Changing Mindsets: Stimulating Deep Learning through innovative Case Assessment involving Peers

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Abstract

Rising competition among business schools in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) challenge them to focus on student centered learning. This requires creating a learning environment that focuses on deep not surface learning, achieved through design of appropriate assessment techniques. This study examines effect of introducing an innovative case challenge component together with conventional case presentation, on student self and deep learning capacity resulting from increased formative self and peer evaluation. Capturing learning via case studies in the four stages of individual, small group, large group and after class reflection, the results highlight increased self-learning capabilities and development of management competencies as facilitated through the challenge component of case assessment among a large cohort of undergraduate students.

Key words:

Business schools, Learning via Case studies, Student-centered Learning, Learning environment, Learning via Case studies, Management competencies

Rising competition among academic institutions in UAE has put substantial pressure on higher education institutions in the region to adopt student-centered approaches to teaching and learning while meeting national and international accreditation standards. Administrators and academics are increasingly focusing on ‘outcomes-centered assessment’ and ‘constructive alignment’, defined by Biggs and Tang (2009) as a process wherein we: “Systematically align the teaching/learning activities, and the assessment tasks to the intended learning outcomes, according to the learning activities required in the outcomes” (p.7). Indeed, one of the true tests of constructive alignment is whether the graduates of a degree program possess the knowledge and skills that the degree outcomes state the students will attain. Academics must therefore identify mechanisms by which approaches to teaching and design of assessments can stimulate deep as opposed to surface learning, while ensuring learning outcomes for the subject and the degree are attained by the students. Good teaching has been defined by Biggs and Tang (2009) as, “Getting most students to use the level of cognitive processes needed to achieve the intended outcomes that the more academic students use spontaneously” (p.11). Furthermore, the significance of designing assessments that support life-long learning as opposed to learning that results in short-term outcomes is increasingly the focus of assessment literature (Boud & Falchikov, 2006; Gibbs & Simpson, 2004-2005; Boud, 2000).
These concerns provide the impetus for this study that tries to examine the impact of a creative case study assessment technique in facilitating deep learning approaches among undergraduate students while building skills for life-long learning. Case study assessments are typically situational examples to review and evaluate how a problem occurred and ensure that similar problems are prevented in future. It involves step-by-step thinking through a situation, evaluating issues and taking logical and educated steps towards effective decision making. As such, it is widely believed and accepted that Case method of teaching and assessment leads to higher level of learning as reflected through application and analyses, besides being an effective tool for building meta-skills such as problem solving and decision-making. However, the manner in which, case assessment is designed and implemented in academic settings in general may trigger a surface learning approach devoid of any long-term benefits thus failing to achieve the higher order cognitive thinking. This is particularly evident in those specific situations wherein case assignments are submitted as a group report and group presentation, wherein individual accountabilities may be limited which then results in students failing to benefit from group interactions and related discussions. However the skewed focus on the usage of peers in such cases as substitute graders have been criticized (Siva, 2000; Cheng & Warren, 2000; Liu & Carless, 2006) because of lack of reliability in addition to the negative impact this has on fostering a collaborative mindset and skill-set (Lopez-Real and Chan, 1999).

The present research addresses these aforementioned issues by designing and implementing an innovative case assessment technique that examines the impact that this innovative peer assessment and feedback technique has on increased accountability and deeper approaches to learning among students. The paper starts with a review of literature on assessments, emphasizing deep versus surface approaches to learning, formative versus summative assessments, case assessment, and trends and gaps related to literature on peer assessment. The second section will elaborate upon the methodology adopted for the study and the final section will conclude with the results and discussion.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**
The key question in a particular assessment practice is ‘How does this assessment practice support learning?’ This is based on the fundamental assumption that assessment tasks should simultaneously be ‘learning tasks’ as well, which is at the heart of Bigg’s (1999) notion of ‘constructive alignment’. Biggs and Tang (2009) further state that ‘it is not what teachers do, but what students do that’s important’ (p.19). As opposed to one-way transmission of information and attributing learning differences to differences in student capability and motivation, a student-centered approach to teaching (Level 3 conception of teaching) emphasizes on first articulating desired levels of understanding among students and then designing specific teaching and learning activities to facilitate students to reach those desired levels of learning (Biggs and Tang, 2009).

