical framework (e.g. interdisciplinary), further to explore the flexibility in it". Simply, case researchers should find relatedness and track changes across cases based on rich-text including theoretical backdrop and extant literature. Secondly, pattern matching means, "one should make out whether relatedness of one case is matching with other sampling cases, ensure that relatedness is significant across cases in the given phenomenon, and corroborate that adequacy to examine the cases with rich-text". Lastly, pattern matching across sampling cases is explored in view of sampling place. I have used both relatedness and pattern matching tasks in successive steps: case analysis and cross-case analysis.

4.4. Case analysis

Case writing, case development, case teaching using a theoretical model and case analysis has given importance in the social sciences and management literature. The purpose of case analysis is to find the problem in the given case, come across alternative solutions, and select the best possible alternative for the problem identified. In other words, case analysis is an in-depth investigation of single case or multiple cases, thereby aiming at locate and breakdown the problems for possible inferences in the organizational phenomenon. Peng (2004) mentioned that "firm-level analysis is heart of research enquiry". Hence, I have found that case researchers (based on primary data) used variety of techniques to complete this task. For instance, Eisenhardt (1989) cited that one might use "tabular displays and graphs to manage and present qualitative data, without destroying the meaning of the data through intensive coding". Similarly, in the context of international business, Ghauri (2004) suggested six methods to analyze cases, such as (i) clustering (classify cases based on common characteristics or relatedness), (ii) comparison (case assessment based on pattern seeking), (iii) matrices (infer and discuss the interrelationship between identified factors), (iv) coding (arrange the data with respect to concepts and themes), (v) decision tree (grounding a description of real-world decisions and actions coherently by using multiple cases), and (vi) chronologies (describe timeline of the events). Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) suggested that "thick description of case analysis does not refer to a voluminous, but to a verbalized interpretation that is able to crystallize the reasons behind the rich and multifaceted details of the case".

Captivating this, I have analyzed all sampling cases "individually"; an individual case analysis has performed before doing the cross-case analysis. I analyze each case based on relatedness and pattern matching observations. I also capture few micro (e.g. firm-level) and macro (e.g. economy-based) factors from the existing literature that match and explain the sampling cases phenomenon. I have adopted Ghauri's (2004) case analysis tools that include clustering, comparison, and chronologies in this research procedure. In sum, I have been conducted cross-data analysis, triangulation of data sources, and searching and linking of related meaningful constructs from the extant literature (Drori, Wrzesniewski, & Ellis, 2011).

4.5. Cross-case analysis

Cross-case analysis is the major task of multiple case study research design. It has received high-importance compare to single-case analysis in business management, particularly in cross-culture studies. Further, case researchers should emphasize to perform a case analysis across sampling cases based on sophisticated theoretical framework, relevant literature, and thereby meeting the guidelines of “relatedness and pattern matching” (Stake, 2006). In fact, it allows a researcher to delve the findings of the study through a systematic analysis in some depth (Byrne & Ragin, 2009). In a recent study, Stewart (2012) defined that “cross-case analysis involves generating a case-ordered descriptive matrix that establishes a basis for comparing the sampling cases on a number of factors”. More positively, the aim of cross-case or comparative case analysis is to “compare (or, replicate) the case phenomenon in a systematic way, to explore different dimensions of research issues” (Ghuri & Firth, 2009, p. 33). In this course, Druckman (2005) suggested few tasks include specify the research problem, define factors or variables, select appropriate cases for the controlled comparison, discover causal relations between various outcomes and configurations, and formulate the questions to be asked of each case. As such, Druckman suggestions would anticipate the research outcome of cross-case analysis and consider those tasks in my research process. Briefly, I analyze sampling cases across various theories and themes based on relatedness of given situation/pattern. For example, motives of cross-border inbound acquisitions, deal characteristics, financial information, corporate ownership, and prior acquisition experience are defined, compared across sampling cases.

