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# The Role of Theoretical Breadth and Student Engagement in the Use of Case Methods in Marketing Pedagogy

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## Abstract

*The case study is a very popular pedagogical tool in management education, especially in international business, marketing and strategy courses. Substantial literature exists about the effectiveness of case studies, but there is a lack of studies on empirical evaluation of their effectiveness in the classroom and subsequent contribution to learning. This study explores how case studies perform in meeting the twin deliverables of providing a theoretical framework and also student engagement. This study evaluates the role of Theoretical Breadth (TB) and Student Engagement (SE) in contributing to learning in a case-based pedagogy. The paper argues that the TB and SE leads to perceptions of learning and influences learning effectiveness. Using data collected from 176 MBA students, the paper conducts a PLS-SEM analysis to investigate these effects. Results indicate that TB and SE are critical course design elements, which influence the overall learning of marketing courses using case methods. Instructors must aim to provide greater TB and better opportunities for SE in order to make marketing courses more fruitful to students.*

**Key words**: *Case Study, Pedagogy, Marketing, Business Education, Structural Equation Model.*

**JEL Classification:** I20
**PsycINFO Classification**: 3530; 3550
**FoR Code:** 1302; 1505
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## Introduction

Today, more than ever, business school education is in a transformational stage. There is a heightened focus on the pedagogical tools employed in the classroom, and their effectiveness is a matter of great debate. There are disciplines, such as marketing, that rely heavily on the case method of teaching. Hunt (1976) lists many areas of scholarship in marketing viz. consumer behavior, pricing, purchasing, sales management, product management, marketing communications, comparative marketing, social marketing, the efficiency/productivity of marketing systems, the role of marketing in economic development, packaging, channels of distribution, marketing research, societal issues in marketing, retailing, wholesaling, the social responsibility of marketing, international marketing, commodity marketing, and physical distribution. It is quite natural that a subject so vast and complex proves to be a challenge for instructors who aim to engage the students and impart learning. A common challenge faced by marketing faculty around the world is how to integrate marketing theory with contemporary practice. Marketing as a profession and practice deals with practical issues that needs building real-time problem-solving abilities in students. Case studies are perceived to be a useful instructional method towards this end.
The theoretical and practical orientations of marketing as an academic discipline, have been a matter of great debate over the years (e.g. Hunt, 1991; Buttle, 1994; Weitz & Wensley, 1992; Deshpande, 1983). Most scholars who commented on the discipline, have concluded that the nature of marketing, as a practicing discipline resembles medicine, engineering, or architecture (Hutchinson, 1952); a view that establishes marketing as closely linked with the practice and profession (Bartels, 1951; Hunt, 1983). Teaching such a subject requires unique pedagogical tools, one which has historically been balancing the act of providing subject knowledge and contemporary marketing skills to its students (Hafer & Hoth, 1981; Kelley & Gaedeke, 1990; Petkus, 2007; Schibrowsky et al., 2002).

The challenge of marrying practice and theory has led to the use of many innovative methods in marketing classrooms. There are reported studies that illustrated the effectiveness of projects (Browne, 1979; Conant &d Mokwa, 1987; Haas & Wotruba, 1990), case-studies (Ward & Stasch, 1980; Miller & Hoover, 1999; Henson, Kennett, & Kennedy, 2003), simulation (Mentzer, Cox, & Meadow, 1983), historical methods (Peterson, 1987; Peterson & McQuitty, 2001), scenario planning (Van Doren & Smith, 1999) and experiential projects (Razzouk, Seitz, & Rizkallah, 2003) as instructional methods to teach marketing (for a review please refer to Hunt & Madhavaram, 2006). All of these methods are now successfully used in the teaching of marketing to students in undergraduate, graduate and executive education programs in universities.