Before we can answer how to facilitate deep learning, it is important to distinguish between deep and surface approaches to learning. The latter occurs when piecemeal approaches to teaching, assessment and learning are used which fail to lead to in depth learning and understanding and therefore fails to achieve the intended learning outcomes. On the other hand, teaching and assessment that stimulates students to take an active role in their learning by asking questions, hypothesizing, and engaging, applying and presenting problems facilitates deep approach to learning, Biggs and Tang (2009). Ramsden et al. (1992) provide further evidence that it is the design of assessments that determine whether a student takes a deep or surface approach to learning. Likewise, Boud and Falchikov (2008) assert that ‘assessment rather than teaching has a major influence on learning’ (p.4).

An important issue to be considered in assessment is the formative versus summative aspects of assessment feedback. There is substantial evidence in literature which indicates that as opposed to an overemphasis on grading and summative assessment, formative feedback related to the quality of work, when detailed and timely foster intrinsic motivation, while enabling students to engage with learning at a deeper level (Boud & Falchikov, 2007; Gibbs & Simpson, 2004-05; Sadler, 1998; Black & William, 1998 a & b). This learning is effective particularly if there are opportunities to act upon formative feedback to improve subsequent work thus closing the feedback loop (Higgins, et. al. 2002; Boud, 2000, Carless et. al.
Furthermore, drawing cues from the conception of a ‘learning society’ and ‘sustainable development’ Boud (2000) has also proposed the need to design ‘sustainable assessments’, which he defined as “assessments that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of students to meet their own future learning needs” (pp. 151). This essentially implies that assessment design must foster the kind of contextualized learning reflective of real-life challenges. The only way students develop this capability, is by having opportunities to collaborate, while familiarizing themselves with criteria and standards of assessment, and further developing the skill to assess the quality of one’s own work and those of the others (Boud, 2000; Boud & Falchikov, 2006).

The preceding discussion signifies the need to balance formative with summative feedback to benefit student learning in the longer term. However, modularization of courses and short semesters coupled with increasing workloads and class sizes makes it difficult to provide detailed one on one formative feedback on assessment. It is within this context that peer learning assumes utmost significance. There is substantial support for the significance of peer assessment as a contributor for student engagement with the assessment process besides contributing to their ability to develop critical thinking skills and other skills relevant for practical life such as the ability for evaluating one-self and others (Higgins, et. al. 2002, Sivan, 2000; Mac Alpine, 1999). Are these benefits for real? Cheng & Warren (2000) have provided evidence that incorporating some form of peer assessment lead to a much wider spread of marks by identifying individual contribution thus enhancing perceptions of fairness and equity. However, there is evidence to indicate that involving peers in grading may lead to in-group versus out-group feeling thus leading to unhealthy competition, in turn casting doubt on the reliability of the grades as given by the peers. In order to combat this problem, Lopez-Real & Chan (1999) propose an additive approach that involves a ‘process assessment’ and ‘product assessment’, with peers reviewing and providing feedback on group interaction processes and contributions and tutors grading the product or final project. While there are opportunities for students to extend from ‘self’ to ‘others’ when engaging in some form of peer assessment, thus facilitating further learning (Liu & Carless, 2006), it is also important to take specific
steps to enable a shared understanding of assessment criteria if one is to achieve these benefits (Carless, 2006). Various authors have advocated the need to engage students in the process of setting criteria and standards of assessment early on in the process to create more buy-in (Sivan, 2000; Lopez-Real & Chan, 1999; Cheng & Warren, 2000; Liu & Carless, 2006). Carless and Liu (2006) also suggest that instead of using peer assessment as a means to an end, this process of involving peers is treated as an end in itself, which is much more conducive to learning as opposed to asking peers to classify each other on ill-defined scales (Boud, 2000; Sadler, 1998; Falchikov & Goldfinch, 2000; Stephanie, 1998). A question that merits attention here is how best to design ‘learning oriented assessment tasks’ in a way that involves students in the evaluation of their own work and that of their peers. In the assessment perspective of Gibbs and Simpson (2004-05), besides communicating clear and high expectations from students, the assessment task, must capture sufficient time and effort, distribute student effort across topics and weeks, and engage students in productive learning activity. Furthermore, building ‘feedback’ or ‘feed forward’ loops is very important whereby students use information provided to progress on their work and learning. Students can then become independent learners, capable of monitoring and improving quality of their work not only in class environment but also as life-long learners in their professions. The present study builds on the aforementioned findings to: Examine the impact of a creative peer assessment technique (within the context of case assessment) on a deep versus surface approach to learning.

