

Beyond AR and VR: immersive techniques for effective case teaching

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1. Introduction

The case method has been a cornerstone of management education for over a century, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making by exposing students to real-world business challenges. Introduced by Harvard Business School in the early 20th century, the case method has since evolved to become a globally recognized pedagogical approach (Ellet, 2018). While effective, traditional case teaching often relies on static classroom discussions that may not fully reflect the complexities of contemporary business environments. The rapid evolution of today's workplace demands more dynamic and interactive pedagogical approaches, making experiential learning an essential complement to traditional methods.

Experiential learning, as conceptualized by Kolb (1984), emphasizes an iterative process where learners gain knowledge through active participation, reflection and experimentation. Immersive techniques, which engage students directly in real-world or simulated contexts, align closely with this framework. By fostering emotional, cognitive and behavioral engagement, these techniques provide students with deeper insights into organizational decision-making and business dynamics, enhancing their ability to apply theoretical concepts in practical settings (Hsu and Wu, 2023; Huang *et al.*, 2022).

Management case studies, with their inherently narrative and problem-solving structure, provide fertile ground for integrating immersive techniques. These approaches expand the boundaries of case teaching by encouraging learners to engage beyond static materials, promoting a richer understanding of complex, real-world scenarios. Immersive learning environments create opportunities for students to contextualize theoretical concepts, develop critical thinking and enhance their problem-solving skills, better preparing them for the challenges of modern management education.

The adoption of immersive techniques also reflects broader trends in higher education, such as the shift toward learner-centered and active learning strategies. By fostering greater student ownership of the learning process, immersive methods encourage self-directed inquiry, collaboration and adaptability – qualities highly valued in today's workforce (Dighliya, 2025). Beyond skill-building, these approaches respond to the evolving expectations of employers for graduates equipped with both theoretical knowledge and practical experience.

Despite the increased interest and benefits, the adoption of immersive teaching methods in case-based learning remains limited. Barriers such as logistical challenges, resource constraints and a lack of faculty training often hinder their implementation (Lundgren *et al.*, 2024). In addition, there is a tendency to associate immersive learning with advanced

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Disclaimer. This case is intended to be used as the basis for class discussion rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a management situation. The case was compiled from published sources.

technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR). Much of the existing research focuses on these advanced technologies, which, while promising, are often resource-intensive and inaccessible for many institutions (Liu and Jagadish, 2024). This study addresses the gap by focusing on non-technological immersive methods that are cost-effective, scalable and adaptable to diverse educational settings.

The purpose of this study is to examine how immersive techniques can enrich traditional management case teaching, positioning the work as a pedagogical innovation paper that complements established case-based learning approaches. The phenomenology method provides detailed insights into how educators and students perceive and engage with these methods (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Rather than presenting a conventional case study, this paper contributes to the discourse on teaching innovation by offering experiential insights and implementation strategies that bridge the gap between theory and practice. The findings aim to inform educators seeking to integrate immersive pedagogies, such as protagonist engagement, reflective tasks and asynchronous media, into their case teaching repertoire. Ultimately, this study emphasizes the relevance of immersive techniques in preparing students for the complexities of modern business environments, highlighting their potential to transform management education into a more engaging, effective and impactful learning experience.

Although several immersive techniques presented in this paper, such as roleplay, field visits and interviews, may already be familiar to experienced educators, this study contributes by consolidating these methods within a cohesive, experiential framework tailored to case-based pedagogy. Grounded in phenomenological reflection and tested across multiple teaching cycles, the manuscript provides structured, scalable strategies that instructors can adapt to enhance classroom engagement, deepen contextual understanding and promote reflective problem-solving. By embedding immersive techniques within the logic and flow of case teaching rather than presenting them as external supplements, the paper seeks to inspire both replication and pedagogical innovation across a range of institutional and resource settings.

2. Review of literature

The case method, a hallmark of management education, has been extensively studied for its ability to foster analytical thinking and decision-making skills (Ellet, 2018). However, there is growing recognition of the need to move beyond traditional case teaching to incorporate immersive techniques that provide a more experiential and engaging learning environment.

2.1 Case-based learning and experiential education

Case-based learning is rooted in the constructivist theory of education, which emphasizes the role of active participation and reflection in knowledge construction (Kolb, 2014). A significant body of research supports the effectiveness of the case method in bridging the gap between theoretical concepts and real-world applications. Vitečková *et al.* (2024) found that students engaged in case discussions exhibited greater critical thinking and problem-solving skills compared to those exposed to lecture-based instruction. Similarly, Chen (2024) highlighted that case-based teaching fosters deeper engagement with the subject matter, enabling students to develop skills essential for managerial decision-making. Despite its merits, traditional case teaching often lacks the immersive elements needed to replicate the complexities of real-world scenarios fully.

Experiential learning, as conceptualized by Kolb (2014), offers a framework for enhancing case-based teaching through immersive techniques. Experiential methods such as roleplay, industry visits and simulations provide students with opportunities to engage with case content actively, thereby enhancing their learning experience. A study by Leal-Rodriguez and Albort-Morant (2019) demonstrated that experiential learning approaches

significantly improved students' ability to apply theoretical concepts to practical situations. These findings underscore the potential of immersive methods to transform case teaching into a more dynamic and impactful educational experience.

2.2 Immersive techniques in case teaching

Immersive techniques have gained traction as a means of enhancing the effectiveness of case-based teaching. Roleplay, for instance, allows students to assume the roles of key stakeholders in a case, enabling them to explore different perspectives and make decisions in a simulated environment. [Chang and Hwang \(2023\)](#) noted that roleplay exercises not only improved students' understanding of organizational dynamics but also fostered skills such as communication and teamwork. Similarly, interview-based learning, where students engage with case protagonists or industry executives, has been shown to deepen contextual understanding and provide unique insights into organizational challenges ([Bodolica et al., 2021](#)).

