

# **CASE STUDY METHOD AND RESEARCH DESIGN: FLEXIBILITY OR AMBIGUITY FOR THE NOVICE RESEARCHER?**

*By Dr Susan Carter, University of Southern Queensland*

*Case study is prominent in qualitative research literature, yet the methodologists do not have a full consensus on whether it is an approach, a method, a methodology or a design. Perhaps this flexibility contributes to ambiguity for the burgeoning researcher. The works of prominent methodologists, namely Robert Yin, Sharan Merriam, Robert Stake are explored as I attempt to define case study and then explain how I have utilised 'An Interactive Model of Research Design' (Maxwell, 2009) as a 'road map' for engaging case study to investigate current practices in inclusivity and wellbeing. My contribution is to be a provocateur and explore the question: how do you surface deep knowledge in your interview participants? This chapter is designed to contribute knowledge to the field of research, specifically methodological information for the novice researcher considering using case study as a research method. Dually this chapter seeks to bring into focus examples of case study method applied to explore inclusion and wellbeing.*

**KEY WORDS:** Case study methodology, inclusion, research design

## **INTRODUCTION**

Case study research can be viewed as complex to grasp for the beginning researcher as there is a plethora of literature exploring case study as a method in social inquiry (Stake, 1978), case study as a methodology (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Stake, 1995), case study design (Yin, 2003); and case study as an approach (Maton & Salem 1995; Yazan, 2015). Research methodologists as yet, do not have accord on the design and implementation of case study (Yazan, 2015). This raises the question of what exactly is case study. According to Thomas (2011) case study is a common approach with qualitative researchers as it offers methodological flexibility allowing for the utilisation of different paradigmatic positions. Hyett, Kenny, and Dickson-Swift (2014) suggest it also offers research design, and methods flexibility.

This chapter begins by exploring what case study is and when it should be used. The research design framework is then presented and the five components of the research design are explored: goals; conceptual framework; research questions; method; and validity. The process of theory development, the writing up of theory, and theory reflection are then explained and supported with from studies into inclusion and wellbeing. The significant and limitations of utilizing case study are then unpacked. The chapter concludes with a summary of the purpose of utilising case study together with An Interactive Research Design (Maxwell 2009).

## **BACKGROUND**

This chapter explores three research problems: what is case study?; how does it link to research design?; and when and why should be used? I have structured this chapter according to the thinking process that I engaged in when trying to make sense of case study and considering the complexity of context where main stream schools were exploring meaningful engagement with students with disabilities, learning difficulties and special needs. The literature used terms like method and methodology interchangeably so trying to obtain conceptual clarity involved a great deal of reading and reflection. I battled with questions like: what exactly is case study? What data collection and analysis methods are used? How do I actually do a case study? To use an analogy, I needed a road map in order to navigate to my destination. That road map for me, for making sense of and doing case study, was An Interactive Model of Research Design (Maxwell, 2009) which provided me with the basis for understanding all of connections that shaped my case study research. It is this journey into knowing that I wish to share in this chapter.

## WHAT IS CASE STUDY

The literature on case study at times appears confusing. The first step in utilising case study was a journey into knowing and understanding that there are different trains of thought about case study. In exploring these different trains of thought I needed to consider which one best linked to my educational field of study and my philosophical orientation. Baxter and Jack (2008) suggest there are only two forms of case study: one put forward by Stake (1995) and the other by Yin (2003, 2006). Further to this Yazan (2015) suggests an additional approach used by Merriam (1998). The approach that each theorist takes in outlining case study is underpinned by a particular philosophical stance and the novice researcher needs to firstly understand which philosophical orientation best suits their own study.

Interpretivism and positivism are two approaches to research methods in sociology. Cavaye (1996) suggests that they can be present simultaneously while Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) suggest that constructivist and interpretivists (sometimes termed as qualitative purists) reject positivism.

Stake (1995) sees case study research as underpinned by a viewpoint that “knowledge is constructed rather than discovered” (p. 99). This approach “recognises the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning, but it does not reject outright some notion of objectivity” and is interpretive (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 10). In general terms constructivism is built upon the notion of a social construction of reality (Searle, 1997). Reality is therefore dependent on one’s perspective where researchers are interpreters and collectors of interpretations where they report their view of the constructed reality or knowledge that they assemble through their inquiry (Yazan, 2015).

Yin (2003) has a differing philosophical stance that is not overtly stated but embedded in his statements and assumptions where he demonstrates positivistic leanings (Yazan, 2015). Crotty (1998) explains that researchers of a positivistic philosophical position focus on “established facts, or at least as close to established fact as [their] research has enabled [them] to reach,” (p. 41). According to Yin (2003) the case study researcher is supposed to “maximize four conditions related to design quality: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. How investigators deal with these aspects of quality control” is seen as the ‘yardstick’ for case study (p. 19). In assuming positivistic leanings Yin is fore fronting objectivity and validity.

The philosophical underpinnings of case study as suggested by Merriam (1998) seems more similar to Stake’s stance than Yin’s (Yazan, 2015). For this reason some researchers may align her work to Stake’s, and therefore see that case study research has only two trains of specific thought (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Merriam (1998) can also be seen to approach case study from a constructivism orientation as she suggested “the key philosophical assumption upon which all types of qualitative research are based is the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds” (p. 6).

As the researcher I pondered the concept of reality and decided, like Stake I perceive reality as being constructed by people from their own individual or shared perspectives as they interact in their specific contexts. According to Stake (1995) the case is “a specific, a complex, functioning thing,” more specifically “an integrated system” which “has a boundary and working parts” and is purposive {in social sciences and human services}” (p. 2). A case need not be a single person, but could include a program, a collection, a responsibility or even a population, nevertheless researchers should inquire into it “as an object rather than a process” (Stake, 1995, p. 2). However, formulating what the case is (unit of study) can be difficult and Stake (1995) suggests determining boundaries in order for the study to remain realistic in scope. Baxter and Jack (2008) outline suggestions on ways to bind a case: “(a) by time and place (Creswell, 2003); (b) time and activity (Stake [sic]); and (c) by definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994)” (p. 547).

It also became clear that it was necessary to clarify case study terminology in relation to methodology and method. The methodological description in case studies principally focuses on case study typology (the unit of study). According to Stake (1995) there are three types of cases: the intrinsic case; the instrumental case; and the collective instrumental case. To fathom the specifics of a

single case, the intrinsic case is used. An instrumental case study is used to gain an insight into an issue or build or refine a theory. The case is selected to advance understanding of the object of interest. A collective case study signifies an instrumental case which is studied as multiple, however, each case study is a focused distinct inquiry (Stake, 1995; 1998).