4.6. Theoretical constructs

It is described in the CSR literature that a construct or a set of constructs is essential in theory testing and theory (or, model) development, particularly in strategic management context (Tsang, 2014a, 2014b). Importantly, case researcher should “add something new to the existing theory, or conceptual model, and/or define new theoretical constructs” (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). In the research setting, constructs help further in shaping hypotheses, which involve “refining the definition of the construct and building evidence which measures the construct in each case ... therefore, the evidence from diverse sources converges on a single, well-defined construct” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 541). In the extant explanation, I have understood that

Propositions state the relations among constructs that describe ‘hypotheses’ (specify the relations among variables). Further, a researcher may view the construct as a broad mental configuration of a given phenomenon, and variable as an operational configuration derived from a construct (Bacharach, 1989, p. 500).

Herewith, I define what theoretical constructs are. Thus, different constructs have developed based on the blend of theories and the extant empirical evidence. I mainly develop constructs with reference to various theories propounded in different subjects, for instance, institutional theory in organization studies. In addition, I also define new theoretical constructs in specific research settings when existing theories (constructs) are not suffice to explain or support the given phenomenon.

4.7. Pre-testing and development

It is important to note that case researchers should test relevant theories and constructs suggested in the existing literature, and develop a new theory or a conceptual model, thereby suggesting testable propositions before performing “theory testing”. Barkley (2006) mentioned that “the more ‘complicated’ the research issue, the greater the amount of time and resources required for research design ... and survey pre-testing”. A different research strategy that is crafted in my design is “pre-testing and development”. To do so, I have selected one out of three sampling cases, tested relevant theories and propounded a new theory and few propositions; together, have supported by the existing literature. Thereafter, I have decided to publish this pre-testing and development activity for two reasons, such as, to seek different opinions, comments, and suggestions from the respective field experts (e.g. case researchers in strategic management), and to strengthen the quality of my research design, and thereby validating and generalizing the findings, theory, and constructs to a

bigger population. I have completed this task and started communicating the paper to referred international journals. In sum, the whole process has undertaken approximately two years (Reddy, Nangia, & Agrawal, 2014a). Nevertheless, publishing it in a referred journal or book is not “compulsory” in this design, but in receipt of it keeps a researcher out of jeopardy or serious critiques. By doing this task, a case researcher could notice possible errors (e.g. partially false propositions) and redefine those mistakes in the final job.

4.8. Adjusting theoretical constructs

This task hints a researcher to relook the previous task (pre-testing and development) before performing subsequent tasks (theory testing and theory development). Thus, it has allowed (appealed) me to rethink, retest, and include extant theoretical framework. For example, I have re-reviewed and captivated some additional knowledge from the existing literature (organization studies, corporate finance), and then added those theories for performing the next task, that is, theory testing. On the other hand, I restudy, redefine, reframe, and extend the theory and testable propositions both for generalizing the results and for enchanting (or making) the framework likely to be “interdisciplinary”. However, I have adjusted and reworked in order to improve the quality and trustworthiness of the research (Reddy, 2015).

4.9. Theory testing

Theory testing is the milestone in theory building research in social sciences (general) and management (particular). In the extant CSR literature, I find valuable principles and fruitful suggestions for case researchers who aim to test existing theories and build a new theory. Eisenhardt (1989) suggested that

An essential feature of theory building is comparison of the emergent concepts, theory, or hypotheses with the extant literature ... that conflicts with the emergent theory, is important both for internal validity and generalizability, and for seeking opportunity from conflicting literature (p. 544).

Moreover, CSR design allows a researcher to integrate different theoretical perspectives, interventions, and outcomes (Thyer, 2001). Regarding the nature of testing in CSR, Barkley (2006) pointed that case researchers should “test causal relationships by comparing generalizations from case(s) findings with the existing theory”. Further, I notice that a number of earlier studies have performed tasks, such as, theory testing and hypothesis testing in the given research setting; hence, most of the work has reflected the Yin’s CSR design based on primary data (Yin, 2003). While, few studies have argued that case researchers were failed to test existing theories, concepts, or models carefully. For instance, Miller and Tsang (2011) argued that “scholars often fail to test theories rigorously due to four major barriers, namely the nature of the social phenomena that management researchers investigate, imprecise and fragmented theorizing, inadequate research designs and inevitable reliance upon untested assumptions”. They also stated the key reason that organizations are diverse, complex ... multiple and contingent causal processes (p. 140). In the recent literature, theory testing and theory development are considered as important research activities for creating new knowledge and they are exceptional in terms of rigor and contribution, specifically in international business and strategic management (Tsang, 2014b). I thus recognize that theory testing is the most careful step in theory building research and further, a researcher should test relevant existing theories before propounding a new theory, extending existing theory, advancing the understanding of earlier theoretical constructs, and/or suggesting a new conceptual model. In particular, this task permits case researchers to examine the sampling cases “deeply”.