The case study method has emerged as one of the most popular pedagogical tools among marketing faculty. Extant literature argues that case study teaching is very effective in facilitating learning in marketing (e.g. Barnes, Christensen, & Hansen 1994; Boehrer & Linsky 1990; Karns 1993; Rogers & Rymer, 1998). Henson, Kennett, and Kennedy (2003) suggest that case studies help a marketing student in (i) development of problem-solving skills, (ii) addition of realism to theory application, (iii) development of interpersonal and communication skills, and (iv) encouragement of greater student responsibility for learning. Case studies are understood to help students with application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and organizational skills (Karns 1993), equip them to confront, understand, and manage realistic problems (Barnes, Christensen, & Hansen 1994; Valentin, 1996), and provide students with concrete applications of marketing (Henson, Kennett, & Kennedy, 2003). Although the role of case method is extensively documented, and this pedagogical tool has become ubiquitous in marketing discipline; there is a dearth of empirical studies that test the effectiveness of case methods. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using case studies in marketing education. This study specifically looks at whether case study method is

useful and effective in meeting the twin requirements of providing a conceptual framework as mandated by the body of knowledge as well as keep a high level of engagement with the students. The paper speculates the influence of two constructs namely 'theoretical breadth' (TB), and 'student engagement' (SE) on the student's 'perception of learning' (LP) and overall 'course effectiveness' (CE). The study argues that TB and SE are antecedents to learning effectiveness in courses using case studies.

Theoretical Breadth (TB) refers to the extensiveness of theoretical and conceptual knowledge; which is essential for the learning of marketing (Hunt & Madhavaram, 2006). Theoretical frameworks have been established to be useful in helping the student think about the concept (Garda, 1988). They are also seen as methods to organize and begin the problem-solving process (Rossiter, 2001), and frameworks are vital anchors to the student's learning process (Day & Montgomery, 1999). Marketing academics often use case studies to illustrate such conceptual/theoretical underpinnings of the discipline, all of which is essential to the student's learning process and outcomes. Student Engagement (SE) on the other hand represents the role played by the student in the process of learning. Case situations often are intriguing and thought-provoking. Case teaching attempts to make the student ask questions in the process of thinking through and arriving at a solution. This process of inquiry requires the students to use analytic and critical thinking skills (Henson, Kennett & Kennedy, 2003). Case studies shift the focus from a teacher-centric approach to a participant-centric approach, where the student is instrumental in self-learning and making learning possible to other participants. The student's engagement influences how learning occurs in the classroom. Costigan and Donahue (2009) highlight the role of leaderless group discussions and its utility in helping the participant learn skills such as (i) enterprising and performing, (ii) adapting and coping, (iii) organizing and executing, (iv) creating and conceptualizing, (v) analyzing and interpreting, (vi) interacting and presenting, (vii) supporting and cooperating, and (viii) leading and deciding. All learning through case studies requires active participation from the student, and more instrumental is an environment to engage in discussions both in small groups prior to the class and while during the class session.

This study using data from 176 MBA students of one of the leading Indian universities estimate the relationship if any between TB and SE and student's perception of learning and overall effectiveness of the course. The next sections of this paper deal with the literature review of case-method as a pedagogical tool, conceptual directions of the study, details of the research methodology and analysis, discussion, implications and conclusion.

## Literature Review

### *Case Methods in Marketing*

According to Shugan (2006), the origin of case method of instruction can be traced back to 1870, when Harvard University Professor Christopher Langdell first started using the case method to teach law students in place of the then accepted textbook based lectures (Shulman, 1986). The case method was found to be effective in helping students learn and apply the concepts in different situations (Shulman, 1986). Later in 1919, Harvard Business School Dean Wallace P. Donham employed case method to teach business students (Shugan, 2006) and ever since its introduction, the popularity of case methods have only increased. Case study teaching is now a dominant pedagogical tool in business schools. Almost all major programs across the world use case method in one form or the other. Case study teaching is generally understood to involve the process of providing students with a historical account of a real business situation. The written case consists of a detailed description of issues faced by certain organizations; with a few decision alternatives and a context. Cases provide students with the option to analyze the business issue, and to arrive at a suitable conclusion.