Field visits and industry tours represent another popular immersive approach. By exposing students to real-world business environments, these methods bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. For example, a study by [Ferns et al. \(2022\)](#) found that students who participated in industry visits exhibited greater confidence in applying their learning to professional contexts. However, logistical challenges, such as coordinating with organizations and managing large groups, often limit the feasibility of such approaches.

Beyond roleplay and field visits, subscription-based learning and product exhibitions have emerged as innovative immersive techniques. Subscription-based learning involves students engaging directly with a company's products or services, providing firsthand insights into its business model and customer experience. Product exhibitions, on the other hand, allow students to analyze and critique the design, marketing and positioning strategies of various offerings. These methods have been particularly effective in enhancing students' analytical and creative skills, as demonstrated in studies by [Vitečková et al. \(2024\)](#) and [Chang and Hwang \(2023\)](#).

2.3 Impact on learning outcomes

The integration of immersive techniques into case teaching has been associated with several positive learning outcomes. Chief among these is the enhancement of student engagement. Active participation in roleplay, interviews and field visits fosters a sense of ownership and accountability, which, in turn, motivates students to engage more deeply with case content ([Leal-Rodriguez and Albort-Morant, 2019](#)). In addition, immersive methods encourage critical thinking by exposing students to complex, real-world challenges that require analytical and creative problem-solving.

Another significant impact of immersive techniques is the development of soft skills such as communication, leadership and adaptability. Roleplay exercises, for instance, provide students with opportunities to practice negotiation and conflict resolution in a simulated environment. A study by [Nguyen \(2021\)](#) found that students who participated in roleplay activities exhibited greater confidence and competence in interpersonal interactions. Similarly, field visits and industry tours help students build professional networks and gain insights into organizational culture and practices.

The use of immersive techniques also aligns with the principles of universal design for learning (UDL), which emphasize the importance of providing multiple means of engagement, representation and expression ([Leinenbach and Corey, 2004](#)). By catering to diverse learning preferences, immersive methods ensure that all students, regardless of their background or learning style, can benefit from the case teaching experience.

2.4 Challenges and limitations

Despite their benefits, immersive techniques are not without challenges. Logistical constraints, such as the availability of resources and access to industry partners, often pose significant barriers to implementation (Rowe and Zegwaard, 2017). In addition, the reliance on external stakeholders, such as case protagonists and company executives, can introduce variability and unpredictability into the learning process. Educators must also navigate ethical considerations, such as ensuring the confidentiality of sensitive information shared during interviews or field visits (Nolen and Putten, 2007).

Moreover, there is a tendency to associate immersive learning exclusively with advanced technologies such as VR and AR. While these technologies offer significant potential, their high cost and technical requirements make them inaccessible to many institutions (Nguyen, 2024). This underscores the importance of exploring non-technological approaches to immersive case teaching, which are both cost-effective and scalable.

3. Research methodology

The research adopts an exploratory qualitative design based on self-reflection, ideal for analyzing the practical application of teaching strategies. Unlike traditional qualitative research involving external participants, this study relies on the authors' own observations and reflective journals. This approach helps to examine the authors' personal teaching experiences with non-technological immersive techniques in case teaching. Reflective practice enables educators to evaluate their pedagogical methods critically, offering deeper insights into their effectiveness and impact on student engagement and learning outcomes (Meng, 2023). The focus is on the authors' use of immersive techniques such as roleplay, industry visits, interviews with case protagonists and product exhibitions, as applied in widely used case studies from sources like Harvard Business School and Emerging Markets Case Studies of Emerald Publishing. This study highlights not only successful applications but also the challenges and adaptive strategies used when institutional support or technological resources were limited.

This methodology emphasizes transparency and integrity, with the authors committed to documenting both successes and challenges honestly. Recognizing the subjective nature of reflective practice, the study addresses reliability through the consistency and depth of reflections across multiple teaching sessions. The authors also engage in self-critique to challenge assumptions and enhance the rigor of their analysis.

While the study offers valuable insights into the practical application of immersive techniques, it is limited by its reliance on subjective self-reflection. The findings are specific to the authors' teaching contexts and may not be directly transferable to other educators or settings. In addition, the absence of external data collection restricts the study's ability to incorporate diverse perspectives, such as those of students or other educators. Despite these limitations, the reflective approach provides a detailed account of immersive methods and their impact, contributing to the broader discourse on experiential learning in management education.

3.1 Reflectivity statement

The authors are faculty members at a reputed university located in a metropolitan city that is nationally recognized for its concentration in information technology and biotechnology industries. The university has institutional agreements with leading case publishers, including The Case Centre, Harvard Business Publishing and Emerald Publishing, and has embedded case-based teaching and learning as a foundational pedagogical approach in its postgraduate programmes in business and management.

Each course within the postgraduate curriculum includes a minimum of five to a maximum of ten case studies, ensuring consistent exposure to real-world decision-making frameworks. All authors have extensive experience in using case studies across various management subjects and have iteratively experimented with the immersive techniques described in this paper over multiple teaching cycles. These iterations allowed the authors to critically reflect on what worked, adapt methods to different learner groups and refine their approaches across semesters.

To ensure the diversity and comprehensiveness of this paper, the authors integrated similar case studies from different publishers when exploring a specific theme. For instance, if a primary case was sourced from Harvard Business Publishing, a thematically aligned case was selected from Emerald or The Case Centre to provide additional perspectives. At least one case would have been experienced using each technique.