The method refers to the process or processes used to collect information and data for the purpose of investigating an overarching research question. Case study data collection methods vary depending upon how the researcher chooses to investigate the problem. Choices made use naturally occurring sources of knowledge, such as observations of interactions of people. Multiple data collection and analysis methods, which may include using unstructured or semi-structured interview techniques with individuals or groups, are selected by the researcher in accordance with the context to further understandings of the case (Stake, 1995). These choices will be explored further in the methods section.

### **WHEN TO USE CASE STUDY**

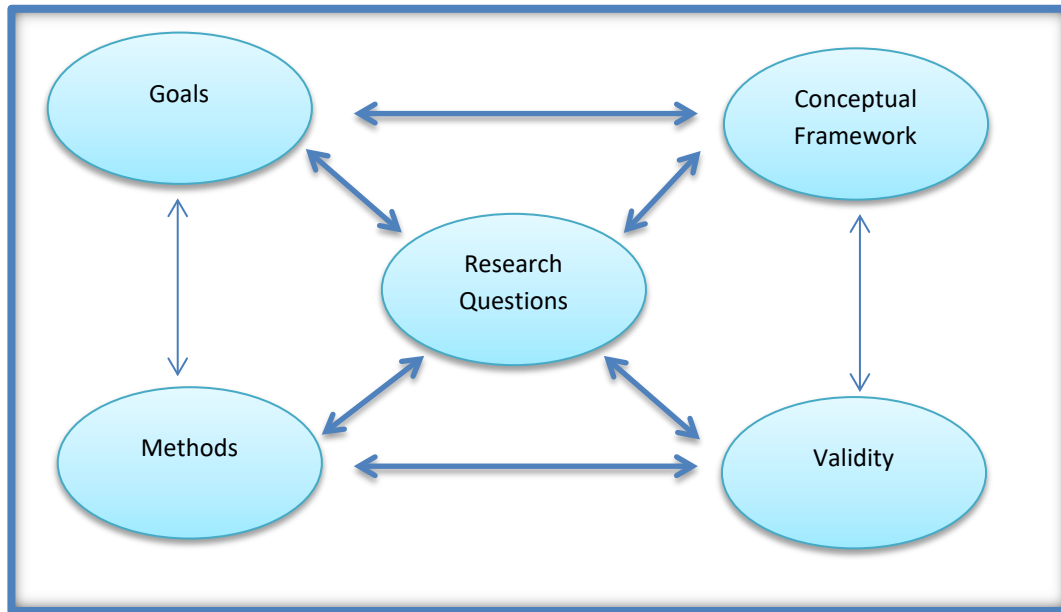
While I have stated that my underlying assumptions align with those of Stake and Merriam I do acknowledge that Yin (2003) provides clarity on when to use case study. Yin advises that a case study design should be deliberated when: (a) the study seeks to answer how and why questions; (b) the contextual conditions are pertinent to the phenomenon which is being studied; and (c) the behaviour of those in the study cannot be manipulated.

I chose case study as a method for research in numerous studies as my main research questions were 'how' questions, seeking to investigate complex contextual conditions and the behaviour of people in these contexts. Stake (1995) suggests a flexible design which enables researchers to formulate changed even after they progress from design to research. In all three of the case studies I conducted I used Maxwell's (2009) An Interactive Model of Research Design, as it was organised and procedural, yet also flexible

### **RESEARCH DESIGN—FRAMEWORK**

Endeavouring to make sense in a quagmire of contradictions of what part of the research design the novice researcher begins with was difficult until I discovered the work of Maxwell (2005; 2008; 2009) and then I understood how I could do case study. The research design provides the overarching process utilised to integrate the different components of the study in a logical and comprehensible way. Stake (1995) and Yin (2003) both make reference to conceptual frameworks, as an overarching process for case study but "both fail to fully describe them or provide a model of a conceptual framework for reference" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 553). This meant I needed to search to find a framework, something that I could use as a conceptual road map for case study. Numerous researchers take design to be fixed arrangements of research methods and conditions that have their own logic and coherence, while others argue design as a flow of logical progression from problem formulation through to the formulation of conclusions or theory (Maxwell, 2008). A broader and less restrictive concept of design is needed for a qualitative research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Maxwell, 2008). The model showcased in this chapter, 'An Interactive Model of Research Design' presented by Maxwell (2009, 2012), is interactive where the components work together in a non-linear harmonious manner, promoting efficient and effective functioning.

Maxwell (2009) asserts that 'An Interactive Model of Research Design' is intended to help the researcher understand the actual structure of the study as well as to plan it, carry it out and reflect in an on-going manner about decisions made in research design. Maxwell (2009, p. 217) also argues that an "essential feature of this model is that it treats research design as a real entity". The model (shown in Figure 1.1.) consists of five components, each of which addresses a different set of issues that impact upon the coherence of the study: methods; goals; conceptual framework; research questions; and validity. The model components interact in a dynamic ongoing manner which is non-linear.



*Figure. 1.1: An Interactive Model of Research Design. Source: Maxwell, J. A. (2012). Qualitative research design: An interactive approach. Los Angeles; CA. Sage.*

The components detailed in Figure 1.1 are not labelled by Maxwell (2012) as component one, two, three, four or five. They are simply referred to as overlapping components and the overlap allows for further exploration of concepts that may have been mentioned in relation to other components. The strength of the ‘An Interactive Research Design’ is that by nature the researcher using the design constantly self reflects upon all of the components of the model as they are linked in an organic and flowing manner.

The research questions were central to the model, connecting to all of the other components of the model. This connection reflects how all components inform and are sensitive to the other components (Maxwell, 2009). The upper triangle of the model should be closely related (i.e., goals, research questions and conceptual framework) as should the lower triangle; methods, research questions and validity. In the model this relationship is depicted through the use of bolded arrows. Maxwell (2009) asserts that the research question should have a clear connection to the goals of the study and be informed by what is already known, by current knowledge and theory. Similarly the connection was mirrored with what decisions I made about what knowledge and theory were relevant in relationship to the goals of the study. Maxwell (2009) therefore argues that the “methods you use must enable you to answer your research questions, and also to deal with plausible validity threats to these answers” (p. 217).

I found this model useful as the basis for all three of my studies because it was reflective of how my study took shape with questions and decisions impacting upon and relating to other components of the study. Maxwell (2009) claims that “it provides a model for the structure of a proposal for a qualitative study, one that clearly communicates and justifies the major design decisions and the connections among these” (p. 218). I now explore the components the research design and how they were used in my case studies.