Following the research question, I have surveyed and completed the readings of previous literature that precisely fits to the current research phenomenon. Nevertheless, it is one of the difficult and exhaustive tasks in CSR design where in to search, collect, read, and note the relevant studies when research context is interdisciplinary like mergers, acquisitions, and joint ventures. In particular, a case researcher should allocate more time and update the literature frequently. It also

infers that one should have considerable knowledge on publication industry, which allows him or her to know the most cited papers and to track the performance of journals across disciplines in the given sampling time. I have found abundant and diverse theories on mergers and acquisitions that developed in economics, finance, organization, strategy, and international business. Then, I have included additional theories other than theories used in pre-testing and development (Reddy et al., 2014a; Reddy, 2015). As such, testing additional theories allows a researcher to find most possible and relevant knowledge gaps, and to improve quality and rigor of the research.

4.10. Building theory and testable propositions

I have garnered the true meaning of theory while it is my first accountable job before putting any comment on theory development in the case research setting. Eisenhardt (1989) mentioned that theory building is a central activity in organizational research and it is particularly well suited to research areas for which existing theory seems inadequate (pp. 548–549). It is important to remind that *good theory must have explanatory power, and predictive and prescriptive validity* (as cited in Collinson & Rugman, 2010). I have found that different researchers define the theory differently based on context or phenomenon. For example,

It may be “viewed as a system of constructs and variables in which the constructs are related to each other by propositions and the variables are related to each other by hypotheses” (Bacharach, 1989, p. 498).

A systematically related set of statements, including generalizations that are empirically testable (as cited in Schöllhammer, 1994, p. 8).

It is emergent in the sense that it is situated in and developed by recognizing patterns of relationships among constructs within and across cases and their underlying logical arguments (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 25).

Early researchers have propounded theories by combining observations from previous literature, common sense, and experience (Eisenhardt, 1989). A theory also allows a case researcher to predict and explain the given context with better understanding of data collected, which is accepted as a contribution to knowledge (Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2007; Corley & Gioia, 2011; Cornelissen & Durand, 2014; Quinton & Smallbone, 2006). In essence, “theories are collections of constructs that are related to each other by propositions within a set of boundary assumptions and constraints” (Bacharach, 1989, pp. 496–511). More positively, theory building from single case or multiple cases is likely to have stronger internal validity, wider generalizability, and higher conceptual level, and novelty, testability, and empirical validity (Eisenhardt, 1989), and to make generalizations from the data (Quinton & Smallbone, 2006). In the international business research setting, a case researcher can develop a theory in a deductive mode (from the general to the particular) or in an inductive mode (from the particular to the general) (as cited in Schöllhammer, 1994, p. 8). However, scholars should perceive that the new knowledge (a continuous mapping of the empirical research) could be created (achieved) by connecting the ability of new theory to bridge the gap between two or more different theories (Bacharach, 1989, p. 511). In sum, I have understood that theory is a blend of theoretical constructs, which explains and interprets the given research based on insufficient literature, and is having strong capabilities include internal validity and generalization of findings.

Captivating this, I propose a new theory based on two strong fundamentals (Reddy et al., 2014a; Reddy, 2015). First, the characteristics, behavior, and prospects of emerging markets are significantly different from the development markets. Second, a call for thrust and emergency of theory building, because existing theories developed in western markets are inadequate to explain the phenomenon of emerging markets (e.g. Hoskisson et al., 2000). In fact, there is a lack of literature on foreign market entry models, particularly in emerging markets like India. All together, and other issues related to knowledge gaps in the existing literature have motivated me to develop new con-

structs within the emerging markets boundaries and constraints. The task “pre-testing and development” has given me the opportunity to relook, reframe, redefine, and extend the emergent theoretical framework.