A specific case study in classroom is characterized by (i) a description of a business issue (ii) which could be real or hypothetical, (iii) with information about the context, and (iv) which requires students to make managerial decisions based on discussions and using theoretical concepts. This is summarized by the commonly followed definitions of a case as provided by Gragg (1954) as "*A case typically is a record of a business issue that actually has been faced by business executives, together with the surrounding facts, opinions, and prejudices upon which executive decisions have to depend. These real and particularized cases are presented to students for considered analyses, open discussion and final decision as to the type of action that should be taken*". The definition suggested by Mauffette-Leenders, Erskine & Leenders (1997) is as follows "*A case is a description of an actual situation, commonly involving a decision, a challenge, an opportunity, a problem, or an issue faced by a person (or persons) in an organization. The case allows you to step figuratively into the position of a particular decision maker*". Barnes, Christensen and Hansen (1987) argued that "*A case is...a partial, historical, clinical study of a situation that has confronted a practicing administrator or managerial group. Presented in narrative form to encourage student involvement, it provides data—substantive and process—essential to an analysis of a specific situation, for the framing of alternative action programs and for their implementation, recognizing the complexity and ambiguity of the practical world*". The above definitions of case studies illustrate the nature and purpose of this pedagogical tool.

Cases provide the instructor with an opportunity to use the "*Socratic Dialogue*" to challenge the participants with questions and alternate points of view (Garner, 2000). This process allows the students to understand nuanced concepts and learn the subject experientially (Shugan, 2006). Although the case method might seem effective, there are also critics. Shugan (2006) has presented one of the major arguments against the overwhelming use of case methods in marketing education. Case methods, although perceived as effective in challenging the student with Socratic dialogue, fails to employ scientific methods to justify its use. It is also noteworthy to mention Shugan's (2006) observation of how the case method fails to integrate contemporary research into the classroom discussion. Nonetheless despite the critics, the case method seems to be one of the most frequently used pedagogical tools in the classroom, now and in the foreseeable future.

***Effectiveness of Case Studies***

The effectiveness of case study as a pedagogical tool is extensively documented in the extant literature. Literature has identified four core benefits of using case method in marketing courses (Henson, Kennett & Kennedy, 2003). These include (i) development of problem-solving skills, (ii) addition of realism to theory application, (iii) development of interpersonal and communication skills, and (iv) encouragement of greater student responsibility for learning.

Development of problem-solving skills is the first benefit of using case study methods in the marketing pedagogy. Problem-solving skills are generally integrated into the marketing curriculum by various methods such as problem-solving tutorials, exercises, simulation, case analysis, and applied and real-world business projects (Klebba & Hamilton, 2007). Of these, case study methods are the most widely used in marketing courses. Case studies ae believed to be thought-provoking and enabling the student to develop analytical and critical thinking skills that apply to solving a wide variety of management problems (Kennedy, Lawton & Walker 2001; Mauffette-Leenders, Erskine, & Leenders 2000).

Cases also provide students with an opportunity to add real-world examples to better illustrate the theoretical concepts that they have discussed. The organizational context in the theoretical conceptualization is better explained using case studies. Case studies

further minimize the need for memorizing large texts (Henson, Kennett & Kennedy, 2003; Kennedy, Lawton & Walker 2001; Mauffette-Leenders, Erskine & Leenders 2000).

Case study methods are also influential in the student's ability to enhance their skills with the development of interpersonal and communication skills, and encouragement of greater student responsibility for learning. Students have the opportunity to use various media of communication (e.g. written, verbal, listening etc.) and also engage in small-group as well as classroom discussions that enable the student enhance their interpersonal communication skills (Henson, Kennett & Kennedy, 2003; Kennedy, Lawton & Walker 2001; Mauffette-Leenders, Erskine & Leenders 2000).
Though the literature is replete with many a benefit of case study method, few empirical studies are available that tests whether the anecdotal claims and beliefs indeed are true. Any method of instruction need to undergo empirical validation to verify whether the claimed benefits are obtained. In this context the authors attempt to evaluate outcomes of case study based instruction in this paper.