Furthermore, the proximity of protagonists, executives and companies featured in many of the cited cases – particularly those from retail, health-care and technology sectors – within the city limits provided unique opportunities for immersive engagements. These included store visits, guest interactions, executive interviews and virtual walk-throughs, enabling seamless, contextual application and deepened student engagement. This institutional and locational advantage has played a pivotal role in facilitating the reflective and immersive practices outlined in this study.

4. Immersive techniques in case teaching

Case teaching is a cornerstone of management and business education, emphasizing active participation and experiential learning. Traditional case teaching typically involves classroom discussions centered on pre-written narratives, allowing students to analyze scenarios, identify challenges and propose solutions. However, contemporary pedagogical demands call for more dynamic, interactive approaches that move beyond static materials. Immersive techniques, which engage students on deeper cognitive and emotional levels, have emerged as a transformative solution. These techniques are particularly valuable for bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills. This section explores a range of non-technological immersive techniques in case teaching and their relevance in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes.

4.1 *Going beyond case study material (supplementary research)*

Immersive techniques in case studies overcome the limitations of traditional static approaches by encouraging students to explore beyond the provided materials. Instead of passively analyzing fixed content, students conduct additional research, such as examining financial performance, market trends and competitors. This method fosters independent inquiry, critical thinking and a contextual understanding of real-world complexities. Research supports this approach, showing that supplementing case studies with external resources enhances students' ability to understand the dynamic nature of business environments (Ellet, 2018). Rooted in constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes active knowledge construction (Jonassen, 2000), this approach aligns with modern pedagogical practices.

For example, the Richard Ivey School of Business Case Study series includes "Aravind Eye Care System: Providing Total Eye Care to the Rural Population," which explores Aravind's innovative approach to addressing blindness in India. Students can research its recent outreach programs, financial performance and partnerships, such as those with SEVA and Google AI, to analyze how Aravind sustains its low-cost, high-volume model (Velayudhan *et al.*, 2011).

Similarly, the Emerald Emerging Markets case study “Workplace Discipline for an Employee’s Resilience at Indian Bank” prompts students to investigate Indian Bank’s current HR initiatives, employee engagement strategies and workforce retention challenges. By examining market reports and competitor strategies, students develop a broader understanding of the banks’ adaptability (Singh and Singh, 2018). International cases, such as “Apple (Computer) Inc.: Whither the Mac?” and “Tesla Inc.: Accelerating Sustainable Profits,” enable students to study Apple’s efforts and Tesla’s sustainability efforts in the EV market. Through supplementary research, students critically analyze strategies, innovations and regulatory challenges, gaining deeper insights into dynamic global business landscapes (Klassen *et al.*, 2020; Lenox *et al.*, 2017).

4.2 Meeting the protagonist

One of the most impactful immersive techniques in case studies is facilitating interactions between students and the protagonist, typically an executive or entrepreneur. These interactions provide firsthand insights into the challenges and decisions discussed in the case, allowing students to ask questions, clarify ambiguities and understand the motivations and constraints behind key decisions. Such engagements enhance empathy for decision-makers, fostering a deeper understanding of complex business dilemmas (Dariosi and Lahav, 2021).

For example, the case “Puran Poli to Purnabramha: An Exemplary Entrepreneurial Journey” can be enriched through discussions with founder Jayanti Kathale. Students gain insights into how she scaled her restaurant business while preserving cultural authenticity and balancing customer expectations with operational constraints (Maheshwari, 2023). Similarly, in the case of “Goonj: Social Innovation for the Poor,” students can engage with founder Anshu Gupta to understand the operational and ethical challenges of scaling social innovations. Such interactions highlight the nuances of leadership in addressing systemic societal issues through resource optimization (Sanjeev, 2011). By bridging theoretical models with these real-world applications, such engagements prepare students for managerial roles by enhancing their critical thinking, contextual understanding and empathy for decision-makers.

4.3 Interviews with executives

Incorporating interviews with executives from companies featured in case studies is a powerful immersive technique that provides students with firsthand insights into organizational culture, strategic priorities and decision-making processes. These interactions expose students to the complexities of leadership, including ethical dilemmas and stakeholder management, and enhance their understanding of the practical implications of theoretical concepts, as highlighted by Li *et al.* (2023). Such experiences better prepare students for managerial roles by bridging the gap between theory and practice.

For instance, the case “Sustainability as an imperative and an opportunity: the case of Infosys Limited” can be enriched through interviews with senior executives from Infosys. These discussions offer insights into leadership styles, technological advancements and global strategic priorities. Students gain a deeper understanding of how Infosys aligns operations with dynamic global tech trends and ethical business practices (Mathew and Rajan, 2013).

Similarly, the case “Biocon Research: Preparing for the Bio-Pharmaceutical Transition” can benefit from interactions with Biocon executives. Conversations about R&D investments, regulatory challenges and global expansion strategies help students understand leadership in the high-risk, high-reward biopharma sector, complementing their theoretical knowledge of innovation and strategic decision-making (Tripathy and Ghosh, 2020).

In cases like “Starbucks Coffee Company: Transformation and Renewal” and “Amazon’s HQ2,” interviews with executives provide valuable insights into balancing global consistency with local adaptation, navigating regulatory environments and managing operational challenges. Students can explore Starbucks’ market strategies and Amazon’s location decisions, enhancing their understanding of leadership complexities and global outcomes in dynamic industries (Koehn *et al.*, 2014; Sebenius and Cook, 2021).

