

# Teaching law to non-law students: The use of problem solving models in legal teaching

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## Abstract

The use of problem solving models has been successfully applied and subject to evaluation in law school courses. However, the models have not been evaluated in terms of their application to law courses in which non-law (i.e., business) students are involved. This paper discusses the usefulness of such legal problem solving methods for non-law students from a technology use and acceptance framework, presenting data obtained from a pilot study which was the subject of a teaching and learning grant from CQUniversity Australia.

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## Introduction

This paper outlines a study that was undertaken in 2007 at CQUniversity Australia, Rockhampton Campus, to explore the acceptance and use of legal problem solving models by non-law students. The catalyst for the development of this project was an internal Academic Staff Development grant from CQUniversity. The project sought to understand the legal problem solving techniques promoted by the researchers in their individual subjects and then to understand how students viewed these techniques within the context of a technology use and acceptance framework. The technology use and acceptance framework is used as this essentially tests the acceptance by users of a particular system which has been put into place (Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, & Davis, 2003). The courses selected were Introductory and Contract Law, Company and Association Law, and Taxation Law. It was hoped that by understanding the acceptance and use of legal problem solving techniques that the researchers would gain an appreciation of students' expectations of legal problem solving and that curriculum delivery could be adjusted accordingly, if required.

## Background

The specific nature of business law instruction at undergraduate level requires students, particularly within an accounting degree, to undertake at least one business orientated law subject. Part of the rationale for undertaking business orientated law subjects is to encourage 'well rounded' graduates who have a basic

understanding of Australian legal principles (Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and CPA Australia, 2008). Generally speaking, such business law subjects are presented by legal academics who expect students to be able to apply the legal principles taught to situations involving (sometimes complex) legal problems (James & Cappa, 2007). In reflecting (Hughes, 2007) on their practice the researchers observed that during the course of coordinating their respective subjects at CQUniversity that many students lacked (despite the academic expectation mentioned above) the ability to apply legal principles to practical legal but business-related scenarios. It appeared to the researchers that whilst each, in their role of lecturer, was presenting to students a legal problem solving technique, the technique presented by each was subtly different. As such, it appeared to the researchers that there was a lack of clarity for students caused by legal academic staff using different problem solving models rather than the cohesive approach of using one definable, and consistently applicable, model. Having come from backgrounds involving legal education using problem solving models the researchers could see the usefulness of such techniques in the instruction of non-law students (Krever, 2008, p. 54). There was no question that a legal problem solving method needed to be presented to students. Hence, a research project aimed at examining the usefulness of the use of problem solving models in legal problem solving for business (i.e., non-law) students was conceived.

### **Legal problem solving methods**

There are a number of legal problem solving techniques that can be presented to students as a way by which to solve legal problems; however, the literature is focused on teaching law to students who are studying law as part of a law degree program (Little & Hefferan, 2008). The absence of literature in the non-law student area, in the researchers' experience, does not mean that an assumption can be made that law students in a law degree program and non-law students studying law in a business-related program have an identical approach to learning (Henriss-Anderssen, 2004). Rather, the researchers' experience, as noted by Wong (2003), was such that the learning styles of law students differ to those of students studying law in a non-law degree. Reflecting on practice, the researchers felt that many students preferred to undertake essay style questions rather than attempting problem style questions in assessment pieces as the students seem to feel more comfortable with approaching such questions. Whilst this may simply be due to different levels of exposure to legal concepts experienced by the two groups there remains limited literature evaluating the methods used by non-law students to problem solve legal problems.

### **The research project**

The research problem was to evaluate current methods of legal problem solving to determine which technique is best (or if indeed there is a 'best' technique) for non-law students at CQUniversity. The researchers decided that in order to research the problem the most appropriate research instrument was that of a survey. Ethics approval to conduct the research was obtained from CQUniversity's Human Research Ethics Committee.

It was decided that the research project not be strictly hypothetico-deductive in the traditional sense of seeking to prove a hypothesis or series of hypotheses. Notwithstanding, it was decided that the research needed to follow the hypothetico-deductive process by examining the literature and then presenting statistical data to explain the results of the research (Kellehear, 1993).

To that end, it was decided that the survey questions be based on work already undertaken in management information systems focussing on technology use and acceptance as propounded by Venkatesh et al. (2003). In this sense the legal problem solving technique was regarded as the ‘system’; the views of the students then being able to be examined for ‘use and acceptance’ of that ‘system.’

