# A LONGITUDINAL STUDY ON TEACHING CASE STUDIES IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AT AN OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING UNIVERSITY

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**Abstract**

The paper critically examines the use of the case study approach as an innovative teaching and learning method. The researchers' attention was captured by what students think of this teaching method and therefore the study was undertaken. Throughout the study, the researchers ascertained the perspectives of the student in the case study teaching method. The case study teaching method can provide students with an opportunity to learn and solve cases affecting society and organisations. The case study approach is a problem-solving-orientated learning and teaching pedagogy which makes teaching and learning active and alive.

The Department of Public Administration and Management at the University of South Africa (Unisa) adopted this approach in addition to the existing teaching and learning pedagogies. A longitudinal study of teaching case studies in Public Administration at Unisa was conducted from 2007 to 2009. The researchers wanted to ascertain the effectiveness of this method in making the teaching and learning of Public Administration relevant, and also wanted to assist students to become responsible citizens or public servants. In addition, this paper concludes that case studies have made a remarkable contribution to the graduateness of students, as they empower the students with the meta-skills and personal attributes necessary to succeed in the working environment and in life generally.