### **THE FIVE COMPONENTS**

The five components of An Interactive Research Design are discussed: goals; conceptual framework; research questions; method; and validity.

### **Goals Component**

Bromley (1986) argues that the aim of case study “is not to find the ‘correct’ or ‘true’ interpretation of the facts, but rather to eliminate erroneous conclusions so that one is left with the best possible, the most compelling interpretation” (p. 38). VanWynsberghe and Khan, (2007) also claim that a goal of case study research is to provide “description that goes deep enough to provide analysis” (p. 89) These arguments resonated with my research studies for example when my intention was to explain the manner of how some school principals maintain their SWB, evidenced from their lived experience. This aim is also reflected in Maxwell’s (2009) assertion that a study requires clarity in regard to its goals. He outlines three different goals: personal goals that influence the researcher; practical goals; and intellectual goals. The latter two were core components of the research design. The researcher needs to be aware of and take account of their personal goals and how they potentially shape research (Maxwell, 2009). The important part for me was to clearly reflect upon what the personal goal was and how this needed to be articulated and acknowledged. My personal goal was to put something valuable back into the profession, something that could be of use to others. This personally motivated goal is what Maxwell (2009) defines as practical goals. He asserts “practical goals are focused on accomplishing something—meeting some need, changing some situation, or achieving some goal” whereas “intellectual goals are focused on understanding something” (Maxwell 2009, p. 220).

Maxwell (2009) notes that there are five intellectual goals that are particularly relevant to qualitative studies: understanding the meaning for participants in the study; understanding the specific context in which the participants are located and the impact that the context has upon the participants; identifying unanticipated phenomena and generating new theories about the phenomena; understanding the process by which events take place; and developing causal explanations (Maxwell, 2009). It was my aim to address the intellectual goals outlined by Maxwell (2009) in developing an understanding of the phenomenon under study. In order to plan how best to achieve the goals I developed a clear understanding of the conceptual framework needed for this study.

### **Conceptual Framework Component**

Miles and Huberman (1994) describe a conceptual framework as explaining either narratively or graphically the key concepts, components or variables and the seeming relationship between them. Maxwell (2009, p. 222) states that “your conceptual framework is a formulation of what you think is going on with the phenomena you are studying – a tentative theory of what is happening and why”. Maxwell (2009) sees the “research problem” as an integral part of the conceptual framework as it identifies something that is going on in the world, posing the overall coherence of the conceptual framework is something that you build, it is not something that is already in existence. Maxwell (2008) advises that the research paradigm must be defined in order to explore the research problem.

### ***Research paradigm***

Careful consideration was given by me to developing an understanding of the research paradigm chosen for each of the studies I conducted. I engaged in on-going reflection utilising An Interactive Model of Research Design (Maxwell, 2009) ensuring the paradigm was suited to the research being undertaken and my world-view of how best to investigate the research problem. Firstly I began with developing conceptual clarity around what constitutes a paradigm. A paradigm refers to a set of general philosophical assumptions concerning the nature of the world (ontology) and how the world can be understood (epistemology) (Coombes, Danaher, & Danaher, 2004). Sarantakas (1998) categories paradigms, into three types; “Positivistic, Interpretive and Critical” (p. 33) whereas Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) outline the paradigms as: scientific; interpretive; and political and ideological. The scientific paradigm rests upon theoretical frameworks that can be tested through experimentation. The interpretative paradigm seeks to understand and interpret the world and the political and ideological paradigm can be deemed to be critical in educational research.

Qualitative research in an interpretivist paradigm appeared best fit for investigating the research questions in all three of the case studies I conducted. Travis (1999) suggests that interpretivism focuses on “meaningful social action and an in-depth understanding of how meaning is created in

everyday life and the real-world” (Travis, 1999, p. 1042). The role of the researcher in the interpretivist paradigm as explained by Cohen et al. (2007) is to elucidate and explain social reality through the lived experiences perceived by different participants.

Each time I conducted a study I wanted to be sure of how I was going to make meaning of the research generated. In reflecting deeply upon this, I thought constructivism would enable me to explore these factors in more depth. Somekh and Lewin (2011), assert that:

constructivism is a term used to describe a theory of knowledge which stresses the active process involved in building knowledge rather than assuming that knowledge is a set of unchanging propositions which merely need to be understood and memorised (p. 320).

Constructivism explains how one develops and utilises cognitive processes, building upon existing beliefs or knowledge to construct new ideas, meaning and knowledge (Carter, 2016). Hofer and Pintrich, (1997) purport that constructivism is an epistemological account relating to motivation, cognition and the nature of knowledge. Although constructivism offers the epistemological framework for many of these theories, in itself it is not an explanation for the psychological elements involved in knowing (Carter, 2016).

Gergen (1985a) explains that social constructionism is a variant of constructivism principally concerned with illuminating the process which people use to explain or describe the world (including themselves) in which they live. Gergen (1985a, pp. 266-268) explains that social constructivism is grounded on several assumptions:

1. What we assume to be experience of the world does not in itself decree the terms by which the world is understood.
2. The world is understood in terms of social artefacts, products of historically situated interchanges among people.
3. The amount to which a given form of understanding predominates or is sustained across time is not fundamentally dependant on the empirical validity of the perspective in question, but on the vagaries of social process (e.g., communication, conflict, negotiation, and rhetoric).
4. Negotiated understanding (such as the wave of a hand) are of crucial significant in social life, as they are integrally linked with many other activities in which people meaningfully engage.

Gergen, (1985b) suggests that social constructionism places knowledge in the relational processes of social interaction and exchange that induce personal categories of understanding rather than in the minds of single individuals. Individual knowledge and belief is therefore constructed with links to the experiences and beliefs of the social group/s to which the individual belongs, their epistemological stance (Carter, 2016).

### ***Researchers Experiential Knowledge***

According to Maxwell (2009) an important aspect of building the research framework involves exploring the researcher’s experiential knowledge as this can add depth to the study. Maxwell (2009) asserts that using experience in research can provide the researcher with key insights, hypotheses and also validity checks. In all of the research studies I conducted I had notable practical experience in the field I was researching, for example: as a teacher; as principal; and a lecturer special education and leadership and management. In one of the studies I conducted I was interviewing colleagues that I had worked alongside. This caused me to spend considerable time reflecting deeply and from multiple angles upon the different aspects of my experience that appeared to be relevant to the study and implementing strategies to ensure that it was the voice of the participants that was fore fronted.