RATIONALE

Literature documents that case assessments involve higher cognitive processes requiring student involvement in the learning process (Bonwell and Eison, 1991). Case analyses are student centered activities based on topics that demonstrate theoretical concepts in an applied setting (Davis and Wilcock, 2008). This is achieved when case assessments are designed in a way such that they can be completed by using research, peer discussion and application of theory to practice with intermittent interaction with lecturer. Thus, case method is an intensive, engaging and participatory learning method for students and can promote one or more of the following: application of theoretical concepts to bridge gap between
theory and practice, encouragement of active learning, development of key skills such as communication, group work and problem solving, sharing and use of personal knowledge and experience in the case, independent learning skills outside controlled class environment, ability to assess and use primary and secondary sources of information (Davis and Wilcock, 2008, Mustoe and Croft, 1999). From the aforementioned discussion, it is reasonable to assume that case assessments can contribute to what has been referred to in literature as a) declarative knowledge demonstrated by factual learning, and b) higher levels of procedural knowledge, reflected by an understanding of how and when to apply the concepts and at the highest level c) the development of strategic knowledge, described as a capability to be able to ask the ‘why’ questions (Blanchard and Thacker, 2007). However with existing dangers of ‘free riding’ and ‘secondary internet download’ adversely affecting learning, case method of learning and evaluation may degenerate to only ‘surface’ and not ‘deep’ learning. In addition, even if a few intrinsically motivated students who engage in case analyses demonstrate declarative and procedural knowledge, overall the opportunities for developing Meta cognitive processes such as the capability to ask the ‘why’ questions may not be achieved, particularly when case assessments are designed inappropriately.

Mauffette-Leenders et. al. (2007), have stipulated the need for three stages in learning with cases and that needs to be adhered to in the strictest sense for holistic learning with cases. These are: Stage 1: Individual preparation (which involves individuals to take on the position of the decision maker to address the problem at hand); Stage 2: Small group discussion (which provides an opportunity to test knowledge and understanding besides fostering idea-generation, team-work and confidence-building) and; Stage 3: Large group discussion (which comprises class discussion that provides an opportunity to test one’s knowledge and to share learning acquired in the first two stages). A fourth dimension includes the after-class reflection that closes the feedback-loop, thereby leading to highest levels of learning when learning with cases and impossible to achieve when any of the stages is missing (Mauffette-Leenders et. al.2007; Erskine et.al. 2003).
Given the stages of case preparation as proposed by Mauffette-Leenders et. al. 2007; Erskine et al. 2003, case assessment must therefore capture as much of ‘summative’ evaluation through in-class presentation using facts and theory (stimulating large group discussion or Stage 3) as of ‘formative’ evaluation as captured in the ‘process’ component of individual preparation and small group discussion (Stages 1 and 2). We propose therefore that such an assessment comprising some form of peer assessment when combined with summative evaluation by the tutor can have a lasting and deep impact on learning. Specifically, this study examines the impact of a ‘Case Challenge’ component on student learning approaches, this being deep versus surface approaches to learning in a large undergraduate advanced management class.

**METHODOLOGY**

Participants in the study included a large student cohort studying an undergraduate advanced management class of thirteen weeks comprising both lectures and tutorials. All students attend the same weekly lecture of two hours and then attend one-hour tutorials.

**ASSESSMENT DESIGN:** Students were assessed on:

1. **Case defense and presentation by a presenting team:** This included submission of a written executive summary to tutor and a *challenging team* forty – eight hours prior to presentation.

2. **A critique of case presentation by a peer group called the challenging team:** This included written submission of a set of questions to the tutor along with academic rationale for each question at the beginning of the presentation, to be used as the trigger for case challenge and

3. **Preparation and participation by all the remaining students in each case presentation, challenge and defense:** Tested through pop quizzes by tutor throughout the semester.