One ‘oft-used’ legal problem solving technique is the IRAC (Wolff, 2004, p. 4) technique. The acronym IRAC stands for Issues, Rules, Application and Conclusion and is promoted as a logical system that can be used by students to better answer hypothetical legal problems. It was identified by the researchers that they were each either using this method as part of their teaching practice or something of a similar nature. As such the IRAC technique was used in the survey as the ‘system’ to be evaluated.

The intention of the researchers was to survey the student body within the business law subjects coordinated by researchers. It was planned to obtain a large sample by involving all students enrolled across all campuses in each subject. In Term 2, 2007 there were 873 students enrolled in Introductory and Contract Law, 604 students in Company and Association Law and 123 students enrolled in Taxation Law and Practice; however, timing and logistics (in particular) were such that a student-wide survey was unable to be achieved. Consequently, the sample of students needed to be, and was, reduced. Given the timing and logistical difficulties the researchers faced, the decision was made to restrict the scope of participants to those who attended the Rockhampton Campus for the three subjects. Consequently, those students studying by distance and at international campuses were thereby excluded. As such, one limitation of the study is that a limited number of students were the subject of the research (for example, 56 students enrolled in Introductory and Contract Law, 24 students enrolled in Company and Association Law and 14 students enrolled in Taxation Law and Practice B). A further limitation is that no conclusions can be drawn as to whether there are differences in use and acceptance as between different ‘types’ (e.g., domestic/international) of students; or whether there are differences in use and acceptance between the modes (e.g., internal/distance) in which the students study. As such the research must be regarded, at most, as a pilot study.

The survey was undertaken by students enrolled in Introductory and Contract Law, Company and Association Law and Taxation Law and Practice. That these subjects are offered in different years of the degree, Introductory and Contract Law is generally a first year subject, Company and Association Law is generally a second year subject and Taxation Law and Practice is generally a third year subject proved interesting in terms of the responses that students provided and will be discussed as part of the researchers’ final considerations of the project. The survey instrument provided to students was largely developed through a collaborative process using the technology use and acceptance literature (Venkatesh et al., 2003), in particular the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT).

### ***The UTAUT model***

The UTAUT is a single model under which Venkatesh et al. (2003) unified various theories that existed in the area of technology acceptance. The UTAUT model was utilised in this research because of its unifying and holistic quality. The UTAUT model has been subjected to rigorous testing (Venkatesh et al.) and is an appropriate model in the context of this research as the model enables correlations to be made between acceptance and use. The questions used in the survey

instrument reflected those recommended by researchers who have subjected the model to testing (Venkatesh et al.). The model has been used by two of the researchers in other projects assessing the perceived ease and use of technology in tertiary law educational settings (Butler & Richardson, 2006, 2008). The model involves the use of a number of constructs:

1. Performance Expectancy. Performance expectancy is defined as the degree to which an individual believes that using the system will help him or her attain gains in job [or in this case, study] performance (Venkatesh, et al., 2003, p. 447).
2. Effort Expectancy. Effort expectancy is defined as the degree of ease associated with the use of the system (Venkatesh et al., 2003, p. 450).
3. Attitude (Venkatesh et al., 2003, p. 455) toward using the technology and facilitating conditions (Venkatesh et al. p. 453). Attitude and facilitating conditions are defined as the degree to which an individual believes that an organisational and technical infrastructure exists to support the use of the system.
4. Anxiety and behavioural intention to use the system as representing an individual's overall affective reaction to using a system (Venkatesh et al., 2003, p. 451).

The survey questions as they related to the constructs above are detailed in Table 1:

**Table 1: The Constructs and the Survey Questions**

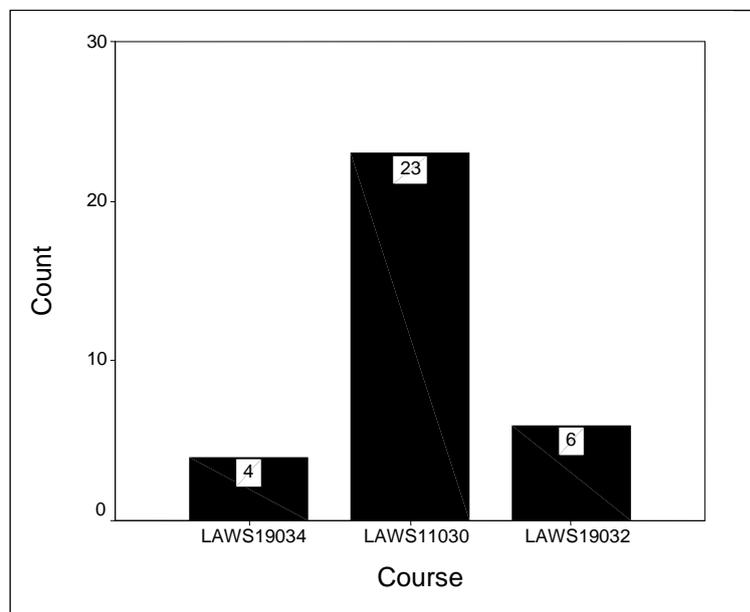
<b>Construct</b>	<b>Survey Questions</b>
Performance Expectancy	I found the IRAC method useful in answering tutorial problems in my course of study (Question 7) Using the IRAC method enabled me to answer tutorial problems more quickly (Question 8) The IRAC method increased my knowledge of the subject (Question 12)
Effort Expectancy	The IRAC method is clear and understandable (Question 9) It would be easy for me to become skilful at using the IRAC method (Question 10) Learning to use the IRAC method is easy for me (Question 11) I found the IRAC method easy (Question 13)
Attitude Towards Using Technology	Using the IRAC method is a bad idea (Question 14) The IRAC method made answering tutorial problems more interesting (Question 15) Solving legal problems using the IRAC method was fun (Question 16) I liked using the IRAC method to solve tutorial problems (Question 17)
Anxiety	I felt apprehensive about using the IRAC method to solve tutorial questions (Question 18) The IRAC method is somewhat intimidating to me (Question 19) I hesitate to use the IRAC method for fear of making a mistake in answering tutorial problems (Question 20)

Social Influence	Other students in the course tell me that I should use the IRAC method to solve tutorial problems (Question 22) Lecturers tell me that I should use the IRAC method to solve tutorial problems (Question 23)
Facilitating Conditions	I have the resources necessary to use the IRAC method (Question 24) I have the knowledge necessary to use the IRAC method (Question 25) The IRAC method is vastly different from other methods of solving tutorial problems that I have been taught (Question 26)
Behavioural Intention to Use the System	I would recommend the IRAC method of solving tutorial problems to other students (Question 21) I intend to use the IRAC method to solve legal problems in this course (Question 27) I predict that I would use the IRAC method to solve legal problems in other law courses (Question 28)

## The data collected

Survey responses were obtained from students enrolled on Rockhampton campus as follows and represented in Figure 1:

1. Introductory and Contract Law (LAWS1030)= 56 enrolled– 23 students responded;
2. Company and Association Law (LAWS19032) = 24 students enrolled – 6 students responded;
3. Taxation Law and Practice (LAWS19034) = 14 enrolled – 4 students responded.



4.

**Figure 1: Survey Responses and LAWS subjects**

## The data collected: Background information

Prior to asking participants about the use and acceptance of the IRAC method participants were asked:

- their gender
- their age
- whether they had studied a law subject as part of a degree program
- whether they had used the IRAC method to answer legal problems prior to studying their particular course and
- whether they had used any other method to answer legal problems.

Interestingly, of the 33 participants, more females (n=24) participated in the research than males (n=9). When expressed as a percentage, 72.7 per cent of participants in the research were female whilst only 27.3 per cent of participants were male. This is not reflective of the enrolment data with respect to each of the subjects. For example in Term 2, 2007, the overall enrolment in LAWS11030 was 48.7 per cent male and 51.3 per cent female, in LAWS19032 56.1 per cent male and 43.9 female and in LAWS19034 32.3 per cent male and 67.7 per cent female. Further, in terms of the survey itself, more students in the age group of 17–25 (n=26) responded than students in the age groups of 26–30 (n=3), 31–40 (n=1) or 41+ (n=3). With respect to the research, the demographics of the participants must be acknowledged as a limiting factor such that generalisations are unable to be made.

In terms of their use of IRAC and other legal problem solving methods:

- the majority of participants had not previously studied a law subject as part of their degree program
- the majority of students had not used the IRAC method previously and
- the majority of students had not used any other method to answer legal problems. For those students who had used another method the IDEAS method was the method commonly used.

The data collected from participants with respect to their use of IRAC and other legal problem solving methods are reproduced in Table 2.