## Hypotheses Development

***Theoretical Breadth (TB)***
Garda (1988), Rossiter (2001), and Hunt and Madhavaram (2006) have highlighted that case studies provide an important aspect of learning to the participant. Case studies provide theoretical breadth; which includes concepts, theories and frameworks. Such conceptual frameworks are essential for students to understand the subject and to structure the decision making process in the case context. Conceptual frameworks are important as they help the student understand the subject in a deeper and more systematic manner. Literature has supported this assertion and conceptual frameworks are known to help learn the concept better (Garda, 1988) and such frameworks also help in organizing and solving marketing problems (Rossiter, 2001). Thus, it is essential that concepts and theories are provided alongside case studies for them to assist learning and overall effectiveness of the marketing course.

Similar to conceptual frameworks, the role of the theories is also critical in any method of instruction. Hunt (2002) mentions that Theory, defined as "*a systematically related set of statements, including some law-like generalizations, that is empirically testable*" is extremely important in marketing education since such theorizing leads to a normative theory, which is a "*systematically related set of statements, including some normative imperatives (prescriptive statements), that purports to assist decision makers in accomplishing their objectives*". Such theories are critical in assisting the marketing practitioner in making effective decisions. Thus a good theoretical and conceptual breadth is critical to provide overall effectiveness of the course. Theoretical and conceptual clarity is one of the key ingredients to the success of the case method, such frameworks and theories are often extremely useful to the student in learning marketing (Day and Montgomery, 1999); thus the study hypothesizes:

***H1: Theoretical breadth in case study method will be positively associated with the perception of learning***
***H2: Theoretical breadth in case study methods will be positively associated with the overall effectiveness of the course.***

***Student Engagement (SE)***
Case study methods, as a teaching tool, has its foundations in the active learning theories, which postulate that learning is not only from the instructor but also from one's experiences and from interacting with one's peers (Greek, 1995). It is based on the fundamental shift in the approach that learning is not merely about memorizing and remembering, but more of a function of experience and doing. Lomb and Blowers (1998) illustrate that learning from activities and experiences involves a great deal of improvement in critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, nurturing leadership,

improve multiculturalism and appreciate the context; all of which are essential purposes of using case studies in a marketing classroom (Henson, Kennett & Kennedy, 2003). Student engagement (SE) has been established as a critical requirement for the success of teaching programs. Case study teaching is considered as a useful mechanism to get students actively involved in learning (Galbraith, 1992; McAlpine, 1992). Case studies have been established as a very effective tool for active learning approaches.
We argue that student engagement is a required necessary condition for learning and effectiveness of a marketing course. Case methods allow the student to analyze, evaluate, conceptualize and discuss the application of marketing. Holkeboer (1993) highlighted three key learnings that are provided by case studies; these include (i) critical-thinking process, (ii) identification of a core problem, and (iii) brainstorm possible solutions. All of the aforementioned learning goals require an implicit engagement of the student at all stages. Thus student engagement is also a critical aspect of the learning and overall effectiveness of a marketing course that uses case studies, without which such courses are bound to fail. Similar approaches are provided by various proponents of experiential learning methods (Kolb, 1984; Sims, 2002). Thus the study hypothesizes:

***H3: Student engagement in case study methods will be positively associated with the perception of learning***

***H4: Student Engagement in case study methods will be positively associated with the overall effectiveness of the course.***