**DATA COLLECTION:**

Drawing from Mauffette-Leenders *et. al.* (2007), the case assessment process mapped the four stages using structured interviews:
Stage 1: Students’ prior experiences with Case analyses, presentation and case challenge

Stage 2: Impact of knowing that a peer group is to challenge the analysis of the presenting group, on: the presenting group’s preparation for the case and on: approaches to learning, including individual preparation and small-group discussion prior to case presentation and defense in class.

Stage 3: Impact of knowing a line of argument adopted by the presenting group (as reflected through their executive summaries) on: the challenging group’s preparation for case, to come up with challenging critique and, questions and on: approaches to learning adopted by the challenging group, including individual preparation and small-group discussion prior to case challenge in class.

Stage 4: Impact of the challenge component in class on the quality of the large-group discussion and learning outcomes for the general class participants.

Structured interviews were conducted with each participant after each had experienced both the presenting and the challenging roles as the after class reflection to assess individual learning experiences. In addition, the general participant interview (who at some point had experienced both presenting roles and challenging roles) captured the impact of introducing an additional case challenge component on large group discussion in class. All participants had assurance of confidentiality of data provided and their use only at an anonymous and aggregate level.

RESULTS

The section below captures student learning as responses to the four stages (as indicated in the previous section)

Stage 1: Students’ prior experiences with Case analyses, presentation and case challenge

Out of a sample of 71 respondents, 54 had experience of case analysis and presentation in earlier semesters; however only 42 had experience of both case preparation and then presentation in groups; the
remaining 28 did not. Seventeen (71-54) did not have any experience of case presentation and analysis prior to this class (see figure 1a for details). Out of the 42 who had experienced group level case preparation and presentation, as many as 39 students had experience of some rudimentary form of challenge to their presentation by way of Q&A sessions with the class and the tutor respectively (see Figure 1b). However no student had any experience with a formal pre-defined and evaluated ‘Case Challenge’ component of learning. Majority in the class confirmed that sufficient information had been provided to facilitate a shared understanding of assessment criteria (see Table 1 for details).

Stage 2: Impact of knowing that a peer group is to challenge the analysis of the presenting group

Presenting group students reported that more intense and in-depth preparation involving detailed research on the case situation was required. As remarked by a student “It requires the presenters to clearly understand the case and be prepared to clarify and state the facts against the challenge”. Opportunity to argue and counter-argue in a peer group rather than with the tutor helped the tutor as an independent observer to better assess student understanding and learning resulting in perceptions of fairer and equitable marking. As an indication of the ‘deep’ and thorough learning requirement, the following measures were captured from the structured interviews: It took the students 4 to 13 hours (S.D = 2.341, Mean = 9.48, N= 71) to prepare for the case presentation. (See Figure-2 for histogram). Sixty students (N=71) reported that it took longer for the group to prepare for the case presentation because of the inclusion of a challenge component. Fifty-four students (N=71) reported that it was important for presenting groups to find all the potential issues in the case along with all possible solutions to reduce the scope of challenge by the peer group. Furthermore, 52.1 % (N= 71) of the respondents said that they did extra research from a variety of sources (see figure 3). 63.4% (N=71) of the respondents said that the requirement to write the executive summary for the tutor and challenging group enabled all group members to arrive at a shared understanding of case problems and solutions (see figure 4).
Stage 3: Impact of knowing a line of argument adopted by the presenting group (as reflected through their executive summaries)