**Table 2: Background Information: Use of Legal Problem Solving Methods**

Question	Response	Frequency/Percent
Have you already studied a laws subject as part of your degree program?	Yes	13 (39.4%)
	No	<b>20 (60.6%)</b>
Have you used the IRAC method to answer legal problems previously?	Yes	5 (15.2%)
	No	<b>27 (81.8%)</b>
Have you used any other method to answer legal problems?	Yes	10 (30.3%)
	No	<b>22 (66.7%)</b>

## The data collected: Responses to the survey questions

In terms of then considering the responses to the specific questions the survey contained 22 closed questions. It was decided to use closed questions to force an answer from the students and encourage participation in the research. As De Vaus (2002, p. 100) notes, “where ... people’s motivation to answer is not high, forced-choice questions are useful since they are quick to answer.” In addition, given the pilot nature of the study it was not necessarily critical to the research to have an appreciation of the degree of use or acceptance (De Vaus). What was critical was whether there was acceptance or not. On that basis the forced-choice responses to the questions were: “Yes”, “No” and “Unsure/Don’t Know.” Given that the data collected were dichotomous the internal consistency of the constructs will be unreliable and should not be used to draw conclusions (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). The analysis and presentation of each of the survey questions as contained within each of the constructs follows.

### The data collected: Responses to the survey questions: The construct of performance expectancy

Venkatesh et al. (2003, p. 447) suggest that the “performance expectancy construct ... is the strongest predictor of intention and remains significant at all points of measurement ... .” Given that performance expectancy is the strongest predictor the results gathered from the questions (Table 3) related to this construct will give a clear indication of whether students consider the IRAC method of legal problem solving as a useful ‘system’.

**Table 3: Performance Expectancy Responses**

Question	Response	Frequency/Percent
I found the IRAC method useful in answering tutorial problems in my course of study (Question 7) (n=31)	Yes	<b>22 (66.7%)</b>
	No	2 (6.1%)
	Unsure/Don’t Know	7 (21.2%)
Using the IRAC method enabled me to answer tutorial problems more quickly (Question 8) (n=31)	Yes	<b>18 (54.5%)</b>
	No	4 (12.1%)
	Unsure/Don’t Know	9 (27.3%)
The IRAC method increased my knowledge of the subject (Question 12) (n=32)	Yes	<b>15 (45.5%)</b>
	No	5 (15.2%)
	Unsure/Don’t Know	12 (36.4%)

### The data collected: Responses to the survey questions: The construct of effort expectancy

Venkatesh et al. (2003) suggest that:

[t]he effort expectancy construct ... is significant ... however, each one is significant only during the first time period ... becoming non-significant over periods of extended and sustained usage. Effort-orientated constructs are expected to be more salient in the early stages of a new behavior, when process issues represent hurdles to be overcome and later become overshadowed by instrumentality concerns.

Given this understanding of the construct, the responses received will be vital to evaluating the usefulness of IRAC as a legal method to be provided to non-law

students to use in law subjects. This is on the basis that a large number of students responded to not having used IRAC, or indeed any other legal problem solving method, previously in their studies. Positive student responses to this construct will give an indication of IRAC being easy to use and efficient and therefore not regarded by students as a ‘hurdle’ to their study and progression in the subject.

**Table 4: Effort Expectancy Responses**

Question	Response	Frequency/Percent
The IRAC method is clear and understandable (Question 9) (n=32)	Yes	<b>26 (78.8%)</b>
	No	2 (6.1)
	Unsure/Don't Know	4 (12.1%)
It would be easy for me to become skilful at using the IRAC method (Question 10) (n=32)	Yes	<b>25 (75.8%)</b>
	No	1 (3.0%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	6 (18.2%)
Learning to use the IRAC method is easy for me (Question 11) (n=31)	Yes	<b>20 (60.6%)</b>
	No	3 (9.1%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	8 (24.4%)
I found the IRAC method easy (Question 13) (n=32)	Yes	<b>24 (72.7%)</b>
	No	2 (6.1%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	6 (18.2%)

The majority of students responded positively to the use of IRAC. Arguably, this indicates a positive result in favour of IRAC being of use to students with respect to their study and progression in their respective law subject.

### **The data collected: Responses to the survey questions: The constructs of attitude towards using technology and facilitating conditions**

As stated above, this construct is defined as the degree to which an individual believes that an organisational and technical infrastructure exists to support the use of the system (Table 6). In the context of this research the organisational and technical infrastructure is focused upon the students’ perceptions of their own knowledge and resources. The first four results presented (Table 5) deal with students’ attitudes towards using the IRAC method. The results are mixed, and the researchers are unable to explain why students considered that using the IRAC method was a bad idea but then responded in Question 17 as having liked using the IRAC technique. In reflecting upon the use of closed questions in this section of the survey the mixed results may be able to be linked to the survey questions themselves. It may have been that there was ambiguity with respect to the question and the words used may not have had the same meaning for everyone. These issues are identified by De Vaus (2002, p. 98) as disadvantages of using closed questions. Similarly, it may be that the approach of forcing a selection from participants did not give them appropriate scope to rate or rank their attitude toward using IRAC (De Vaus).

