

THE USE OF SELF-EVALUATIONS TO ASSESS CASE DISCUSSION: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION

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ABSTRACT

As the dependence on case -based pedagogies in marketing education increases, so does the importance of effective and insightful assessment of students' performance in case discussions.

Assessing student participation in case discussions presents challenges for faculty as relying on memory may lead to biases due to original perceptions or a single memorable incident (Hertenstein, 1991) while extensive note taking may distract the faculty from effectively leading the discussion. The case method helps discussants gain critical thinking, develop self-analysis, confidence and responsibility (Aylesworth, 2008) which suggests the use of an introspective means of assessment such as self-evaluations. Given that case discussions require each student to closely follow the discussion and contribute meaningfully, making students evaluate each other is likely to be a distraction. Also, preparation (reading the case) prior to class and attention paid in class can be most accurately assessed by an honest and introspective self analysis. Finally, the introspective nature of self-evaluations will help students better identify their own strengths and weaknesses, especially if a clearly established rubric is provided that identifies strengths and weaknesses.

In this research we develop a three-level, iterative self evaluation rubric designed to enhance students' competence in evaluating their own case discussion skills and identify their own strengths and weaknesses in case discussions. We identify *preparation*, *attention*, and *discussion* as the three dimensions of participation in a case discussion that, if assessed accurately and longitudinally, will provide an effective measure of students' performance and provide them tools for self improvement.

Participants of the first study of this research responded to a survey assessing their experience with self-evaluations and the correlation between self and faculty evaluations while participants of the second study evaluated their own performance in case discussions using the above-mentioned rubric three times during the semester. The evidence that emerges from the two studies demonstrates the value of the introspective, self-evaluative process in a case-based pedagogy.

Instead of being a tool for strategic self-enhancement, self-evaluations provide students considerable introspective insights that aid learning. In addition, the studies indicate that students benefit from multiple self-evaluation opportunities as the use of the iterative, multi-dimensional self-evaluation process provides them an opportunity to develop and hone their self-evaluation skills and provides specific direction on how to better prepare for case analysis and classroom participation. With respect to the three-level assessment tool, evidence indicates that while the *discussion* component of the rubric appears to be immediately "easier" for students to self-assess, *preparation* and *attention* are dimensions students improve on progressively.

Educators utilizing a case-based method of instruction should consider the use of a self-evaluation process as an element in the evaluative rubric used to assess student learning. Future research must investigate the effectiveness of such means of assessment in all pedagogical methods besides the case method using longitudinal investigation of the progressive improvements in students' skills provided by iterative, multi-dimensional self-evaluations.

References Available on Request