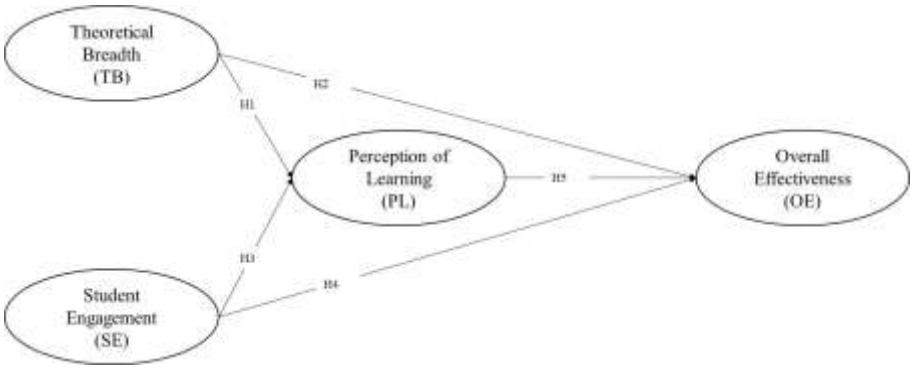
### *Learning*

Learning is best explained as the process that a student undergoes during stages of problem-solving, thinking, perceiving and remembering. Such learning happens in every course, wherein the student learns to use the course content to experience problem-solving situations, understand the business context, think deeply about the problem at hand, and remember key facts and figures. Such learning is further explained by various learning styles (e.g. Curry, 1987; Riding & Cheema, 1991). Students use these learning styles to evaluate their relative learning from respective courses. Unless the student perceives that they have learned effectively from the course, their overall evaluation of the course will not be good, and the perception of the student's learning will be dependent on the depth of the journey that they underwent with understanding, evaluating, memorizing, and solving the problems presented to these students. Thus the study hypothesizes:

***H5: Students perception of learning will be positively associated with the overall evaluation of learning.***

***Figure 1:***

*Conceptual Model and Hypotheses*




## Methodology

Data for the empirical investigation of the model was collected from 189 students participating in their Marketing-1 course at an Indian University. The students participated in the exercise based on a voluntary mechanism and no monetary incentive was provided for their participation. Based on initial evaluation, 176 responses were considered for the evaluation of the model. The next sections discuss details of the respondent profile, details of the research instrument, the reliability and validity of the data, and the Partial Least Square based Structural Equations Modelling (PLS-SEM) based analyses of the results.

**Respondent Profile**

Out of the 189 responses that were collected, 176 were found to be complete to be used in further evaluation stages. 32.3% of the sample was female and the average age of respondent was 23.5 years. The youngest respondent was 20 years old, while the oldest was 34. Students in the sample had a wide array of basic disciplines that they had studied prior to doing their MBA. These disciplines included Engineering, Commerce, Economics, Architecture, Medical studies, Business studies, and Core sciences. The sample was diverse and hence appropriate for such a study. The use of students in this research meets the Ethical requirements of the University.

**Research Instrument**

The research instrument was developed from existing measures from literature. A paper-pencil questionnaire was developed and administered in the classroom. The questionnaire measured four variables of interest (apart from demographics). These included (i) Theoretical breadth (TB), (ii) Student engagement (SE), (iii) Perception of learning (PL), and (iv) Overall effectiveness (OE). The instruments for measurement of the aforementioned constructs were adopted from the SEEQ questionnaire of Marsh (1982). SEEQ (Students' Evaluations of Educational Quality) is one of the most comprehensive and well-established battery of items available for the evaluation of student's learning. Response to the items were captured in a numerically anchored five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The scale had a neutral mid-point at 3.

TB was measured using four items which included (i) instructor contrasted implications of various theories well using case studies, (ii) instructor presented background of ideas/concepts well using various case studies, (iii) case studies were used by the instructor to present points of view other than own, and (iv) case discussions aided the instructor to discuss current developments in field.
SE was measured using four items which included (i) students were encouraged to participate in class discussions, (ii) students were invited to share ideas and knowledge, (iii) students were encouraged to ask questions and give answers, and (iv) students were encouraged to express their own idea.

PL was measured using four items that included (i) use of case studies made the course intellectually challenging and stimulating, (ii) case study methods made me learn valuable concepts, (iii) interest in the subject was improved by using case studies, and (iv) case studies made it easy to learn & understand the subject.

