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Case Study Research in Accounting

David J. Cooper and Wayne Morgan

SYNOPSIS: We describe case study research and explain its value for developing theory and informing practice. While recognizing the complementary nature of many research methods, we stress the benefits of case studies for understanding situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict. We introduce the concept of *phronesis*—the analysis of what actions are practical and rational in a specific context—and indicate the value of case studies for developing, and reflecting on, professional knowledge. Examples of case study research in managerial accounting, auditing, and financial accounting illustrate the strengths of case studies for theory development and their potential for generating new knowledge. We conclude by disputing common misconceptions about case study research and suggesting how barriers to case study research may be overcome, which we believe is an important step in making accounting research more relevant.

INTRODUCTION

Accounting research is periodically challenged about its practical relevance and its progressive scientific achievements (Reiter and Williams 2002; Hopwood 2007). Case studies can help researchers respond to these challenges and contribute to relevant knowledge. We use examples from financial and managerial accounting and auditing to show the value of case studies in making accounting research matter, both for the development of theory and for improving practice. In so doing, we identify four types of case study and show how each type can enhance accounting research and practice. We conclude by reflecting on some of the reasons that case study research may in fact be discouraged, and suggest some avenues to address this situation.

Most accountants are familiar with case studies in relation to teaching. They provide vivid examples that can be used for many purposes, not least to generate an appreciation of the way a general principle can be applied in specific, and often complex, settings. In this paper we concentrate on case studies for research purposes, showing how the benefits that are widely recognized for teaching purposes can also enhance accounting research. A crucial difference between teaching and research-oriented case studies is the central role of theory in the latter. Moreover, we show how research-oriented case studies are valuable for practitioners.

David J. Cooper is a Professor and Wayne Morgan is a Ph.D. student, both at the University of Alberta.

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Accounting Research Paper Example

Geoffrey Whittington



Accounting Research Paper Example:

Two Hundred Years of Accounting Research Richard Mattessich, 2007-11-15 This is the first and only book to offer a comprehensive survey of accounting research on a broad international scale for the last two centuries Its main emphasis is on accounting research in the English German Italian French and Spanish language areas it also contains chapters dealing with research in Finland the Netherlands Scand *Handbook of Research Methods in Corporate Social Responsibility* David Crowther, Linne Lauesen, 2017-12-29 Corporate social responsibility now touches upon most aspects of the interaction between business and society The approaches taken to research in this area are as varied as the topics that are researched yet this is the first book to address the whole range of methods available The book identifies the methods available evaluates their use and discusses the circumstances in which they might be appropriate It also includes forward thinking guidance from experienced academics on the future directions of research in the area [The Real Life Guide to Accounting Research](#) Christopher Humphrey, Bill H.K. Lee, 2007-11-29 The Real Life Guide to Accounting Research is a book that goes behind the more official presentations and accounts of research methods to explore the lived experiences joys and mistakes of a wide range of international researchers principally working in the fields of accounting and finance but also in management economics and other social sciences The authors of the articles in this book address a wide range of issues and obstacles that they have confronted at various stages in their respective research careers In reflecting on their personal experiences they provide practical guidance on how to overcome the types of problems that typically confront researchers in their day to day work Practical tips on how to undertake research and get findings published Research project management skills International and interdisciplinary perspectives **Memorial Articles for 20th Century American Accounting Leaders** Stephen Zeff, 2016-03-31 This collection of memorial articles and selected obituaries highlights the careers and contributions to accounting practice the accounting profession and the accounting literature of leading American figures in the 20th century The memorial articles do much more than recite their subject s career More importantly they discuss and assess their subject s role in influencing the course of accounting practice and the profession as well as the evolution of their influential writings revealing the names of the accounting leaders and leading thinkers of the past century Memorial Articles for 20th Century American Accounting Leaders is useful in providing students and young researchers with a rich source of intelligence on the leaders who have established norms of practice advanced the profession and set the terms of debate in the literature leaders who are cited and even quoted but who are known mostly as names without a full bodied treatment of their backgrounds and broader roles in shaping the accounting literature [Accounting Education Research](#) Richard M.S. Wilson, 2015-04-10 An annual prize is awarded for the best paper appearing in Accounting Education an international journal and this book contains the prize winning papers for every year from 1992 to 2012 The journal s primary mission since the first issue was published in March 1992 has been to enhance the educational base of accounting practice and all the papers

in this book relate to that mission These papers reporting on research studies undertaken by accounting education scholars from around the world build on research findings from the broader domain of education scholarship and embrace a wide array of topics including curriculum development pedagogic innovation improving the quality of learning and assessing learning outcomes Of particular interest are three themes each of which runs through several of the papers students approaches to learning and learning style preferences ethics and moral intensity and innovation within the accounting curriculum Accounting educators will find many ideas in the book to help them in enriching their work and accounting education researchers will be able to identify many points of departure for extending the studies on which the papers report whether comparatively or longitudinally This book is a compilation of papers originally published in Accounting Education an international journal