4.11. Suggesting strategic “swap” model

The purpose of academic research is to explore or discover new findings, and to create and add new knowledge to the extant literature. In the management context, research is defined as an activity that generates original knowledge and contributes novel phenomena, theory, model, or theoretical constructs to the literature. In this vein, Buys (2007) defined that “a management investigation consists of the application of acquired knowledge to a specific management problem in an organization, whereas research is the generation of new knowledge generalizable to other environments” (p. 4). In Whetten (1989), the author pointed that “theoretical insights come from demonstrating how the addition of a new variable significantly alters our understanding of the phenomena by reorganizing the causal maps” (p. 493). For instance, besides theory testing and theory building tasks I have developed a conceptual model based on limitations of the existing models in M&A literature and barriers to entry in emerging economies. Buys (2007) described the model as “a graphical, mathematical, or schematic representation of a system of postulates (theory) data and inferences” (p. 6). Thus, I have suggested “swap” model mainly for filling the driving force of multinational enterprises and their entry into developing markets. As such, this task is an optional and leaving it to the researcher.

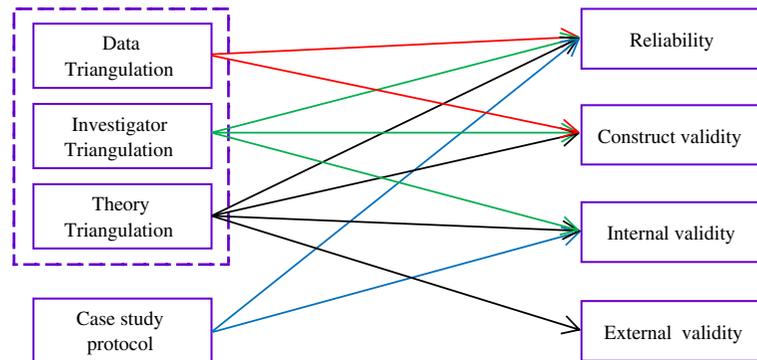
5. Strengthen the “Rigor”—Some ideas and discussions

It is worth highlighting that the quality of either qualitative research or quantitative research depends upon rigor (or, approachability) of the research performed by the researcher in a given setting (Yin, 1994, 2003). I strongly suggest that the quality of any research and its outcome not only depends upon rigor or openness but also depends upon quality (or, research excellence) of the researcher who conducted (e.g. Thyer, 2001), and the methodology chosen (e.g. Johnston, 2014; Kieser, Nicolai, & Seidl, 2015; Scandura & Williams, 2000). On one hand, quantitative scholars argue that most qualitative studies lack rigor both in approachability and in generalizability, and even are very difficult to measure the quality of its outcome. Conversely, in the past and recent times, qualitative as well as case researchers have defended the regrettable comments, and therefore improved the quality of study, particularly the methodology rigor (Hoon, 2013). At the same time, methodology rigor not only improves the quality of research but also advances the given field and literature (Ketchen, Boyd, & Bergh, 2008). Further, it would become more acceptable and publishable report when a researcher improves the transparency (Ghuri & Firth, 2009). While achieving this, Yin (2003) also stressed the quality of case research in terms of “reliability and validity” in which he brought them from experimental studies.

By contrast, it has been noticed that qualitative research reports produced in organization and management are weakened by taking a defensive approach to justifying the choice of qualitative methods (Rosaline, 2008), and lacks rigor and objectivity of the quantitative approach (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003). In fact, there is a serious shortage of high-impact research in management studies (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013; Zoogah et al., *in press*). Therefore, rigor is very important element in measuring the quality of management research, but imposes discipline that restricts the scholar and reduces creativity (Donaldson, Qiu, & Luo, 2013). Nevertheless, qualitative researchers should minimize misrepresentation and misunderstanding, including through triangulating data sources and then presenting a “substantial body of uncontested description” (as cited in Conrad & Serlin, 2006; Rosaline, 2008).