4.4 Visits to stores or offices

Organizing visits to the stores or offices of companies featured in case studies provides students with a tangible, real-world context. Such visits allow students to observe operations, interact with employees and experience organizational culture firsthand, aligning with experiential learning theories that emphasize learning through experience and reflection (Kolb, 2014). Research shows that site visits enhance student engagement, retention and the ability to connect theoretical knowledge with practical applications (Attard *et al.*, 2021; O’Connor, 2021).

For instance, the case “Royal Enfield Motorcycles: Reviving the Brand” can be enriched by visits to Royal Enfield dealerships or manufacturing facilities. These visits offer students the opportunity to observe operations, customer interactions and marketing strategies, providing insights into how the brand maintains its iconic status in the motorcycle industry (Prashar *et al.*, 2013).

Similarly, “Fabindia Overseas Pvt. Ltd.” offers opportunities to explore Fabindia stores or production units. Observing the integration of traditional craftsmanship with modern retail practices allows students to understand how the company balances social impact with commercial success, fostering a deeper understanding of operational strategies and customer engagement (Khaira, 2007).

Cases such as “Zara: Fast Fashion” can be enhanced through visits to their stores. Students can observe store layouts and product offerings adapted to diverse consumer preferences and the efficiency of its fast-fashion supply chain. Such experiences enable students to bridge theoretical knowledge with practical insights into global retail strategies and cultural adaptation, providing a holistic perspective on business operations (Ghemawat and Iniesta, 2003).

4.5 Roleplay and simulation

Roleplay and simulation are highly effective tools for immersive learning, allowing students to assume various stakeholder roles and engage in decision-making scenarios. This technique enables them to explore multiple perspectives, practice negotiation skills and experiment with strategies in a risk-free environment, enhancing their decision-making abilities (Salas *et al.*, 2009).

For example, the case “The Dabbawala System: On-Time Delivery, Every Time” provides an excellent opportunity for roleplay. Students can assume roles such as logistics managers, delivery personnel or customers to simulate decision-making within this efficient delivery network. This exercise helps students explore operational challenges, stakeholder perspectives and strategic options, deepening their understanding of complex business environments (Thomke and Mona, 2013).

Similarly, in the case “BigBasket.com: Redefining the Business Model,” students can take on roles like logistics managers or customer representatives to simulate decision-making processes. For instance, they could debate pricing strategies or customer acquisition plans in a competitive e-commerce landscape, enhancing their negotiation and strategic thinking skills (Sujo Thomas *et al.*, 2017).

In cases like “Airbnb: Business Model Development and Future Challenges” and “GE’s Two-Decade Transformation: Jack Welch’s Leadership,” roleplay allows students to simulate decision-making scenarios involving regulatory compliance or leadership transformation. These simulations foster critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving, equipping students to navigate complex, cross-cultural business environments and making them more adept at handling real-world business challenges (Chatterjee, 2016; Christopher, 1999).

4.6 *Product exhibitions and ensembles*

Product exhibitions offer an immersive technique where students interact with the products or services featured in case studies, bridging the gap between abstract concepts and tangible outcomes. This hands-on experience helps students analyze and critique strategies more effectively, enhancing their comprehension and retention. A study by Nguyen *et al.* (2020) found that tactile learning significantly improves students’ analytical skills.

For instance, the case “Procter & Gamble India: Gap in the Product Portfolio?” offers an opportunity for a product exhibition (Gupta *et al.*, 2013). Students can physically interact with consumer products of P&G, analyzing aspects like branding, product range, quality and sustainability efforts. This interaction helps students connect market positioning and consumer behavior with tangible outcomes, enhancing their analytical and critical thinking skills.

Similarly, the “Royal Enfield (B): Harley-Davidson X440 Challenge” case lends itself to product exhibitions. Students can explore Enfield and Harley-Davidson motorcycles, examining their design, branding and market positioning strategies (Singh, 2024). This tactile experience helps students understand abstract concepts like brand equity and customer experience, improving both their analytical and retention abilities.

In cases like “LEGO® Products: Building Customer Communities Through Technology” and “L’Oréal: Global Brand, Local Knowledge,” product exhibitions provide insights into global branding strategies (Henderson and Johnson, 2011; Krishnan, 2013). By analyzing LEGO’s product lines in Asia or L’Oréal’s diverse product offerings, students can understand how companies adapt their strategies to align with different cultural and economic contexts. Engaging with these products enhances students’ understanding of how branding strategies are executed across regions.

4.7 *Connecting via social media*

Social media platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter offer unique opportunities for immersive learning by allowing students to follow companies or executives featured in case studies. These platforms provide real-time insights into ongoing activities, initiatives and challenges, helping students observe decision-making processes and industry trends. In addition, engaging with social media content fosters networking skills and enhances industry awareness, bridging the gap between academia and practice (Boyd and Ellison, 2007; Røe *et al.*, 2022).

For instance, in the case “Flipkart: Transitioning to a Marketplace Model,” students can follow Flipkart’s official LinkedIn page or Twitter account to analyze its marketing campaigns, partnerships and customer engagement strategies (Narayandas *et al.*, 2015). Observing Flipkart’s real-time interactions with customers and stakeholders enhances students’ industry awareness and practical understanding.

Similarly, the case “Reinventing Performance Management at Deloitte (A)” provides an opportunity for students to engage with Erica Banks, a key protagonist, via LinkedIn or Twitter (Gino *et al.*, 2018). By following her professional engagements and thought

leadership, students gain insights into strategic priorities and leadership styles, offering real-time context to the case study.