Finally, overall evaluation of the course (OE) was measured by asking five questions, which included (i) required case-study discussions were valuable, (ii) case preparations contributed to better appreciation/ understanding of the subject, (iii) how does this course compare with others at the university? (iv) how effective are case studies to teach the concepts?, and (v) how did the course satisfy your hunger for learning? The last three items for OE were measured using a five-point Likert format that ranged from 1 (Very Poor) to 5 (Very Good).

## Results

### Reliability and Validity

Reliability and Validity of the model was established prior to evaluating support for the hypotheses. The analysis was conducted using Partial Least Square based Structural Equations Modelling (PLS-SEM) in the study. Structural Equations Modelling (SEM) is a second-generation multivariate statistical method, used to test hypothesized relationships (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). SEM is a well-established methodology in marketing (Bagozzi 1994; Hulland 1999). PLS-SEM is found to be appropriate to test models without very large sample size requirements (Chin & Newsted, 1999), or enforcing strict normality assumptions (Chin, 1998), and thus appropriate for this study. Table 1 provides the summary of reliability and validity indices.

Results (Table 1) indicated that all Composite Reliability values were greater than 0.845, and all Cronbach's Alpha values were greater than 0.758; both of which indicate a good internal consistency and reliability of the suggested model. Convergent validity of the model was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) criterion, and by evaluating factor loadings. Results (Table 1) indicated that all AVE scores were greater than the minimum threshold of 0.5 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) and factor loadings were greater than 0.6. Thus the model displayed adequate reliability and validity. Discriminant validity of the model was assessed by comparing the inter-construct correlations to the square root of respective AVE's (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The square root of AVEs was found to be greater than the inter-construct correlations. Discriminant validity was also assessed using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) (Henseler et al., 2015), wherein maximum HTMT values for each construct was found to be less than 0.838, establishing acceptable discriminant validity. Having established the reliability and validity of the model, the paper further proceeds to discuss the results of PLS-SEM.

**Table 1:**
*Reliability and Validity Indices*

| | | Factor Loading | CA | CR | AVE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Theoretical Breadth (TB)** | | | 0.75 | 0.84 | 0.57 |
| 1 | Instructor contrasted implications of various theories well using case studies | 0.802 | | | |
| 2 | Instructor presented background of ideas/concepts well using various case studies | 0.820 | | | |
| 3 | Case studies were used by the instructor to present points of view other than own | 0.777 | | | |
| 4 | Case discussions aided the instructor to discuss current developments in field | 0.629 | | | |
| **Student Engagement (SE)** | | | 0.92 | 0.94 | 0.81 |
| 1 | Students were encouraged to participate in class discussions | 0.908 | | | |
| 2 | Students were invited to share ideas and knowledge | 0.897 | | | |
| 3 | Students were encouraged to ask questions and give answers | 0.881 | | | |
| 4 | Students were encouraged to express their own idea | 0.927 | | | |
| **Perception of Learning (PL)** | | | 0.81 | 0.87 | 0.63 |
| 1 | Use of case studies made the course intellectually challenging and stimulating | 0.761 | | | |
| 2 | Case study methods made me learn valuable concepts | 0.826 | | | |
| 3 | Interest in the subject was improved by using case studies | 0.834 | | | |
| 4 | Case studies made it easy to learn & understand the subject | 0.772 | | | |
| **Overall Effectiveness (OE)** | | | 0.81 | 0.86 | 0.56 |
| 1 | How does this course compare with others at the institute? | 0.691 | | | |
| 2 | How effective are case studies to teach the concepts? | 0.772 | | | |
| 3 | How did the course satisfy your hunger for learning? | 0.630 | | | |
| 4 | Required case-study discussions were valuable | 0.803 | | | |
| 5 | Case preparations contributed to better appreciation/ understanding of the subject | 0.851 | | | |

**PLS-SEM Analysis**
PLS-SEM was conducted with Bootstrapping method for test of hypothesis with 1000 subsamples. $R^2$ was evaluated for each latent variable, $R^2$ for PL was found to be 0.473 (Adj. $R^2$ =0.467), while that for OE was found to be 0.540 (Adj. $R^2$ =0.532). Both $R^2$ values for latent variables established good explanatory power of the model. The summarized results of PLS-SEM analysis are provided in Table 2 below.