Most quantitative studies have used reliability and validity as strategies to measure the quality of research outcome, and they have reconsidered in qualitative research with naturalistic approach because they are rooted in positivist perspective (Golafshani, 2003). Historically, Cook and Campbell (1976) proposed four types of validity: internal validity, external validity, construct validity, and reliability. In 1981, Guba referred validity in qualitative research as credibility, which infers truthfulness

Figure 2. Strengthen the “Rigor” of the case study research: A Test-Tube typology.



of findings (as cited in Thyer, 2001). Whereas, Lincoln and Guba (1985) have developed alternative strategy in which they replaced internal validity by credibility, external validity (transferability), reliability (dependability), and objectivity (confirmability) (as cited in Poortman & Schildkamp, 2012, p. 1728). Thereafter, Yin (1994, p. 18) has brought those quality measures to improve the generalizability of case research design. In addition, the quality of study can be measured upon its objectivity and generalizability (Amis & Silk, 2008), and trustworthiness that extends validity (Conrad & Serlin, 2006). More specifically, explanation to the reliability and validity in the research setting depends on the skills of the researcher (Thyer, 2001), and “generalization is restricted at the point where homogeneity of one kind or another breaks down” (Byrne & Ragin, 2009). In a recent study, Gibbert and Ruigrok (2010) examined the “rigor types” by content analyzing all cases appeared in 10 management journals during 1995–2000. They found that very few scholars have discussed the rigor criteria in the positivist approach, prioritized rigor types including strategies for ensuring internal and construct validity than for external validity and reported some emergent ideas (setbacks and serendipities) used in the research. I thus recognize that the quality of any research depends upon strategies such as reliability, construct validity, internal validity, and external validity (Figure 2).

5.1. Reliability

I understand that reliability is a prerequisite for validity that refers to “the degree to which other researchers performing similar observations in the field ... would generate similar interpretations and results” (as cited in Thyer, 2001). In qualitative research, it has been replaced by dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In other words, it implies the condition that interpretations from different researchers in the given research setting should be “similar and harmonious”. It also confirms that data collection is appropriate with research objectives (Poortman & Schildkamp, 2012). Albeit, it is very difficult to check the reliability of case study research and its design performed by the researcher compare to any other empirical research. It is because of two reasons, firstly the CSR design largely practiced by case researcher based on rich-text or thick description, and secondly the inferences derived from various sources do not come closure due to authenticity and openness of sources (primary and secondary). However, one could overcome this problem by supporting well-structured case study protocol, and suggested few strategies such as using multiple researchers, multiple sources of data, peer review, and thick description (Poortman & Schildkamp, 2012, pp. 1732–1733).

With this in mind, I have checked the reliability of the research by using three triangulation strategies. First, the data used for my research are secondary sources in which data have been collected from various authenticated sources, for example, registered finance dailies, magazines, and reports; official data and annual reports of sampling cases during the sampling period. Data triangulation in my research is strong and approachability. Lastly, I use both multiple researchers’ views and thick description, which are part of the investigator triangulation and theory triangulation, respectively. Following the Poortman and Schildkamp (2012) views, I have carefully recorded and presented the research events carried out during sampling time in the so-called “case study protocol” (Yin, 2003).

5.2. Construct validity

The second quality measure of qualitative research is construct validity, which is essential in case study research (Yin, 2003). It plays a vital role in theory testing and theory building using case studies in social sciences and management research (Eisenhardt, 1989). The purpose of the construct validity is to define the theoretical construct and distinguish it from other constructs, and to confirm that the constructs are developed using multiple sources of evidence include multiple viewpoints within and across the data sources (Meyer, 2001, pp. 345–346). Similarly, Poortman and Schildkamp (2012) described that “qualitative studies should use multiple sources of evidence in terms of data, methods and preferably investigators to reduce bias in the research context”. From these views, I have understood that construct validity is crucial task in theory building research that strengthens by multiple sources of evidence and thereby confirming that theoretical constructs are developed based on them. Whereas, multiple sources of evidence refer to “triangulation”. In my research, three triangulation strategies have been used to check the validity as well as to improve the rigor. The strategies include data triangulation, investigator triangulation, and theory triangulation (Stake 1995; Yin, 2003). For example, I have experienced a significant time factor that consumed to publish all sampling cases and therefore, improved the quality of cases in different rounds of revisions with case journals. In this process, I have acknowledged the reviewers for suggesting valuable comments that significantly improved the quality of sampling cases. The publishing task has appreciably improved the chances of conducting case study research in emerging markets context. For instance, testable propositions are developed on the basis of case evidences, and extant theoretical framework and empirical findings. Nevertheless, I state that the rigor of any research not only depends upon various measures but also depends upon intelligence, timing, and action of the researcher.