In global cases such as “Nike: Changing the Sneakers Game” and “Tesla, Elon Musk, and the SEC: To Tweet or Not to Tweet?” social media plays a vital role in illustrating how companies communicate with and influence their audiences (Elberse *et al.*, 2018; Subramanian, 2022). For example, analyzing Nike’s messaging on Instagram or Elon Musk’s tweets allows students to explore the impact of digital communication on brand reputation and consumer behavior across different regions. This deepens their understanding of the role of social media in modern business strategies.

4.8 Google maps walkthroughs

When physical site visits are not feasible, virtual walkthroughs using tools like Google Maps offer a practical alternative, providing students with spatial and contextual awareness. These virtual experiences help students analyze location-based factors and enhance their ability to assess strategic decisions. Studies have shown that virtual site visits are particularly effective for geographically dispersed classrooms, fostering engagement and contextual understanding (Martins *et al.*, 2021).

For example, in the case “The Oberoi Resorts: luxury redefined,” students can use Google Maps to explore properties and analyze the location choices. By examining the layouts and geographical characteristics of these resorts, students gain insights into location-based strategies and new business opportunities (Bharwani, 2011).

In the case “Atlantis Paradise Island Resort & Casino: Improving Performance with a New Vision and Mission,” students can explore the resort’s layout on Google Maps to assess how design impacts customer experience and operational efficiency, linking strategic decisions to real-world spatial factors (Applegate and Piccoli, 2010).

The case “Walmart Around the World” offers another opportunity for virtual exploration. Students can use Google Maps to examine Walmart store locations worldwide, evaluating site selection strategies and sustainability initiatives in diverse cultural and regulatory environments (Alcacer *et al.*, 2013). This virtual approach provides deeper insights into global operations and location-based decisions.

4.9 Industry visits

Industry visits play a crucial role in experiential learning by offering students direct exposure to operational processes, technologies and managerial practices. Visiting relevant industries allows students to witness how theoretical concepts are applied in real-world settings, enhancing their understanding of business ecosystems.

In the case “Bosch Group in India: Transition to a Transnational Organization”, students can visit Bosch’s Bangalore campuses to observe the vertical integration strategy for its Indian operations. This visit allows students to connect academic frameworks with operational practices, particularly in terms of organizational structure for innovation and efficiency.

Similarly, in the case “Economics behind the internationalization of Biocon India Ltd.,” visiting Biocon’s facilities in Bangalore exposes students to biotech operations, research processes and the ethical challenges faced by the industry. This hands-on experience helps students relate theoretical knowledge to practical challenges in biotech innovation (Jain, 2013).

4.10 Subscription-based immersion

Subscription-based immersion offers a unique approach to experiential learning by allowing students to directly engage with the services of companies featured in case studies. This

technique provides students with an insider perspective, enabling them to experience customer journeys and assess company value propositions firsthand. For instance, in the case of “Swiggy™, Foodora™, and Yelp™: Hyperlocal Platforms,” students could subscribe to Swiggy and other services to analyze user interfaces, explore customer experience strategies and evaluate operational efficiencies. Experiencing the service firsthand provides insights into service design and marketing strategies, enhancing understanding through consumer immersion ([Srinivasan et al., 2019](#)).

In the case of “Zepto – 10-min grocery delivery service,” students can subscribe to Zepto’s services to evaluate user interfaces, customer service and marketing strategies ([Saldanha, 2023](#)). This hands-on experience deepens their understanding of the concepts and theory, as noted by [Malik and Zhu \(2023\)](#).

For cases such as “Spotify Lyrics: Free or Paid?” and “Pricing and content – Netflix’s dilemma in India,” subscription-based immersion can also be applied to global digital platforms. For example, subscribing to *Spotify* or *Netflix* allows students to explore user interfaces, customer service and content offerings. Analyzing Netflix’s strategy to produce region-specific content highlights the importance of localizing services in a global business context ([Saldanha and Aranha, 2022](#)). Similarly, evaluating Spotify’s playlists and pricing strategies across different markets offers insights into how digital platforms adapt to diverse consumer preferences and regional trends, providing a deeper understanding of global service design and customer satisfaction ([Torti, 2024](#)).

4.11 Online addresses and speeches

Organizations featured in case studies often have executives who deliver keynote speeches or participate in webinars, providing valuable insights into their strategic priorities and leadership styles. Watching these online addresses allows students to gain additional perspectives and enrich their understanding of the cases.

For instance, in the cases of “Narayana Hrudayalaya Heart Hospital: Cardiac Care for the Poor (A & B)” (HBS Case 716–473), students can watch keynote speeches or webinars by Dr Devi Shetty. These addresses offer insights into his leadership style and strategic vision for the health-care sector ([Khanna et al., 2005](#); [Khanna and Bijlani, 2012](#)). Similarly, speeches by executives in the “Leading the Tata Group (A): The Ratan Tata Years” can help students understand Ratan Tata’s leadership philosophy and the group’s long-term vision for innovation ([Manikandan et al., 2017](#)). Analyzing these speeches connects leadership philosophies with strategic execution, enriching students’ understanding of corporate leadership.

In global cases, students can enhance their learning by watching online speeches from executives such as those in “Nike: Sustainability and Labor Practices 1998–2013,” where TED Talks or similar addresses provide valuable perspectives on corporate social responsibility and innovation ([Carroll et al., 2013](#)). Similarly, the “Johnson & Johnson: The Promotion of Wellness” case offers opportunities to learn from executives in leadership roles ([Quelch and Knoop, 2014](#)). Watching speeches on global leadership and wellness experts helps students connect theoretical frameworks to real-world scenarios, broadening their perspectives on leadership in complex, globalized environments.