The Routledge Companion to Accounting Communication Lisa Jack, Jane Davison, Russell Craig, 2013-05-02 One of the prime purposes of accounting is to communicate and yet to date this fundamental aspect of the discipline has received relatively little attention The Routledge Companion to Accounting Communication represents the first collection of contributions to focus on the power of communication in accounting The chapters have a shared aim of addressing the misconception that accounting is a purely technical number based discipline by highlighting the use of narrative visual and technological methods to communicate accounting information The contents comprise a mixture of reflective overview stinging critique technological exposition clinical analysis and practical advice on topical areas of interest such as The miscommunication that preceded the global financial crisis The failure of sustainability reporting The development of XBRL How to cut clutter With an international coterie of contributors including a communication theorist a Big Four practitioner and accounting academics this volume provides an eclectic array of expert analysis and reflection The contributors reveal how accounting communications represent or misrepresent the financial affairs of entities thus presenting a state of the art assessment on each of the main facets of this important topic As such this book will be of interest to a wide range of readers including postgraduate students in management and accounting established researchers in the fields of both accounting and communications and accounting practitioners

Handbook of Management Accounting Research Christopher S. Chapman, Anthony G. Hopwood, Michael D. Shields, 2006-12-08 Volume one of the Handbooks of Management Accounting Research sets the context for both Handbooks with three chapters outlining the historical development of management accounting as a discipline and as a practice in three broad geographic settings The bulk of the first volume then draws together a series of contributions that analyse the scholarly literature in terms of distinct intellectual and theoretical social science perspectives The volume includes a chapter which looks at work informed by psychology as a base discipline The volume also includes a set of chapters that seek to evaluate and explain issues of research method for the different approaches to research found within management accounting Special pricing available if purchased as a set with Volume 2 Documents the scholarly management accounting literature Publishing both in print and

online through Science Direct International in scope **Research in Accounting Regulation** Gary Previts,2006-01-27 The scope of service provided by professional accountants is influenced by legislation and case law as well as the dictates of a variety of government and private sector agencies including State Boards of Accountancy Academic Accreditation Bodies the United States Securities and Exchange Commission the Public Accounting Oversight Board independent standard setting bodies such as the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board US the Financial Accounting Standards Board US and the International Accounting Standards Board These entities and self regulatory organizations such as U S State Societies of CPAs and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and equivalent and emerging national bodies that exist in most developed and developing countries are among the emerging entities which attempt to coordinate the activities of professional accountants among sovereign nations It is important for academics students practitioners regulators and researchers to consider and study the role and relationship of such bodies with the practice and content of our discipline Research in Accounting Regulation seeks high quality manuscripts which address accounting regulatory policy broadly defined including 1 self regulatory activities 2 case law and litigation 3 legislation and government regulation 4 the economics of regulation of markets and disclosure including modeling 5 matters involving the structure of education licensing and accreditation The editors encourage submission of original empirical behavioral or applied research manuscripts which consider strategic and policy implications for regulation regulatory models and markets It is intended for individual researchers practitioners regulators and students of accountancy who desire to increase their understanding of the regulation of accountancy **Profitability, Accounting Theory and Methodology** Geoffrey Whittington,2007-06-11 An important scholar in the history of accounting Geoffrey Whittington s numerous articles cover a broad spectrum of the field and are both sharply insightful and extremely significant He has made important contributions to the topics of inflation accounting accounting theory and methodology and standard setting and he has conducted a number of valuable empirical studies This remarkable collection pulls together essays and articles and encompasses his work on empirical studies based on company accounts specification of empirical models price change accounting taxation and regulation and regulation of accounting and auditing Accompanied by a new introduction and conclusion this significant volume will be extremely useful for historians of accounting as well as accountancy practitioners and researchers The Economics of Auditing Dan A. Simunic,2024-12-12 The financial information provided to governments creditors investors etc by businesses has been verified by auditors since ancient times In its modern form the independent public accounting profession has its roots in 19th century Scotland A distinctive feature of this profession is that it consists of private for profit businesses operating as sole practitioners partnerships but mostly as large accounting firms The question naturally arises why should users of financial information provided by private for profit firms place trust in the verification of that information by other private for profit firms This is the interesting and complex economic issue that underlies research in what has come to be called the economics

of auditing The author is one of the first researchers in this area This book traces the development of this important stream of research that applies economic analysis to the study of financial statement audits by professional public accounting firms It offers a narrative commentary along with a series of previously unpublished papers that the author presented during the 1970 s at Accounting Research workshops at the University of Chicago as part of his dissertation research that ultimately led to one of the bedrock papers in the field It provides an explanation and discussion of the economic regulatory and research environment at that time The book concludes with a discussion of important but currently unanswered questions in the field that flow from the author s thesis research but remain unresolved It will be of significant interest to advanced students and academics who are engaged in developing their own research programs as well as to any researcher who is working in the area of the economics of auditing

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