With regards the impact of the challenge component on challenging group learning, results revealed: As many as 68 respondents out of 71 used the guideline provided by the tutor at the beginning (Table 1) to prepare for case challenge. About seventy-seven percent responded that the ‘challenge component’ of evaluation affected their learning from the course as it ‘stimulated thinking’ or deep learning as opposed to surface learning. (See figure 5 for details). Most challenging groups reported spending extra time to read the case individually, to do research and then discuss the case as a group. (See Table-2 for details). This is succinctly captured in one group’s remark that “We had to research and analyze hard to find some facts that the presenting team might not consider. Therefore we had to look at scenarios and case problems from multidimensional aspects”. The executive summary provided by the presenting team helped in identifying the presenting team’s main areas of focus, such that the challenging team could prepare to challenge accordingly. As reported by one of the challenging groups “First we went through the case and tried to identify the key themes and the key issues in the case independently and then compared our analyses with the executive summary submitted by the presenting team to identify gaps”. The requirement for submitting the challenging questions along with rationale and possible answers to the tutor prior to the actual challenge in class was acknowledged by challenge groups as a very useful technique since it “gives a specific direction to think about the case”, by narrowing down the focus of the challenge to the most important issues in the case. The formal requirement to prepare for a case challenge reportedly increased individual preparation and the quality of small group discussion, accountability. This in turn enhanced synergy, helping develop skills to challenge the arguments presented and countering it with case facts and their alternative interpretation in accordance with theory as training for managerial success; 51 out of 71 respondents agreed on the importance of this (see Table 3, Item D). As remarked by a student “Individual and group accountability increased because preparing the challenge component requires more brainstorming and helped in achieving synergy”
Stage 4: Impact of the challenge component in class on the quality of the large-group discussion and learning outcomes for the general class participants.

With regard to the impact of the challenge component in class on the quality of the large-group discussion and learning outcomes for the general class participants, students reported that the case challenge component had a strong impact on understanding the case and its issues better. Most students reported that the challenging team’s arguments and questions helped them to think about concepts that they might not have thought about otherwise. This in turn helped them in their own preparation and understanding. As remarked by one student: “It helps in the sense that one would know how to prepare, present, challenge, and to avoid mistakes and pitfalls another group has made”. As remarked by another student “The case presentation and challenge scenario are like live forums to learn and discuss industry situation…… It was a good practice for how I could solve a problem in my company in the future.”

DISCUSSION

The present study attempted to examine the impact of including a case challenge by a peer group on deep versus surface approach to learning among a large cohort of advanced management students at the undergraduate level. Results provide substantial evidence that the inclusion of this peer assessment process encouraged three main stakeholders- presenting group, challenging group and the rest of tutorial group to take ownership for their own learning. As is evident from the previous section, the presenting group had to understand the case, the problem and possible solutions in detail to leave no room for counterargument by a well-informed challenge group. The challenging group and their arguments too came under similar scrutiny and peer pressure in the presence of a kind of jury in witness, this being the other students attending the presentation. This innovative and informed evaluation pattern encouraged ‘deep’ learning as is evident from the results indicating substantially more time being spent in case preparation through additional research and in small group discussions. Furthermore, since the presenting group and the challenging group used facts from the same case and concepts from the same lectures to
build and defend their arguments, group members as well as others in the tutorial including the tutor remained unbiased in judging the merits of a superior argument. The increase in difficulty level required process learning of linking case facts to theory for the specific purpose of addressing the burning problem highlighted in the case, and not in a disjointed manner, to avoid gaps in argument for challenging peers to exploit. This practice involved higher cognitive processes of applying concepts to live scenarios by both presenting group and challenge group creating a more intense and participatory learning environment where process related skills like presentation, defense, challenge, group work and outside classroom work are acquired besides subject/product skills. The requirement of submitting an executive summary forty-eight hours before class combined with a requirement for the challenging group to submit the set of challenging questions and rationale required both the presenting and challenging groups to put in more advanced preparations outside class, reflective of rigorous self-driven initiatives of students themselves as opposed to received learning in classrooms as achieved by conventional assessment approaches. Louise. et al. (2007) have also acknowledged that the first stage of individual preparation of the case outside of class is the foundation on which all the other stages such as small and large group discussion rests and therefore is fundamental to any learning using the case method. It is clear from this study that the case challenge component has successfully led to achievement of this objective. In addition, the inclusion of the challenge component clarified doubts in the presentation and provided ideas on how to approach a presentation or challenge in a case class to even the non-participating students. Overall results provide evidence that each student had an enhanced learning experience by being a member of presenting group, challenging group and general class as a result of this innovative case assessment.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study provides further validation for the constructivist paradigm and confirms that it is the design of assessments and perceptions of the learning environment that determine whether students take a deep or surface level approach to learning (Shepard, 2000; Ramsden, 1992, 1997; Entwistle 1991). From the discussion and findings of the research, it is evident that introduction of an innovative case
challenge component stimulates ‘deep’ learning (Biggs and Tang, 2009) involving peers in a case based evaluation process. The positive impact of formative assessment feedback on deep learning has been noted in literature (Higgins, Hartley & Skelton, 2002; Hyland, 2000, Black & William, 1998a; 1998b; Biggs, 1999). This learning which was also a collaborative and participative process was facilitated by ensuring that peers had familiarity with the evaluation criteria as provided through initial preparation by the tutor. Furthermore the opportunity to apply this criterion in the context of their peer group encouraged self-learning and increased capability to evaluate others’ work reflective of higher cognitive processes (Boud, 2000; Sivan, 2000; Chen and Warren, 2000; Liu and Carless, 2006). Introduction of peer challenge as a ‘process measure’ was a further merit of this approach with the tutor assessing the final summative (product) based on quality of arguments and counterarguments. Earlier literature has criticized the over reliance of peers as graders (Lopez-Real et. al. 1999; Mac Alpine, 1999; Sivan, 2000 ; Liu & Carless, 2006) and the peer assessment process as presented in this paper addresses this criticism by using a combination of process and product assessment, thereby reaping the benefits of collaborative learning, while ensuring perceptions of equity and objectivity. In the case presentation and challenge process, peer feedback was further embedded as a natural process of learning, aiding self reflection and learning and not a mere classification using undefined scales as in peer evaluation in the absence of a case challenge component (Bond, 2000; Sadler, 1998). As noted by Boud & Falchikov (2006), ‘Preparing students for lifelong learning necessarily involves preparing them for the tasks of making complex judgments about their own work and that of others and for making decisions in the uncertain and unpredictable circumstances in which they will find themselves in the future’ (p. 402).