One criticism often aimed at interpretivism is that the ontological assumptions are subjective and not objective (Cohen et al., 2007; Maxwell, 2009). This challenged me as a researcher until I thought that by selecting a paradigm, are not all researchers being subjectively oriented regarding the choices they make concerning the way they conduct their research (Carter, 2016)? My experiential knowledge

proved to be asset when conducting research into school principals SWB as most participants articulated that they only participated in the research because: (a) I had been a school principal; (b) they knew me and trusted me. I did however engage specific strategies to limit my bias. I explored my assumptions and bracketed these, analysing the data with a focus on what was going on in the environment, rather than my own preconceptions informing the data (Cohen et al., 2007). In order to do this accurately and objectively, I spent time considerable time interrogating and then acknowledging my assumptions, judiciously and objectively bracketing these assumptions (Carter 2016).

### ***Existing Theory and Research***

To use an existing theory or not use an existing theory as a conceptual framework module caused me to engage in considerable thought in one case study I conducted. Maxwell (2012) explains that using an existing theory in qualitative research can be advantageous helping the researcher to organise the data, as well as providing the scaffolding for particular pieces to fit together. Maxwell, (2009, p. 227) suggests that a “useful theory illuminates what you are seeing in your research”. After much consideration in two of my studies I decided to use Diener’s (2000; 2006; 2009) theory of Subjective Well-Being as it provided a conceptual framework of well-being.

### **Research Questions Component**

Maxwell (2009) suggests that research questions specifically focus on what is to be understood as a product of completing the study. The questions are at the heart of the study, connecting all of the components of research design (Maxwell, 2009), and establishing some key parameters of the research (Cohen et al., 2007). The research questions have a two-fold function: providing focus for the study and secondly to offer guidance on how to run the study (Maxwell, 2009). Encouraging the novice researcher to be mindful of the type of questions being asked Maxwell (2009) advises a strong focus on process (how and why things happen) rather than on discrepancy (dealing with difference and correlation) as the strength of a qualitative approach, is “in understanding the process by which phenomena take place” (p. 232).

For each case study I conducted I developed overarching ‘how’ questions. In developing these questions I strived to focus on process questions, on the how and why things happened as this was seemingly omitted from the current literature. In conjunction with determining my research questions I considered methods and validity.

### **Method Component—Case Study**

A question that I asked myself was: when should a researcher select case study as a method? Maxwell (2008, p. 234, italics in original) argues that when deciding your research methods the “decision you face is not primarily *whether* or *to what extent* you pre-structure your study, but *in what ways* you do this, and *why*”. The research methods were targeted at finding solutions to the particular research problems in the various educational settings where the research was conducted. Flyvberg (2006) describes case study as a necessary method for specific research tasks in the social sciences, arguing that it “holds up well when compared to other methods in the gamut of social science research methodology” (p. 26).

Pertinent to establishing the interrelationships of case study is determining what the case is and what it is (Stake, 1995), in other words establishing the boundaries of the case study. Consideration should be given to what Connelly and Clandinin (1999) term as the *landscape* of the case study. In this instance landscape is representative of time, place and relationships among various agents and of interactions that play out over time and these elements help bound the case study (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). This means that the professional landscape of education is shaped by stories that are passed down over time within the culture of the schools. This includes: the teachers’ and principals networks; the organisational system in which the school operates; influences that constitute what knowledge is valued, endorsed and shared; and the role and identity that a teacher or principal should and perhaps does assume.

### ***Participant Selection and Sampling***

In investigating how best to select participants for the case studies I conducted (e.g., those school principals that appeared to be successfully coping in the role and self-identified as such), I took into account four key factors as suggested by Cohen et al. (2007): sample size; representativeness; access to the sample; and the sampling strategy to be utilised. I then explored each of the four factors and their application to my various studies.

There appear to be no specific rules for purposive sample size (Baum, 2002; Patton 1990) but the sample size needed to be reflective of the phenomena being studied (Patton, 1990). Sampling in qualitative research usually draws on small numbers as the aim is an in-depth and detailed study (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990).

The second factor to be taken into account in sampling was representativeness. A small group of socio-demographic variables was included to characterise the individuals in the sample and to identify their objective life circumstances (Cohen et al., 2007). How best to represent a group of participants considering factors like mixed ages, gender, ethnicity, experience, culture and contextual complexity was a question with which I initially struggled? How focused did I need to be on gender, mixed ages, cultural complexity, etc.? When I referred back to the focus research questions (e.g., how do some school principals maintain their SWB) it helped me to decide on the criteria for the participant selection (e.g., experienced principals of more than eight years experiencing, having worked in the role in two or more contexts).

Rubin and Rubin (2005) suggest to select participants that are very knowledgeable and experienced in the topic focus for the interview as that will provide richer data. All of the participants selected for my studies were both knowledgeable and experienced. Importantly for me as the researcher, they were also prepared to communicate this information in a research study. In my studies I chose to take a sample of those who already are part of a group (i.e., school principals, teachers at a particular school) and take whatever diversity came with that group (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity and so on).

Thirdly, access to a sample was an important consideration in thinking through sampling strategies. Given the size of the population of schools and how widely they are dispersed, I looked at setting some geographical boundaries, rather than conducting a random sample. I purposely selected participants that I felt would be likely to disclose information to me because I had a shared experiential understanding of their role and work (Patton, 1990). In providing information about the participants I took care to keep their identity confidential.

Given the busyness of schools and the movement of educators from one school to another school (Mulford, 2003) I felt the data collection phase needed to occur within the timeframe of one school year, in the context that was real (i.e., their school). As I had been an educator I recognised that the first two weeks of the year, the last two weeks of the year and the weeks leading up to National testing should be avoided due to the heavy workload on participants at this time. This timing consideration therefore limited the selection of the sample size and also the sampling strategy selected.

In relation to the fourth factor of sampling I looked closely at the sampling strategy. In order to meet the goals that were established in each study I chose to capture the voice of experienced participants that indicated they were willing to participate in the research. In the literature this is referred to as “purposeful sampling” (Cohen et al., 2000, 2007; Wiersma, 2000). This strategy was useful as participants are selected for the important information they could provide that cannot be obtained as well from other choices (Maxwell, 2009). Wiersma (2000) asserts that “the logic of purposeful sampling is based on a sample of information-rich cases that is studied in depth, however, there is no assumption that all member of the population are equivalent data sources” (p. 285). How best to obtain data for study was the next crossroad I approached.