5.3. Internal validity

The third important quality measure of research is internal validity. It is worth citing that senior case researchers have emphasized the need of measuring internal validity and its contribution to the CSR design in social sciences and management. It is also called as “logical validity” (Cook & Campbell, 1979) and “credibility” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which states the charisma of causal relationships between variables and findings (Gibbert & Ruigrok, 2010). Few scholars defined that “the extent to which researchers’ observations and measurements are accurate representations of some reality” (as cited in Thyer, 2001). In other words, it can be described as “the equivalence of research results with the objective reality” (Bitsch, 2005). In a recent study, Poortman and Schildkamp (2012) suggested that “qualitative researchers should highlight major patterns of similarities and differences between respondents’ experiences and ... have to eliminate alternative causal interpretations by verbal argumentation, supplementary data, comparison, thick description and peer debriefing”. I hereby perceive that internal validity is a quality measure where the case researcher should be transparent and openness while making casual relationships between variables and findings and such relationships have to establish based on extant theoretical background, peer review comments, additional data, and personal arguments. I also state that sophisticated triangulation (e.g. investigator and theory) would suffice to check the internal validity of case research. Besides, one can use case study protocol to confirm that the research has been conducted “transparently with approachability”.

Captivating this, I have checked the internal validity of my research and its implementation before making any general conclusions. The main checks include investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and case study protocol. For example, I have followed the ideas and suggestions (received from research supervisors, research committee, peers, and anonymous reviewers) while establishing casual relationships between case findings, cross-case analysis, and previous theoretical framework. Based on the established relationships, I have identified knowledge gap, and therefore developed theory and testable propositions. It infers that the case researcher has wisely used both investigator and theory triangulation strategies. In addition, I have recorded all kinds of research activities (e.g. sources of secondary data, data classification, case writing, development, and publication) to confirm that the research work was conducted manifestly, and I presented this task in the form of “case study protocol” (Reddy, 2015). I have used the task “pre-testing and development”

as one of the tools to check internal validity of the research. Thus, the task has allowed me to deeply study the further extant literature, correct the mistakes (e.g. redefining and extending the theory and propositions), and therefore make easy of things in the research setting.

5.4. Extern validity/generalizability

Last but important, the qualitative measure of research is external validity or generalizability. It is replaced by “transferability” in few social science studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It refers to that “determining the extent to which findings can be applied in other contexts or with other respondents, the similarity between sending and receiving context” (Bitsch, 2005, p. 85). In fact, researchers who might use different methods to check the validity of research that result both in robust and generalizable conclusions (Scandura & Williams, 2000). Regarding the importance of external validity in case research, Poortman and Schildkamp (2012) suggested that one should provide thick description (time, place, context, and culture), sampling strategy and its constraints, connect the findings to previous theories and constructs, and use the replication logic (pp. 1734–1736). In a recent study, Tsang (2014a) defined the generalization as a “general statement or proposition made by drawing an inference from observation of the particular”. It infers that case researcher should be a critical realist view while generalizing the conclusions. From this, I have understood that external validity is the important quality-measure strategy to generalize (and, transfer) the case findings including new theoretical constructs to other relevant disciplines in the given research setting.

I have made generalizable conclusions based on various techniques so far followed in the case research. For instance, I have widely surveyed the extant literature, carefully completed the readings of relevant studies, logically connected different theoretical constructs garnered from different disciplines, seriously tested the existing theories, and then, developed new theory and testable propositions for initiating future research. Thick description is a blend of casual relationships established between different disciplines, which have become “interdisciplinary research”. I argue that the research carried out using interdisciplinary literature may have more strength in generalizing the case findings compared to individual disciplines, and improve synthesizing the informational inputs (Schöllhammer, 1994). In this vein, it is worth putting that “conflicting literature presents more opportunity while building theories from case studies, and thick description enhances the confidence of research findings” (Eisenhardt, 1989). Furthermore, I have been used data triangulation as a tool to generalize the case findings, because data are a mix of secondary sources such as company’s annual reports, research reports, finance dailies, magazines, institutional and regulation information, and so forth.