5. Discussion

The integration of immersive techniques in case teaching has redefined pedagogical strategies in management education and other professional domains. These approaches emphasize curriculum design, resource allocation, assessment, professional development and institutional support to enhance learning outcomes while ensuring inclusivity and accessibility. Immersive techniques are not considered as a replacement for case teaching

but rather as an integrative enhancement. Instead of treating immersive methods as separate pedagogical strategies, the most effective learning outcomes were achieved when they were embedded into the case narrative itself. For example, roleplay was not introduced as a standalone activity but as a continuation of the in-class discussion, enabling students to enact potential solutions discussed during the case analysis. Similarly, industry visits were positioned as pre-case explorations that informed students' perspectives before engaging with the case material. This integrated design ensured continuity between theory, case and practice.

Case-based teaching undergoes a meaningful transformation when integrated with immersive techniques. Traditional case analysis often positions students as external analysts solving a fixed scenario. However, immersive integration shifts this paradigm by positioning students as *participants* in the case, requiring them to engage dynamically with evolving contexts, stakeholder perspectives and operational constraints. For example, instead of discussing a protagonist's challenge from a distance, students roleplay that protagonist in real time, make strategic decisions and justify their actions in post-activity debriefs. This repositioning enhances student agency and deepens conceptual understanding by linking theoretical frameworks with lived simulations. Such integration also necessitates a shift in instructional roles from facilitators of discussion to designers of learning experiences.

When choosing the appropriate immersive techniques for a case, educators should align them with course objectives and learning outcomes to achieve specific educational goals. For instance, roleplay exercises are effective for teaching negotiation and conflict resolution, while industry visits deepen understanding of operational processes. A modular curriculum design allows students to build skills progressively, moving from foundational concepts to real-world applications. Clear preparatory materials and guidelines, such as pre-roleplay briefings, enhance students' confidence and engagement during activities. This structured approach ensures immersive techniques support, rather than overshadow, learning objectives.

Each immersive strategy is purposefully aligned with a particular phase of the case learning arc. For example, roleplay activities are designed to follow analytical discussion, enabling students to assume stakeholder roles and explore the implications of competing decisions. Industry visits and protagonist engagements serve to contextualize cases either before or after classroom analysis, adding authenticity and lived nuance. Asynchronous tools such as social media tracking and subscription-based interaction are suited to enriching preparatory work and sustaining engagement beyond the classroom.

These techniques serve not merely to increase student activity but to reinforce the deeper pedagogical goals of case teaching: cultivating interpretive reasoning, developing situated judgment and applying theory in context. When systematically incorporated, they support instructors in achieving both conceptual depth and practical relevance in case-based learning.

[Table 1](#) presents a mapping of immersive techniques to their pedagogical functions within the case method and suggests their optimal integration points.

Technological advancements like VR and AR enable educators to simulate realistic and interactive scenarios, enhancing student engagement and critical thinking. Tools like virtual walkthroughs, LinkedIn and industry databases expand access to resources and offer flexibility for remote learners. For example, virtual site visits can provide insights into manufacturing operations without physical travel. Institutions should invest in scalable, user-friendly technology solutions to ensure seamless integration into classroom activities.

Collaboration with industry professionals strengthens the authenticity and relevance of immersive learning. Industry experts can contribute as case protagonists, facilitate site visits and provide insights into current trends. Long-term partnerships with organizations,

Table 1 Mapping immersive techniques to case teaching functions

<i>Immersive technique</i>	<i>Pedagogical function in case method</i>	<i>Integration point</i>
<i>Roleplay and simulation</i>	Enhances decision-making, negotiation and stakeholder empathy	Post-case discussion or during strategy analysis
<i>Meeting the protagonist</i>	Deepens understanding of decision context and leadership dynamics	After initial case analysis; clarifies ambiguities
<i>Interviews with executives</i>	Connects theory to real-world application; introduces live dilemmas and ethical considerations	Used to validate or challenge case conclusions
<i>Store/office visits</i>	Provides operational and environmental context; links observation to case data	Pre-case activity to inform initial discussion
<i>Google maps walkthroughs</i>	Builds spatial awareness and site-based strategic thinking	Substitute for physical visits
<i>Subscription-based immersion</i>	Engages students as real-time consumers; develops customer-centric analysis	During market positioning or business model review
<i>Product exhibitions</i>	Encourages tactile engagement and critical comparison across offerings	Supports discussion on brand strategy, design, UX
<i>Social media tracking</i>	Observes real-time communication and digital strategy execution	Ongoing engagement before and after class
<i>Supplementary research</i>	Strengthens analytical depth and contextual understanding	Assigned as a pre-read or reflective task
<i>Online speeches and webinars</i>	Illustrates strategic intent and personal leadership philosophies	Enhances the protagonist's background and intent
<i>Industry visits</i>	Supports ecosystem understanding; clarifies value chains and stakeholder roles	Pre-case orientation or post-case reinforcement
Source(s): Authors' own work		

professional associations and alumni networks ensure a steady stream of resources. Co-created case studies with industry stakeholders reflect real-world challenges and keep content aligned with professional standards. Guest lectures, panel discussions and industry collaborations further enrich the learning experience. Institutions should actively support these partnerships by allocating resources and fostering a collaborative culture.

Accessibility is crucial for immersive learning. Physical site visits and face-to-face activities may pose challenges for students with disabilities or economic constraints. Virtual alternatives, such as online simulations and recorded sessions, ensure inclusivity. Educators should also account for cultural diversity. For instance, international students may benefit from presession briefings or cross-cultural training to understand industry-specific practices. Tailored support ensures an equitable and positive learning experience for all students.