### ***Data Collection***

Stake (1995) advises that the quality of the data is vital for a good and valid case study. I therefore spent a great deal of time reflecting upon the best way to gather data from participants in the various studies I conducted. There is an unpredictability in the behaviour of human beings and human experience is characterised by complexity (Somekh & Lewin, 2011) so the challenge for me was how best to capture this complexity in the data. I endeavoured to obtain quality data by following Patton's (1990) suggestion which involved:

1. Take descriptive field notes.
2. Gather a variety of information that represents differing perspectives.
3. Select participants wisely, drawing upon their wisdom contained in the perspective they present.
4. Capture participants' viewpoints by utilising quotations so their experiences are retold in their own words.
5. Be as involved as possible in experiencing the fieldwork whilst maintaining an analytical perspective. (p. 209)

Patton (1990) also avers that first-hand experience provides the researcher with the opportunity to be open, to discover and deduce what is significant and obtain quality data. This gathering of data through direct experience enabled me as the researcher to be deeply understand and interpret the setting and understand particular instances of the phenomena (Mabry, 2008). Prior to beginning all of my case studies I obtained first hand experience of the context and participants. One example of how I did this was by basing myself in one of the schools for a period of six months prior to beginning the research. While at the school I participated in their daily life. This involved a variety of activities such as participation on the school administration team, attending staff and teaching meeting, visiting classrooms and teaching classes while the teachers were engaged in other meetings, and facilitating various workshops on request of the principal (e.g., productive pedagogy).

In addition to the suggestions outlined by Patton (1990) I also followed Stake's (1995) proposition that data be drawn from multiple sources to encapsulate the case under study in its intricacy. After careful consideration I utilised a variety of methods of data collection: direct observations; interviews; a researcher journal with my written reflections; surveys; artefacts (e.g., photographs of particular mottos that participants used to help frame positive thinking); and policy documents (e.g., school wide pedagogical framework that outlined inclusion). I used written policy to correlate with interview data where participants had articulated particular linkages to documents.

### ***Interviews***

In the interviews I utilised narrative which involved the utilisation of observations of the participants in their context, along with semi-structured interviews. The sequencing and framing of questions needed considerable thought to ensure that they provided opportunities for participants to disclose data on the phenomenon being studied. Careful consideration was given to which question come first and how I framed questions in order to have the participant provide rich and descriptive answers. The semi-structured interviews provided freedom and flexibility, while also allowing participants to have advance knowledge of the content and procedures as the questions were provided to the participants in the week prior to the interviews.

In conducting the semi-structured interviews two other aspects were taken into consideration: 'Directiveness' (Whyte, 1982); and anticipating problems (Field & Morse, 1985; DeVito, 2011). Whyte (1982) encourages researchers to be aware of their 'Directiveness' as some participants may be affronted if questions are too direct and there sharing is not affirmed while others may vary off topic if questions are not direct enough to elicit information linked to the phenomenon under study. Whyte suggests a six points that the interviewer should take into consideration and these are:

1. making encouraging noises;
2. reflecting on remarks of the participant;
3. probing on the last remark of the participant;
4. probing an idea preceding the last remark by the participant;

5. probing an idea expressed earlier in the interview; and
6. introducing a new topic.

When to enact the six points mentioned by Whyte becomes part of the art of interviewing. All six points were taken into account to best manage “Directiveness” and encourage interviewees to provide rich data about the phenomenon under study. Interviewing can be considered to be an art, challenging researchers to hear the data where the researcher needs to hear the data and know how to label the concept (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). They suggest that at times interviewing is about listening for distinctions, tracking down discrepancies and thinking about what has not been said. The ability to focus on the concepts is enhanced when the researcher becomes sensitive to the data, listening to transcripts and rereading transcripts (Carter, 2016). In taking on board Rubin and Rubin’s (2005) proposition it is vitally important to understand exactly what defines a concept. In simple terms a concept can be defined as “a core idea that can be summarised as a noun” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 56). Rubin and Rubin (2005) suggest that “[s]ometimes the interviewees state the themes themselves to explain why things occur, and by doing so move you rapidly toward an inductive theory” (p. 57). This is further explored in Theory Development.

Pre-interview organisation helped me as the researcher to anticipate potential problems and enable strategies to be implemented in order to mitigate the problems. A strategy used for this was brainstorming and listing out what would be or could be required (e.g., reminder email a week before the interview; telephone call to the interviewee the day before the interview took place; recording device; spare charged batteries; list of interview questions; address, time and place of interview; name of interviewee). In anticipating problems, Field and Morse (1985), assert that distractions must be minimised prior to the interviews occurring (i.e., a quiet, confidential setting is required) and time tabling must be considered. DeVito (2011) refers to such distractions as ‘noise’. Noise is considered to be any distracter (i.e., the interviewer fiddling with a pen; lack of tea for a tea addict). In all of the case studies I conducted participants were interviewed in a naturalistic setting of their choice. All venues for the interviews were selected by the participants with a focus on venue criteria as being private and conducive to no interruptions.

All interviews were conceptualised with time allocations in mind. This included travel time to an interview, and time for opening a general welcome conversation before the scheduled interview occurred. The scheduled interview allowed for more time than the researcher thought it would take so that there was not a feeling of being pressured to finish an interview because the participant or interviewer was required elsewhere. Each interview timeslot was scheduled to be two hours. Time was provided for open ended questions with the addition of retrospective biographical information.

The types of questions being asked in an interview were open-ended to allow for flexibility and probing (Kerlinger, 1970). Additional probing questions were asked during interviews and numerous participants were interviewed a second time in order to obtain more clarity or depth of information. As researcher, I paid close attention to actively listening to the voice of each participant, looking at each story as a window into the experience of the participant. My aim was to listen deeply, recording their stories and reflecting upon them analytically to see what the data revealed as a whole with all of the data sources woven together to provide a picture of what was occurring.

