

**CASE STUDIES AS A
TEACHING-LEARNING TOOL
IN ACCOUNTING AND
MARKETING COURSES**

An Instructor's Perspective

Yusof Ismail



IIUM PRESS

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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IIUM Press

Published by:
IIUM Press
International Islamic University Malaysia

First Edition, 2011
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Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Yusof Ismail: Case Studies As a Teaching-Learning Tool in Accounting and Marketing Courses: An Instructor's Perspective

ISBN: 978-967-418-186-4

Member of Majlis Penerbitan Ilmiah Malaysia – MAPIM
(Malaysian Scholarly Publishing Council)

Printed by :
IIUM PRINTING SDN.BHD.
No. 1, Jalan Industri Batu Caves 1/3
Taman Perindustrian Batu Caves
Batu Caves Centre Point
68100 Batu Caves
Selangor Darul Ehsan
Tel: +603-6188 1542 / 44 / 45 Fax: +603-6188 1543
EMAIL: iiumprinting@yahoo.com

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CHAPTER 7

Case Studies in Consumer Behavior

Kalthom Abdullah

Introduction

As a student pursuing western education for my undergraduate and master's programs in an American university, I was more or less at awe at the way the professors go about delivering their lectures in class. Not much of the materials or chapters were discussed in class, students were responsible for reading and digesting those materials and come prepared in class, professionally discussing and presenting cases as a company executive would. Of hand the American students would speak up immaculately on solutions and recommendations to company cases, with materials not solely from the text but from other sources gathered from the materials or real life happenings in the business world. I was still struggling to decipher the materials covered in the textbook, with the aid of a dictionary for words most of which I did not understand. It took me many hours to understand the materials, and I had come to class expecting the professors to teach me about those topics. And everyday, there was not much being taught in class, just discussions, and cases. I had to work extra hard in trying to catch up with what was discussed in class and relating them to the materials in the books. And that applied to all my courses especially in my area of speciality, that is, *Marketing*, which includes *Marketing Principles*, *Marketing Management*, *Advertising Management*, *Consumer Behaviours*, *Consumer Law*, besides the *Management* related courses such as *Organizational Behaviour*, and *Strategic Management*.

The only course that was not case loaded was *International Business*. For that course, it was all grasping all the materials in the book or you would not know what to write in your exam scripts. I disliked group work because being a foreigner, you have to prove that you were smart and could contribute some expertise (in my case I scored very high in memorising concepts and theories) to be included in any group. Since most of the American students were working, they could effortlessly apply their experience in all the case solutions. So, it was then that I learnt that a very effective method of learning was to combine knowledge from the outside world and experience, with the foundations gathered from the concepts and theories in the book. One would have an advantage with written communication skills coupled with oral presentation skills. Gone are the days when we resorted to writing our points on the white board, now it's all technologically mind boggling fantastic power point presentation slides with sound, music, videoclips, and cross-referencing from the websites.

Teaching the undergraduate courses using case studies for the second year level courses is a hopeless attempt, as the students expect answers to the cases from the instructor. Practically, the instructor reads the case. in class, explains to them about the case, and just probing for answers. If that fails then, just give them the answers for one case, and try again in another case the next time around. I also have to be a walking dictionary as I am supposed to know