**Table 5: Attitude towards Using IRAC**

Question	Response	Frequency/Percent
Using the IRAC method is a bad idea (Question 14) (n=32)	Yes	<b>21 (63.6%)</b>
	No	5 (15.2%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	6 (18.2%)
The IRAC method made answering tutorial problems more interesting (Question 15) (n=31)	Yes	10 (30.3%)
	No	8 (24.2%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	<b>13 (39.4%)</b>
Solving legal problems using the IRAC method was fun (Question 16) (n=31)	Yes	10 (30.3%)
	No	8 (24.2%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	<b>13 (39.4%)</b>
I liked using the IRAC method to solve tutorial problems (Questions 17) (n=32)	Yes	<b>20 (60.6%)</b>
	No	4 (12.1%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	8 (24.2%)

**Table 6: Facilitating Conditions**

Question	Response	Frequency/Percent
I have the resources necessary to use the IRAC method (Question 24) (n=32)	Yes	<b>24 (72.7%)</b>
	No	4 (12.1%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	4 (12.1%)
I have the knowledge to use the IRAC method (Question 25) (n=31)	Yes	<b>20 (60.6%)</b>
	No	5 (15.2%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	6 (18.2%)
The IRAC method is vastly different from other methods solving tutorial problems that I have been taught (Question 26) (n=30)	Yes	3 (9.1%)
	No	<b>14 (42.4%)</b>
	Unsure/Don't Know	13 (39.4%)

### **The data collected: Responses to the survey questions: The constructs of anxiety, social influence and behavioural intention to use the system**

In contrast to the constructs discussed above, the constructs of anxiety, social influence and behavioural intention are not direct determinants with respect to a person's use and acceptance of a system. Indeed, the construct of social influence and anxiety are regarded as direct determinants of behavioural intention (Venkatesh et al., 2003, p. 451). Venkatesh et al. (p. 451) suggest that this is on the basis that:

Social influence is defined as the degree to which an individual perceives he or she should use the new system. Social influence is a direct determinant of behavioural intention ... [as] ... each of these constructs contains the explicit or implicit notion that the individual's behavior is influenced by the way in which they believe others will view them as a result of having used the technology.

Given the importance of the construct of social influence and anxiety on use and acceptance the questions in the survey were designed to elicit which relationships (i.e., social influences) were important in terms of influencing a student to use the IRAC technique. The survey questions and frequency data are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7: Social Influence, Anxiety and Behavioural Intention**

Question	Response	Frequency/Percent
<b>Construct of Social Influence</b>		
Other students in the course tell me that I should use the IRAC method to solve tutorial problems (Question 22) (n=31)	Yes	5 (15.2%)
	No	<b>18 (54.5%)</b>
	Unsure/Don't Know	8 (24.2%)
Lecturers tell me that I should use the IRAC method to solve tutorial problems (Question 23) (n= 32)	Yes	<b>22 (66.7%)</b>
	No	4 (12.1%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	6 (18.2%)
<b>Construct of Anxiety</b>		
I felt apprehensive about using the IRAC method to answer tutorial problems (Question 18) (n=32)	Yes	8 (24.2%)
	No	<b>18 (54.5%)</b>
	Unsure/Don't Know	6 (18.2%)
The IRAC method is somewhat intimidating to me (Question 19) (n=31)	Yes	4 (12.1%)
	No	<b>25 (75.8%)</b>
	Unsure/Don't Know	2 (6.1%)
I hesitate to use the IRAC method for fear of making a mistake in answering tutorial problems (Question 20) (n=32)	Yes	2 (6.1%)
	No	<b>27 (81.8%)</b>
	Unsure/Don't Know	3 (9.1%)
<b>Behavioural Intention</b>		
I would recommend the IRAC method of solving tutorial problems to other students (Question 21) (n=32)	Yes	<b>26 (78.8%)</b>
	No	2 (6.1%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	4 (12.1%)
I intend to use the IRAC method to solve legal problems in this course (Question 27) (n=31)	Yes	<b>22 (66.7%)</b>
	No	6 (18.2%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	3 (9.1%)
I predict I would use the IRAC method to solve legal problems in other law courses (Question 28) (n=31)	Yes	<b>20 (60.6%)</b>
	No	4 (12.1%)
	Unsure/Don't Know	7 (21.2%)

Based upon these results the majority of students evince an intention to use the system, not only with respect to their current law subject, but for subjects in the future. These results reflect positively on the acceptance of the IRAC method as a useful legal problem solving method to be taught to non-law students. These statements are made with the acknowledgement that the data are indicative of a positive response from those participating in the survey but does not provide unqualified support.