For the two instrumental case studies (i.e., how do some school principals maintain their Subjective Well-Being?; and how is inclusion embedded in a complex multicultural school?) I re-interviewed selected participants. The purpose of the second interview was to refine and deepen my understanding, penetrating closer to the phenomenon, until a point of saturation was reached where no new information about the phenomenon under study was revealed. The focus was therefore on a deeper understanding of the concepts as nouns, as highlighted above, to help the researcher move toward developing the theory (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). I read over the transcripts from the first interview and used three broad frames for coding: conceptual links (for example Subjective Well-Being, work, role, agency, wisdom); strategies (for example what did the participants do to maintain Subjective Well-Being); and theoretical links, especially those directly mentioned by participants (for example explicit focus on positive psychology). After reading each script and thinking about it, I

formulated follow up questions and I referred to these questions in the second interview with each participant. These questions related to developing a deeper understanding of concepts and exploration of possible of emerging theory for further clarification in the second interview. The concepts were linked together to begin to see themes. In the case studies I conducted the investigation was focused on “not the amount of data but rather the richness of the data, not the total counts but the detailed descriptions” (Carey, 1995. p. 492). Case studies are useful in capturing the ambiguity of real-life, the ‘kaleidoscopic’ view of inclusivity and the wellbeing of school principals as these people seek to support all students, including students with disability.

### ***Researcher Journal***

I embraced the advice of Fink (2000) and Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008) by electing to use a researcher journal to capture my reflections. I wrote in the researcher journal as soon as possible after conducting interviews, noting the physical setting or specific events, acts and non-verbal responses of each interviewee. I also recorded memos of my perceptions, chronicling my own, feelings, experiences, thinking and perceptions throughout the research process so that as a researcher I could self-reflect upon what I did and what I learnt and what I might do differently in further research studies.

The journal helped demonstrate how the way I conducted case study had enabled particular knowledge to be surfaced, that of tacit knowing where participants often left out parts when explaining what they were doing as it was almost an unconscious way of working. Given I had observed their way of working I could ask questions differently that encouraged the participants to think deeply and work through explaining their thinking and behaviours. At times when participants were asked an interview question, they answered it with easily recalled information. Having observed the way they behaved, provided me as an interviewer with ‘insider’ knowledge that guided my questioning enabling me to get the participants to drill down into thinking enabling tacit knowledge to be surfaced.

### ***Survey***

Survey data were also collected from participants in some of the studies I conducted. The survey used was designed to be brief as it was assumed that participants were ‘time poor’ because of the business of schools therefore be reticent to give up more of their time to complete a survey (Mulford, 2003). The purpose in using surveys in two of my studies was twofold. Firstly the survey clearly evidenced the breadth and depth of the participants experience in educational settings. Secondly the survey established succinctly participants’ views on their involvement in the research and what they hoped the research would achieve. The survey data was merged in with the interview data to provide additional detail and also used to validate the disclosures of participants. One example where the survey drew out contextual information regarding both the time and the context where work was undertaken and this helped the researcher to interpret the interview data around various contexts.

### ***Data Analysis Procedures***

The goal of analysing qualitative data is to reveal main ideas, beliefs, and relationships that inform the participant’s outlook of the world, particularly of the phenomenon being studied (Cohen et al., 2000; McCracken, 1988). Stake (1995) describes analysis as “a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as final compilations”, advocating for the use of analysis conventions for researchers to enable them to “draw systematically from previous knowledge and cut down on misperception” (p. 71). He also advises that priority be given to impression and intuition over direction of the procedural protocol. Taking this into account I enacted four specific steps outlined by Cohen et al., (2007):

- 1) developing units of meaning as they emerged from the data;
- 2) cataloguing, classifying and arranging the units of meaning using codes;
- 3) constructing narratives to portray the interview contents; and
- 4) understanding and interpreting the data (e.g., observations, interview and survey data, artefacts, and researcher journal memos).

Following these four steps enabled me to make sense of the relevant data as I questioned myself about what meaning was emerging, and what patterns were evident. In doing this I also followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) suggestion that coding happens early in the research process, as subsequent coding has the capability to weaken the whole analysis.

### ***Coding and Comparing the Data***

Stage one of the coding and data comparison involved, developing units of meaning. In order to do this I listened to the voices of participants, described and identified common threads from the perspectives of the participants, and considered the relationship of these elements to a scholarly framework of thought. Kvale (1996) and Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggest that the participant's life and the researcher's life coalesce to create a co-constructed or collaborative story. Cohen et al. (2000, p. 282) remind researchers that "transcriptions are decontextualised, abstracted from time and space, from the dynamics of the situation, from the live form, and from the social, interactive, dynamic and fluid dimensions of their source; they are frozen". Taking Cohen, et al's (2000) advice into account I ensured data were captured in both the transcript of the audiotape and the researcher's journal (i.e., observations of tone, emphasis, inflection, silences, interruptions, and mood) as a way of trying to develop units of meaning which depicted the essence of the phenomenon. In doing this I followed the suggestion of Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2013) and utilised software support in data organising, display and analysis.

I elected to utilise NVivo and created independent projects in NVivo for each of my studies as Bazley (2007) had also suggested that software increases the efficiency and effectiveness of data analysis. The data (e.g., transcripts; memo notes from my researcher journal that captured some of the nuances of the interviews including observation data, surveys, and photographs of artefacts) were loaded into NVivo. I experienced first-hand what Basit (2003, p. 153) captured when he wrote "coding, a crucial stage of qualitative data analysis, is tedious and time-consuming when carried out manually, and it may take several weeks to get acquainted with a software package to code qualitative data electronically". Using the software provided me with the means to easily regroup data, enhancing my ability to connect concepts and themes, refine them, and locate evidence (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Stage two of the analysis involved cataloguing, classifying and arranging these units of meaning. Transcription data were read and reread the day after each interview which helped enable a growing sense of the complete data set. I utilised an inductive method to develop data codes, as described by Miles and Huberman (1994) where data were not pre-coded pre-interviews but was developed after the interview process, following transcription. The data were reviewed as to how it functioned as a whole.

As I was reading the transcripts I made annotations regarding ideas, theoretical linkages, emerging assumptions and beliefs of participants. These annotations were made on the transcripts and sections of text were colour coded. From the data a list of topics was created and I clustered these similar topics together in columns with appropriate segments of transcript text in a column beside the code. Data were then assembled into general categories. Abbreviations were written for each category and then organised in a more refined manner. More detailed codes were applied as I began pulling apart categories into smaller parts, scrutinizing emerging linkages, and developing and exploring themes. I then reassembled data material belonging to each category carefully comparing and contrasting it, looking for additional linkages or enlightening quotations and doing a preliminary analysis (Carter 2016).

Stage three of the analysis involved structuring narratives to describe the interview contents. I began this process by questioning myself about what I had discovered so far and what was the data revealing to me. I then wrote a narrative supported with data snippets to describe the contents.