Traditional assessment methods may not effectively capture the outcomes of immersive learning. Innovative approaches such as reflective journals, group presentations and peer evaluations can assess critical thinking, collaboration and engagement. Constructive and timely feedback is essential, focusing on students' problem-solving, communication and teamwork skills. This iterative feedback process fosters continuous learning and professional growth, encouraging students to refine their abilities.

Implementing immersive techniques requires educators to develop new competencies. Institutions should offer professional development programs, including workshops, training and peer mentoring, to equip educators with the necessary skills. Industry engagement through internships, conferences and collaborative research provides valuable insights into current practices, enabling educators to create more relevant and impactful case studies. Recognizing and rewarding educators' efforts fosters innovation and teaching excellence.

Institutional backing is critical for the effective adoption of immersive techniques. Universities must provide funding, infrastructure and administrative support, such as spaces for roleplay activities, VR tools and coordination with industry partners. Streamlined

policies and guidelines ensure consistent and high-quality implementation. Collaborative environments where educators can share resources and best practices create a supportive ecosystem for immersive learning.

Implementing immersive teaching techniques often poses significant challenges in institutions constrained by limited financial resources, inadequate activity space, lack of expert availability or geographical barriers. In such contexts, educators can adopt creative adaptations to sustain the pedagogical value of immersive experiences. When direct access to case protagonists is unfeasible, asynchronous alternatives such as recorded interviews, case-related podcasts or curated YouTube content can serve as effective substitutes. A notable example is the use of videos and shorts featuring Ms Jayanti Kathale for the *Puran Poli* case, which replaced live interactions with a structured reflection exercise and a follow-up class discussion. These reflective practices encouraged students to critically analyze leadership decisions and contextual factors, even in the absence of real-time engagement.

Faculty members can also tap into professional and social networks to bridge resource gaps. Leveraging LinkedIn and alumni connections, they facilitated interactions between students and mid-level professionals in relevant industries. These scalable alternatives provided a realistic perspective on industry dynamics and decision-making without the logistical complexities of high-profile engagements. In parallel, educators found value in collaborating with professional communities and teaching forums that support case-based learning. Platforms such as The Case Centre, Harvard Business Publishing and Emerald Publishing offer access to case libraries, teaching webinars, case writing workshops and directories of practitioners open to collaboration, often accessible through institutional agreements. These organizations serve as valuable entry points for faculty initiating immersive teaching practices.

Importantly, initiating partnerships need not rely on prominent figures or large-scale institutional support. Faculty can begin by engaging local entrepreneurs, regional industry professionals or alumni with relevant experience. Assigning students the task of identifying and interviewing such individuals has proven to be an effective, low-resource method of integrating real-world insights into classroom learning with minimal institutional mediation.

To maximize the impact of immersive techniques, educators should adopt a mindset of continuous improvement. Regular evaluation through student feedback, surveys and focus group discussions helps identify areas for refinement. Staying updated on trends such as artificial intelligence and gamification can further enhance the scalability and effectiveness of immersive methods. These innovations make immersive learning more accessible and impactful for diverse learners.

Immersive techniques represent a transformative approach to management education, equipping students with critical skills for professional success. By integrating thoughtful curriculum design, technological tools, industry collaboration and institutional support, educators can redefine learning experiences. A commitment to inclusivity, innovation and continuous improvement ensures that immersive techniques remain a vital component of modern education, preparing students to navigate the complexities of the business world.

6. Recommendations for educators

The integration of immersive techniques in case teaching marks a significant shift in pedagogical strategies for management education and other professional domains. These recommendations focus on curriculum design, resource allocation, assessment strategies, professional development and institutional support to maximize the potential of immersive learning while ensuring inclusivity and accessibility.

Immersive techniques such as roleplay, simulations and industry visits should align closely with course objectives and learning outcomes to serve as tools for achieving specific goals. For example, roleplay exercises can teach negotiation skills, while industry visits deepen understanding of supply chain operations. A modular curriculum design enables the gradual integration of immersive techniques, helping students build skills progressively. Clear guidelines and preparatory materials are essential for effective engagement. For instance, pre-roleplay briefings on stakeholder dynamics enhance students' confidence and insight during activities. This structured approach ensures that immersive techniques complement rather than distract from the learning experience.

Technological advancements, including VR and AR, provide educators with powerful tools to create realistic and interactive learning scenarios. These technologies enhance student engagement, critical thinking and understanding of complex business concepts. Partnerships with technology providers and scalable investments in infrastructure can help integrate these tools into classrooms effectively. In addition, digital platforms such as virtual walkthroughs, LinkedIn and industry databases expand access to resources. Virtual site visits and case studies offer flexibility for remote learners and ensure inclusivity. However, the use of technology should remain intuitive and seamlessly integrated into learning activities.

Collaboration with industry partners is crucial for implementing immersive techniques. Industry professionals can contribute through case protagonist roles, site visits and expert insights. Long-term partnerships with companies, professional associations and alumni networks ensure a steady flow of resources and authentic case studies. Co-created case studies with industry stakeholders enhance relevance and authenticity. Guest lectures, panel discussions and collaborative activities align immersive learning with real-world challenges. Institutions should actively support educators in building and sustaining these partnerships.

Ensuring inclusivity and accessibility is vital in immersive learning. Physical site visits or face-to-face activities may not be feasible for all students, including those with disabilities or economic constraints. Virtual site visits and roleplay simulations can accommodate diverse needs, while recorded sessions and written transcripts ensure participation for those facing barriers. Cultural and contextual factors also require attention. For example, international students may need pre-session briefings or cross-cultural training to understand specific industry practices. Tailored support ensures a positive and equitable learning experience for all students.