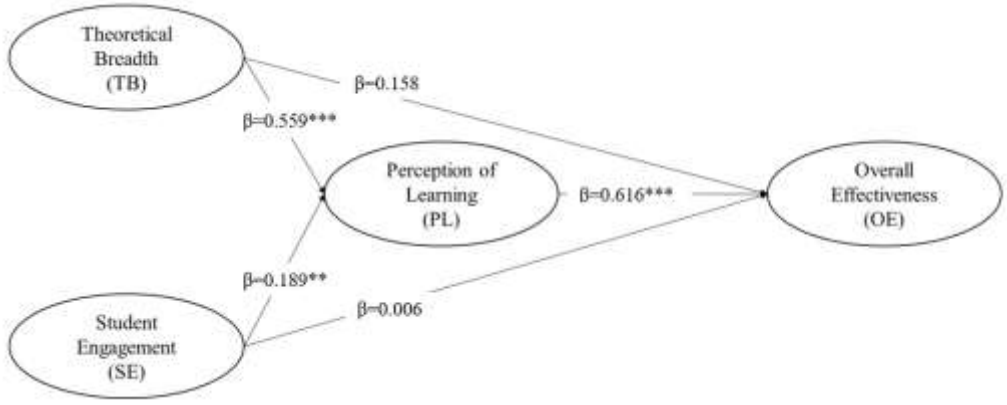
**Table 2:**
*Summary of PLS-SEM hypotheses tests*

| Hypotheses | | | | β | Sig | Finding |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***H1*** | TB | → | PL | 0.559 | 0.001 | Supported |
| ***H3*** | SE | → | PL | 0.189 | 0.006 | Supported |
| ***H2*** | TB | → | OE | 0.158 | 0.065 | Not Supported |
| ***H4*** | SE | → | OE | 0.006 | 0.935 | Not Supported |
| ***H5*** | PL | → | OE | 0.616 | 0.000 | Supported |

Observations from initial analyses (Table 2) indicate that three of the five hypothesized relationships were supported as anticipated. H1, H2 and H5 were found to be acceptable

based on the PLS-SEM analyses. Although the results of the PLS-SEM analyses also indicated that Hypotheses H2 and H4 were not supported as per the PLS-SEM analysis. This finding was interesting as they propose the possibility of a mediation effect of PL on the relationships between TB and OE, as well as SE and OE. Figure 2 provides the summary of the PLS-SEM model and path coefficients.

***Figure 2:***
*PLS-SEM Model and Results of Hypotheses Tests*




To further investigate the mediation effect of PL, specified mediation tests were conducted. These tests were conducted to establish the role of PL in mediating the relationship between TB → OE, and SE → OE. Mediation was tested by evaluating the bootstrapped confidence intervals (CI) as suggested by Preacher & Hayes (2004). Results indicated that PL mediated a significant indirect effect between TB → OE (indirect effect= 0.344, p<0.000, CI: 0.215-0.492) and similarly PL mediated a significant indirect effect between SE → OE (indirect effect= 0.117, p<0.014, CI: 0.033-0.217). Thus, it was understood that PL mediated (full) the relationship between TB → OE and SE → OE.

## Discussion

The study evaluated the role of Theoretical Breadth (TB) and Student Engagement (SE) in the learning (PL) and overall effectiveness (OE) of using case methods in marketing courses. This study is critical in the context that case studies are a very frequently used pedagogical tool in the marketing discipline. The use of case studies have been established to be effective in learning marketing (e.g. Barnes, Christensen & Hansen 1994; Boehrer & Linsky 1990; Karns 1993; Rogers & Rymer 1998).