The fourth and last stage of the data analysis involved understanding and interpreting the data as a whole, validating narratives and looking for any discrepancies. I did this by adapting a process outlined by Rubin and Rubin (2005):

1. Data were rechecked the sorted and summarised (e.g., excerpts my researcher journal, interview transcripts, survey data and artefacts).
2. Data were reviewed for patterns and then summarised into concepts and themes called nodes and examined.
3. Data were sorted, and ranked within the nodes based on the frequency of occurrence.
4. Sections of data were compared to provide a basis for producing further questions for possible theory building.
5. Versions of comparable happenings linking to the same concepts were synthesised.
6. Findings were checked for accuracy, based on the consistency and patterns of the data to ensure interpretations were precise.
7. Findings were viewed in relation to theories that connected with the data. I pondered how far the strategies, and processes that emerged from the data, might extend and what insights were related to a coherent theory.

During my data analysis my conscious focus was also on minimising validity threats.

### **Validity Component**

There is a significant amount of literature on validity in research where two types of threats seem prominent: researcher bias, and reactivity (Cohen, et al., 2007; Maxwell, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). Researcher bias signifies “the way in which data collection or data analysis is distorted by the researcher’s theory, values or preconceptions” and reactivity is the amount that the researcher is trying to control for this variance (Maxwell, 2009, p. 243). Eradicating the tangible influence of the researcher is considered to be impossible (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995), and the aim in qualitative study is to understand it and use it productively (Maxwell, 2009).

I began doing this, analysing my own position as a researcher and reflecting upon what bias and issues of reactivity I bring to the research. I endeavoured to unpack my methodological judgements and bracket it so that I could focus deeply listening to the voices of the participants, and focusing on what they were actually telling me and then cross checking this against other sources of data.

I also endeavoured in two of my case studies where multiple participants were involved, to try and minimise sample bias. Tuckett and Stewart (2004) suggest that this can be done by utilising different methods of collecting data. In all of the studies I used several methods of data collecting including: interviews; researcher journal including observations and artefacts; and surveys. In the case studies where I interviewed the same participant more than once I was able to consider the congruence and complementarity of each participant’s interview one data, with their interview two data. In a cross-cultural study of inclusive leadership practices within a basic education context in each of the following countries: Australia, Canada, and Colombia., data sets could be compared and contrasted (Abawi, Bauman-Buffone, Pineda-Báez, & Carter, 2018). A key approach to limit bias, recommended by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007), is to use numerous and highly knowledgeable participants who view the focal phenomena from diverse perspectives.

Maxwell (2009) advises researchers to take care to focus on both researcher bias and reactivity as specific validity threats to their research and to carefully consider what strategies are best to deal with these. I selected several explicit strategies advised by Maxwell (2009) to mitigate these threats, that is:

1. Intensive long term involvement: Maxwell (2009) suggests “the sustained presence of the researcher in the setting studied, can help rule out spurious associations and premature theories” (p. 244). As a researcher and an experienced teacher and principal I had the opportunity to have developed a broad understanding of school culture before entering into the context where I conducted my work. I also based myself in all three of the contexts where my case studies took place (e.g., one immersed myself school for six months prior to the research) prior to interviewing participants in their individual work sites.
2. ‘Rich data’: Maxwell (2008) encourages the researcher to collect ‘rich data’. In the case studies I have conducted the term ‘rich data’ was seen to mean data that were detailed and varied enough that it provided a full, detailed and revealing picture of what was happening (Becker, 1970).

3. Respondent validation: Respondent validation includes requesting feedback from the participants about their data and inviting their input to check that the conclusions being drawn (Maxwell, 2009) are accurate and valid. In all three case studies I conducted, the transcript of interviews were emailed to participants and they were invited to read the transcript and check that what they said had been accurately captured. When reinterviewing some participants I also asked them whether my understanding of what they had said in the previous interview was indeed correct or did they have more to add to what had been revealed.

One example of this was where I sought clarification and the participant (shown below as the interviewee) automatically cut in to tell me more about the concept. I said:

*“So I'm just going to link back now to SWB and what those processes that are enacted in the school - because you've talked about them, about what...”*

*Interviewee: “It's professionally rewarding for me. It makes me feel good to think, ....”*

To clarify my developing conceptual understanding I also used respondent validation during interviews as evidence in the case study focus on principals Subjective Well-Being.

*Interviewer: So what I'm hearing you say is, this thinking part that we still need to unpack what's actually happening here - you often externalise with externalising behaviours to get other perspectives and invite other perspectives in to see what sort of course of action and their viewpoint. Is that correct? (The participant nodded). But if I come back to this thinking part, what's happening in your own head before you're externalising?*

Participants were also invited via email to ask to debrief with me regarding their involvement in the study.

4. Examining for discrepant evidence and negative cases: The underlying principle here is the requirement to thoroughly scrutinise both the supporting and discrepant data, to evaluate whether it is more plausible to hold or modify the conclusions, while being cognisant of all of the pressures to overlook data that do not fit your conclusions (Maxwell, 2009).
5. Triangulation: Triangulation was used to help ensure data validity by reducing the likelihood of misinterpretation (Mabry, 2008). Somekh and Lewin (2011) describe “triangulation as the process where data from at least three different perspectives on the same event or issue, is collected and can be cross-validated” (p. 330). For this reason, I utilised multiple data sources such as observations, researcher journal, interviews and artefacts to enhance the completeness of data.
6. Quasi-Statistics: Quasi-statistics was a term devised by Becker (1970) to explain the use of basic numerical results that are easily derived from data. Quasi-statistics provide the researcher with the opportunity to trial and check assertions that are essentially qualitative (Maxwell, 2009). I used quasi-statistics in my three case studies. Data that did not seem to align with quasi-statistical patterns were also investigated and presented as discrepant.
7. Comparison: In comparing data I was mindful that sources can vary based on the place, the time or setting, and from whom the data were obtained (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) On-going data comparison was utilised in all three of the case studies I conducted with the purpose of potentially identifying similar patterns (Coombes et al., 2004). As data was gathered from multiple sources it was scrutinised as an individual data set (e.g., participant survey data with the participant's interview data) and also compared against other participant data sets.

Fundamentally the validity of my case research lies in its ability to characterise the participants' subjective reality, that is to say their explanation of the circumstances (Cohen et al., 2000).

### **Theory Development**

Case study is often used to investigate how questions but theory does not always arise from such investigations. The literature on case study theory building can be unclear as it ranges in paradigm alignment from positivist to interpretivist. From a positivist perspective, Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) advise that the theory is developing in the sense that it is situated in and established by

recognising patterns of relationships amongst constructs within and across cases *and* their central logical contentions. From an interpretivist perspective, Bandura (2005, p.23) argues that the “goal in theory building is to identify a small number of explanatory principles that can account for a wide range of phenomena”. All of the case studies I conducted were located in the interpretivist and constructivist paradigm so the inductive approach to theory building was utilised.