Assessing immersive learning outcomes demands innovative approaches beyond traditional methods. Reflective journals, group presentations and peer evaluations can effectively evaluate students' engagement, critical thinking and collaboration skills. Feedback is essential to help students improve. Timely and constructive feedback should focus on problem-solving, communication and teamwork, creating a loop of continuous learning and development. These practices foster self-improvement and professional growth.

Educators require specialized skills to design and deliver immersive learning experiences. Institutions must invest in professional development programs, including workshops, training sessions and peer mentoring. These initiatives enable educators to adopt innovative pedagogical strategies and integrate technology effectively. Engagement with industry through internships, conferences and research projects also equips educators with contemporary insights. Recognizing and rewarding educators' efforts in implementing immersive techniques fosters a culture of teaching excellence and innovation.

Institutional support is a cornerstone for the successful adoption of immersive techniques. Universities should allocate resources for funding, infrastructure and administrative support, such as spaces for roleplay, VR tools and partnerships with industry stakeholders.

Streamlined policies and guidelines can simplify processes, ensuring consistency and quality across programs. Institutions should also promote collaboration among educators, encouraging the sharing of resources and best practices to create a supportive ecosystem for immersive learning.

Continuous improvement is key to maximizing the impact of immersive techniques. Educators should regularly evaluate their strategies using student feedback, surveys and focus group discussions to identify areas for enhancement. Staying updated on emerging trends, such as artificial intelligence and gamification, can further elevate immersive learning. These innovations enhance scalability and effectiveness, making immersive techniques accessible to diverse learners. By fostering a mindset of lifelong learning and innovation, educators can adapt their practices to meet the evolving needs of management education.

Immersive techniques represent a transformative shift in teaching, equipping students with critical skills for professional success. However, their effective implementation requires thoughtful curriculum design, collaboration with industry, professional development and institutional support. With a commitment to inclusivity, innovation and continuous improvement, immersive learning can redefine management education and prepare students to navigate the complexities of the modern business world.

7. Conclusion

Immersive techniques in case teaching are revolutionizing management education by bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application. These approaches enhance critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving skills through experiential learning methods like simulations, roleplaying and real-world case applications. By aligning these techniques with course objectives and learning outcomes, educators can prepare students for the complexities of professional life while fostering engagement and active participation. These methods cater to diverse learning styles, addressing cognitive, emotional and social dimensions of education. In addition to building technical expertise, immersive techniques develop essential soft skills, such as teamwork, communication and adaptability, which are critical in today's business environment. This holistic approach meets the evolving demands of management education, encouraging students to take ownership of their learning.

Traditional methods often fail to prepare students for the complexities of modern business. Immersive techniques fill this gap by providing hands-on, practical learning experiences. Technologies like VR and AR simulate real-world scenarios, allowing students to learn through experimentation in a risk-free environment. These innovations align with experiential learning principles, promoting active engagement and a deeper understanding of business concepts. By fostering self-directed learning, immersive techniques empower students to take charge of their education, preparing them to navigate uncertainty and complexity – skills essential in management education.

Despite their benefits, implementing immersive techniques poses challenges such as limited access to technology, funding, geographical location of the institution and time. Educators may also require specialized training to design and deliver these methods effectively. Addressing these issues demands institutional support, investment in infrastructure and collaboration with industry partners. Inclusivity and accessibility are equally important. Immersive techniques must be designed to accommodate diverse learners, ensuring equity and participation through adaptive technologies and flexible approaches. The future of immersive learning is promising, with advancements like artificial intelligence (AI) enabling personalized learning experiences. Gamification and interactive storytelling make case studies more engaging, offering tailored solutions to enhance student involvement. Future research should focus on long-term impacts, exploring how immersive techniques improve learning outcomes and foster diversity and inclusion in global contexts.

This study underscores the value of immersive techniques in bridging theory and practice in management education. By highlighting their benefits, challenges and best practices, it provides a framework for adopting these approaches. Collaboration among educators, industry stakeholders and technology providers is essential to ensure adaptability and inclusivity. In conclusion, immersive techniques represent a transformative shift, equipping students with critical skills for the professional world. With careful planning, institutional support and a focus on inclusivity, these methods can redefine management education, preparing students to thrive in an increasingly complex business landscape.

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Abstract

Title – *Beyond AR and VR: immersive techniques for effective case teaching.*

Purpose – *This study aims to investigate the integration of immersive techniques into case teaching to address the limitations of traditional static methods in management education. It explores how these techniques enhance student engagement, critical thinking and the application of theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios.*

Design/methodology/approach – *Adopting a phenomenological and self-reflective methodology, this exploratory study draws insights from the lived experiences of educators and students by using non-technological immersive methods such as roleplay, interviews, industry visits and product exhibitions.*

Findings – *The findings reveal that immersive techniques foster deeper cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement among students, providing a richer understanding of complex business dynamics. However, implementation challenges such as resource constraints and the reliance on external stakeholders are noted. Practical recommendations are provided to overcome these barriers.*

Practical implications – *The study highlights scalable and cost-effective immersive methods, making them accessible for institutions with limited technological resources. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, these techniques equip students with the critical skills and competencies required for today's workforce.*

Originality/value – *This research contributes to the existing body of literature by focusing on non-technological immersive methods, an area often overshadowed by studies on advanced technologies like virtual reality. It provides a framework for educators to innovate case teaching practices, enhancing the relevance and impact of management education.*

Keywords *Immersive learning, Case teaching, Management education, Experiential learning, Low-tech methods*