6. Limitations and suggestions

It is my call, thereby accepting that limitations are “hidden threats” of qualitative research. Stake portrayed that “qualitative research as a subjective form of inquiry tied to the perspectives and often to the personal interests of the researcher” (as cited in Scholz & Tietje, 2002). Gillham (2000) described that “qualitative is one of those terms in research that tend to faze people”. At the outset, I have the same opinion where “quality assurance or rigor of the research depends on its thick-analysis and reporting of findings” (Bitsch, 2005). Despite the fact that qualitative research takes much longer time compared to any type of empirical research and therefore importantly needs thick data, rigorous analysis from all dimensions, and energy (e.g. Willis, 2007). Regarding publication opportunity, Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) pointed that case researchers do face lot of difficulties and overcome many criticisms from the reviewers even to publish one case-based research paper in an international referred journal, which has median-impact factor. Few authors argued that qualitative research lacks quality in terms of reliability and internal validity, is “still” a matter of discussion. They also cited that “complex qualitative research relies less on standardized procedures of data gathering and analysis is not an argument; it is a deficit” (Poortman & Schildkamp, 2012, p. 1730). Scholars also cited that qualitative research (idiographic) is aimed to comprehend rich-theoretical description and to offer testable theoretical constructs or propositions compared to quantitative research (nomothetic), but it is not intended to test any hypotheses using statistical tools for empirical generalizations; nevertheless, nomothetic scholars do question on reliability and validity of the idiographic research results (Bengtsson & Larsson, 2012).

In the earlier study, it is mentioned that “qualitative measures are often classified as ‘second rate’ by universities, particularly management departments” (Gummesson, 1991). Mickelson and Worley (2003) suggested that CSR method has “an inability to examine cross-sectional data patterns and to generalize the findings to the larger population”. I hereby perceive that qualitative research lacks rigor including data collection and analysis, and is inferior to quantitative research. Hence, I argue that empirical research deals with numerical data and analyzes the data using sophisticated technical tools, and allows a researcher to measure the quality of such study based on various statistical tools. While, a researcher does the empirical analysis job in US or India and the results are similar because the data-set is numeric. Albeit, one cannot bring this procedure to qualitative research. For instance, the interpretation of interview data is different from the view of US researcher compared to Indian researcher, and setting standards for such kind of data are hard and extraneous due to differences in economy, culture, and institutional rules. Therefore, I suggest one should continue and do research based on his or her ability and thinking (Willis, 2007), and may use a mix of methods (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

In light of CSR design, Yin (1984) stated that case method has traditionally been *stereotyped as a weak sibling* among social sciences research. Eisenhardt (1989) argued that there are no set of standards and procedures to measure the quality or rigor. The author also mentioned that case researchers might lose their sense of proportion as they confront vivid, voluminous data ... the theory describes a very idiosyncratic phenomenon (p. 547). Based on the extant survey, I re-present some authors’ views on CSR design. The views include case study—is subjective, is exploratory, single case is not suffice to generalize, lacks rigor (e.g. reliability, credibility, transferability), takes more time for data analysis and interpretation, is biased and strongly influenced by the researcher (e.g. Byrne & Ragin, 2009; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Ghauri & Firth, 2009; Patton & Appelbaum, 2003; Piekkari, Plakoyiannaki, & Welch, 2010; Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2004; Teegavarapu & Summers, 2008). Furthermore, Ghauri and Firth (2009, p. 39) posed a comment that “a case-based research paper being published in ranked journals is insignificant”. [In my view] This is because of serious issues connected with citations, impact factor, and journal rankings (e.g. Financial Times Top-45 journals in business and economics).