This study’s limitation remains in it being a first attempt to test the impact of such an innovative assessment task on ‘deep’ versus ‘surface’ learning. More information needs to be collected on different student cohorts in a longitudinal manner to identify the learning effectiveness of this assessment tool and to test the generalizability of the results.
References:


Figures and Tables through stages:

**Stage 1:** Students’ prior experiences with Case analyses, presentation and case challenge

**Figure 1a:** Case preparation in Groups

![Bar chart showing frequency of yes and no responses for case preparation in groups.](image)
Figure 1b: Rudimentary Challenge: Question and Answer session with class
Stage 2: Impact of knowing that a peer group is to challenge the analysis of the presenting group

Figure- 2: Case preparation time distribution of presenting group after introducing a challenge component

![Histogram showing case preparation time distribution](image-url)
Figure 3: Frequency distribution of research/aids used by presenting group for preparation with a challenge group.
Figure 4: Frequency distribution of usefulness of having to submit an executive summary for case preparation by presenting group.
Stage 3: Impact of knowing a line of argument adopted by the presenting group (as reflected through their executive summaries)

Figure 5: Being part of a challenging team and its impact on students' learning
Table 1: Lecturer/Tutor initial briefing on preparation for innovative evaluation of case ‘presentation’ and ‘challenge’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Case Analyses guidelines posted in the subject folder.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Case Analyses requirements with Marking template clearly specified in the Subject Outline.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Marking criteria and expectations from presenters and challengers clearly defined in lecture and tutorial sessions.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>A simulation exercise conducted in tutorial as practice prior to evaluated presentation and challenge.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>On-going clarification and feedback on Case Presentation and Challenge.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Case material and preliminary reading provided at least two weeks in advance of Case Presentation and Case challenge.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Preparation by challenge team before receiving presenting group case summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case preparation and analysis by challenge team before receiving the executive summary</th>
<th>Students' responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading the case individually?</td>
<td>62  9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared analysis of case based on guidelines provided.</td>
<td>51  20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed case as group?</td>
<td>60  11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: In facing up to the challenge, the items in the table below were mostly considered important and very important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>VERY IMPORTANT</th>
<th>IMPORTANT</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>NOT IMPORTANT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A To clarify and understand questions clearly</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Identify which team member responds</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Use case facts to defend position</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D Identify alternative points of view</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>