Henson, Kennett, and Kennedy (2003) highlight the four main objectives accomplished by using case studies in marketing courses. These include (i) development of problem-solving skills, (ii) addition of realism to theory application, (iii) development of interpersonal and communication skills, and (iv) encouragement of greater student responsibility for learning. It is in this context that the study was envisaged. Theoretical Breadth (TB) refers to the theoretical and conceptual knowledge; which is essential for the learning of marketing (Hunt & Madhavaram, 2006). The study asserted from the evaluation of the PLS-SEM model that TB had a positive association with the student's Perception of Learning (β= 0.559, p= 0.001) thus providing support for H1, although there was no support for H2 which dealt with the relationship between TB and overall effectiveness (OE) of the course (β= 0.006, p= 0.935); the study further found that PL mediates and indirect effect of 0.344 (p<0.000, CI: 0.215-0.492) on OE. This signifies that learning is critical for the student's overall evaluation of the course's effectives. Unless the student perceives the learning quotient of the course to be high, there is no clear way the student would perceive the course effective.

Student Engagement (SE) on the other hand illustrates the role played by the student in the process of learning. Case study situations often are intriguing to make the student ask questions in the process of arriving at case solutions. This process of inquiry involves the students to use analytic and critical thinking skills (Henson, Kennett & Kennedy, 2003). PLS-SEM model indicated that SE had a positive association with the student's Perception of Learning (β= 0.189, p= 0.006) thus providing support for H3. There was no support for H4 which argues the relationship between SE and OE (β= 0.158, p= 0.065). The study also finds that PL mediates the relationship between TB and OE, as well as SE and OE, wherein PL mediates and indirect effect of 0.117 ($p<0.014$, CI: 0.033-0.217) on OE.

The study finds that both TB and SE are critical factors for the effectiveness of a marketing course. Both SE and TB prove to be positive influences towards learning (PL). Interestingly the perception of learning played a very key role in the overall evaluation (OE) of the course. Key take away from the study indicates that TB and SE are both critical course design elements for the successful learning and overall effectiveness of the course.

## Conclusion

The study provides some significant contributions for marketing faculty, and also for other disciplines where there is a great prevalence of case methods. Case study methods in marketing courses have faced criticism as they fail to teach the student any of the painstaking academic research that is done by most faculty (Shugan, 2006). This is a key problem with marketing courses that rely solely on case studies and the tacit knowledge that student's learn from the case discussion. The findings of this study show encouraging directions for faculty to design courses that use case study methods, and at the same time have good foundation on theoretical concepts. Such an extensive theoretical breadth (TB) is displayed to be an influencing factor for the students learning and overall favorable evaluation of the course. This finding is critical as it provides encouraging directions to faculty members to use theoretical concepts in synergy with the case study method. Instructors must also use as many avenues as possible to get the students engaged in various stages of the case study. Students must be encouraged to have small group discussions prior to the class. During the classroom discussion, students should be encouraged to participate without inhibitions and further faculty should encourage engagement as such engagement leads to favorable learning and evaluation of the course.

The study also finds that PL mediates the relationship between TB and OE, as well as the relationship between SE and OE. This signifies that perception of learning is critical for the student's overall evaluation of the course's effectives. This finding is another significant contribution of this study. Here, this finding of the paper suggests that unless students perceive that they have learned something substantial, their overall evaluation of the course is not going to be favorable. Thus, marketing and international business faculty using case studies in their course must, in addition to increasing TB and opportunities for SE, focus on the students learning styles and ensure that the students perceives and understands the key takeaway's from the course. Faculty must ensure adequate time to debrief and summarize case discussions to make the learning effective and moreover perceivable to the students. Faculty must also ensure theoretical concepts are clearly articulated in the context of the case to make it easier to understand and make evident to the student.

This study provides a foundation to more studies in future that should empirically investigate the effectiveness of major pedagogical tools used in marketing. After all, scientific methods in marketing education and practice have been long argued (theoretical and practical orientations of marketing, as a discipline, have been a matter

of great debate over the years (e.g. Hunt, 1991; Buttle, 1994; Deshpande, 1983) and this paper is a humble step in that direction.

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