On the other hand, I have found a few favorable views and suggestions to improve the CSR application. For instance, case researchers can mitigate the risks and generalize the findings to a larger population by adding more number of cases in the given research setting (Barkley, 2006; Yin, 1981). Similarly, the credibility and trustworthiness of case research can be enhanced by doing negative case analysis (as cited in Thyer, 2001). In particular, Flyvbjerg (2006) broadly discussed the “five common misunderstandings about case study method” and thereby offered suggestions to improve the rigor. Nevertheless, it is “often a victim of negative criticism, shown that major objections to CSR are invalid” (Teegavarapu & Summers, 2008). With this, I realize that CSR is a lengthy work compared to other qualitative and empirical methods, lacks rigor and therefore, new case researchers should give the importance to quality measures while using various triangulation strategies. Though, one should not stop using CSR as a tool in academic research.

Despite the general criticisms on qualitative research and following emergent idiographic principles, I highlight that best principles and standards (except, interview data) of CSR design has been used in the current research phenomenon. In my research, I could not use the interview method to collect primary data where it is described as a prerequisite in CSR design (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). To overcome this problem and thereby understanding the emerging markets context, I have developed a new set of procedures based on archival data to implement the actual guidelines within the boundaries and developed new theory and testable propositions. However, I admit the personal jeopardy that some text of secondary sources may not be authenticated and lack quality compare to primary data, and interpretation of such secondary data creates biasness and allows a researcher to modify the data and analysis. In other words, data from secondary sources (e.g. finance dailies) might be false or pertained errors, which typically affect research procedures, for instance, establishing casual relationship between different theoretical frameworks and theory testing. Nevertheless, I have prevailed over these issues by creating two research strategies, namely sophisticated thick description cum triangulation and pre-testing and development. I have not been used any

qualitative research software (e.g. NVivo) while analyzing the data and making casual links. In sum, limitations always exist in qualitative research, particularly case study method and thus responding to such limitations depends upon the quality of researcher.

7. Concluding remarks

I hereby re-present the novel comments advocated by previous social science and idiographic researchers. A point to remember—good academic research should overcome the double hurdle of rigor and relevance (as cited in Collinson & Rugman, 2010). Conrad and Serlin (2006) mentioned that qualitative scholars always have done more, particularly significant applied work include case study research, and suggested to do more comprehensive and rigorous work within the researcher interest and setting. More positively, Flyvbjerg (2006) concluded that “good social science research is problem driven and not methodology driven” (p. 242). Bengtsson and Larsson (2012) mentioned that the lack of support for the hypotheses ... there has not been any single best-case design to achieve high publication status. Though, the positive point is that case-based papers have lower submission rate, but no higher rejection rate.

I admit that the thick methodological description presented herewith based on extant review of social science research in general and management in particular. I have taken much longer time to understand the purpose of case study method and its application, relevance, and contribution to the management discipline. I have implemented the best standards (except, primary data) of CSR method in my research, and thereby developed a new case research design to overcome the barriers (e.g. conducting interviews) exhibited in emerging markets. Based on this typology, I have created an “interdisciplinary research” impression in the given phenomenon, for instance, critical analysis of the institutional role and political intervention and its affect on cross-border inbound acquisitions. I have deeply discussed the quality measures of CSR such as reliability, construct validity, internal validity, and external validity, and limitations of new case research design. Finally yet importantly, a new set of case research procedures, that is, Test-Tube typology, not only help researchers in management and other social sciences but also help in advancing the current state of management literature on emerging markets.

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Notes

1. Grounded theory is a conceptual approach in qualitative research and is being used for “developing inductive theories that are grounded in systematically gathered

and analyzed data, which is also a form of an inductive research” (Bitsch, 2005, p. 77). Glaser and Strauss (1967) originally discovered it in 1967 in which this approach argues that a researcher should build inductive theories from empirical data where the data should pertain to the particular research setting.

2. As cited in Perecman and Curran (2006).

3. Case survey method (CSM) is a form of meta-analysis, and allows a researcher quantitatively to pool information from a large sample of cases that blends both course-grained methods (e.g. cross-sectional analysis) and fine-grained methods (e.g. individual cases). In particular, it is an alternative method to questionnaire design that is useful in studying in-depth complex organizational issues across international borders (as cited in Larsson & Lubatkin, 2001, pp. 1582–1583).

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