### **Writing Up the Emerging Theory**

How best to writing up emergent theory is again not overly clear in the literature as there is scant details on how to do this from the interpretivist case study perspective. The positivist perspective clearly expressed by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007), is procedural and they suggest beginning with sketching the emergent theory in an introduction, then connecting it to the reinforcing empirical evidence for each construct and for the suggested relationship between constructs. When this is thoroughly executed then the propositions should be coherent with the cases as there is a “pattern match” between the theory and the data (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 30). The next fundamental step comprises writing up the underlying theoretical arguments that propose the logical connection between constructs within a proposition, with the arguments being obtained from case evidence. Finally a visual theory synopsis needs to be provided, and this summary links back to the research questions. In writing up the emerging theory from the case study on wellbeing I used an explanatory framework as a diagram.

### **Theory Reflection**

Maxwell (2009) encourages the researcher to reflect on theory. In order to do this I found I had to review not only self-reflective processes but also my own understand of what a theory is and how one theorises. There is a plethora of information in the literature defining theory and explaining the process of theorising. Theories from an interpretivist paradigm are explanations and in the social sciences they are deliberated to be ‘guiding truths’, more inclined to be more regularly challenged “especially if the methodology is grounded in epistemological assumptions that truth and reality are socio-culturally constructed” (Somekh & Lewin, 2011, p. 330). Theory is derived “from explanation of phenomena, the identification of concepts and the interrelationships between concepts surrounding phenomena, from which an explanatory framework can be developed (Grbich, 2007, p. 186). Grbich (2007, p. 185) also provides some structure around the process of theory reflection suggesting that results which have been collected and analysed should be looked at “again through the lens or frame of one or several theoretical or conceptual positions in order to make further sense of them and to lift the analytical discussion to a more abstract level”. Clarity was provided for me through the engage with Grbich’s work as I realised there are four distinct positions from which the researcher can conceive theorising; pre-chosen theoretical positions which drives the research and is placed against the research finding; methodological underpinnings which “may constitute the orientation and process of data collection”; researcher choice involves selecting from a considerable body of theoretical ideas and linking chosen ones to the research findings and; theory maximisation “where minimal interpretation but maximal display of data occurs” allowing the reader to make their own decisions (Grbich, 2007, p. 186).

I only built theory in one of my three case studies and the approach to theorising that I adopted was ‘researcher choice’ in alignment with the interpretivist paradigm, where what surfaces from the data becomes the foundation for new theoretical explanations, that can have significance in both the theoretical and practical fields.

### **The Significance of the Research**

As a researcher it is important to consider the relevance and use of your research. I gave consideration to how my new research would add depth to my chosen fields of study (inclusion and wellbeing in educational contexts). Research data informed recommendations regarding teacher and leadership training, professional development needs and policy considerations. I considered whether there were current publications in the area, and if not how my work could be used in the field by practitioners or in policy makers. I suggest that time be given to reflecting upon the use of your research at a local, state, national and global level. I encourage all researchers to think about what will be the new and unique knowledge you generate. Why is the new contribution important and how can

it value add to what is already out there? Case study was used to surface what was occurring, the depth below the conscious quick answer that may form part of a survey and to highlight the value of this methodology in educational research where the researcher drills down to surface the knowledge and ways of working that is often almost an unconscious behaviour, termed as tacit knowing.

Using case study enabled the exploration of the complex investigations including one into ‘how, within this school context, do school leaders promote and embed inclusive practices that provide high-quality education?’ Data was collected over a 6-month period of immersion at the research site, helping to surface a clear understanding of inclusion. “Inclusion is defined as successfully meeting student learning needs regardless of culture, language, cognition, gender, gifts and talents, ability, or background” (Carter & Abawi, p. 3). Exploring the nuances using case study revealed that “to remove barriers to education and deliver high-quality outcomes, schools require inclusive practices that embrace all students as valued affiliates of the school community, with inclusion as a vision, operationalised at the school-community, whole-school, and individual level” (Carter & Abawi, p. 5).

[A]t the heart of any inclusive school is a culture of individual acceptance where diversity is respected, perhaps even considered the norm and individuals are valued for what they bring to the learning journey. Inclusion is based upon social justice where individuals are perceived as having rights to a quality education

(Carter & Creedon, 2019, p213).

Data provided a breath of unanticipated responses that may not be captured using other methods or tools.

### **Limitations**

A limitation of case study is that it is hard to generalise findings that are highly contextual and often limited to small participant numbers, to broader contexts (Patton, 1999). Whilst case studies are successful in revealing some of the complexities of the phenomenon being studied, the representation of this is often problematic due to difficulties presenting realistic and comprehensible pictures of that intricacy in writing (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). Stake (1995) proposes that the value of a case study relies on the quality of the thinking and conveyed by the individual researcher and the judgements that they make. The research cannot be entirely objective, no matter how meticulous and systematic researchers strive to be, as it involves individual researcher interpretation and judgement (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001).

### **Summary**

Case study research as a method in combination with ‘An Interactive Model of Research Design’ (Maxwell, 2009) provided me as a novice researcher, with the necessary organisational process and structure in a manner that encouraged the flexibility required to investigate various phenomenon. An ‘Interactive Model of Research Design’ enabled constant bounded self-reflection where each component of the case study was viewed separately but linked in a non-linear fluid manner to all other components, always with the research questions at the centre. Case study enabled the surfacing of tacit knowing and ways of working where the overarching philosophy of inclusion and inclusive education could be clearly evidenced.

Through utilising ‘An Interactive Model of Research Design’, an iterative process was fashioned with the purpose of generating a comprehensive understanding of how the participants conceptualised phenomenon. The data collection strategies were based on the two primary assumptions: that there are various points of entry into any assumed reality (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2007); and that the world is not an impartial entity but a function of differing perceptions and personal communication (Merriam, 1998).

Although the prevalence of case study in education is increasing it is noted that the literature can be very confusing in how to design and conduct case study. I hope that the manner in which case study has been defined in this chapter provides insight for those novice researchers wishing to use it and that case study elicits additional insights into inclusion. Inclusive school cultures are not easily



attained, and even more difficult to sustain and prove complex to study (Abawi, Carter, Andrews, & Conway, 2018). I believe it is important that meaningful discussion occurs about not only the practice of case study and the utilisation of research design to guide the study, but also on the value of the research approach.

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