## Summary of survey results

The survey results are indicative of a favourable response to the use and acceptance of IRAC as a ‘system’ which non-law students can use to answer legal problems. The favourable response to the use of the IRAC method was also evidenced in the responses received to the last question of the survey, an open ended question which asked students to provide any other comments they thought were relevant.

Thirteen participants provided additional comments:

*IRAC is alright though I wouldn't say it's the best method to answer law questions. It's just another method to apply to law questions*

*The IRAC method is the best, it is awesome. Rock on.*

*A little bit confused between “apply” and “conclusion”. “Conclusion” is the outcome of the case, “Apply”?*

*Is a little hard to evaluate this method at the moment as I have only used it once but it appeared to be a good way to break up a question and arrive at a more appropriate answer. Will try it in the future as I did find it helpful*

*It seems very straight forward to use and hopefully will make it quicker to answer questions in the exam. I like the logical "step-by-step" way of doing IRAC.*

*The IRAC method is a very good concept in that it sets out the way you should answer sort of step by step which makes it easier to understand.*

*Is the easiest, understandable method I have been taught to solve legal problems.*

*I was glad this method was introduced to us. It made things easier to focus on and was more helpful in answering questions. I would understand more if this was used more frequently.*

*This is the first law course, so I cannot fully appreciate the method.*

*Haven't really had enough time to establish if it's a good tool or not.*

*I may have heard about the IRAC method but I don't remember it and it sounds confusing. I usually just answer questions by rambling information in any order which is hopefully close to be relevant.*

*I was first introduced to this method in Tax A, and hadn't encountered it in any or my other law courses.*

Whilst all of the responses to the open ended question are of significant value to the research project, of particular interest to the researchers was this response:

*I find it useful having one format for courses which is part of why I found it comfortable to stick with IDEAS. It's enough to learn different concepts in a 12 week term without the inconsistency with formulas for the best way to answer and structure questions.*

Reflecting on the research project and what the researchers had gained from the experience this quote was the most poignant as it required the researchers, not as researchers, but as academics who are part of a discipline group, to consider not

only our individual practice but how the discipline should be approaching the teaching of law subjects to non-law students. The issue of consistency and a single method promoted by all is a feature of the implications for further research identified by the researchers and their reflections of the research project.

## **Reflections**

Notwithstanding the limitations of the research previously identified, the researchers were able to make some tentative (yet qualified) reflections based upon the data obtained from this pilot study. The researchers feel that although a small study in terms of response rate, positive and informative feedback was obtained from students.

The first reflection from the research is that the use of a single designated problem solving model in law subjects be regarded as positive and appropriate pedagogy. The second reflection (which is associated with the first) is that consistency of the use of a single legal problem solving method needs to be promoted to those teaching law to non-law students within the discipline group. This is particularly important on the basis that students will generally study only one law subject in each year of their degree. The third is that students not only need to be told what method to use and but that practice/familiarity with that single method is needed. Ultimately, the researchers felt that more discipline based discussion regarding the suitability and use of a technique of legal problem solving for all students undertaking law subjects within the Faculty needs to be undertaken so that the feedback from the survey can be disseminated, discussed and actioned. These reflections necessarily give rise to the suggestion that the research problem identified and the data obtained from this pilot study provide the basis and impetus for further research.

## ***Implications for further research***

The research project represented the chance for the researchers to engage in research of relevance to their particular teaching areas and of relevance to students engaged in the study of law despite being regarded as non-law students. In reflection, and based upon the literature, the researchers consider it an appropriate assumption to accept that that non-law students approach and understand legal concepts and principles in a different way to that of their 'law-student' counterparts. In saying that, however, it is not appropriate, based upon the limited data collected from this pilot study to make a further assumption that non-law students are unable to understand, or apply a legal technique for problem solving to legal problems in a similar way to law students. A much more extensive research project would be required. A further question for research is whether it is more appropriate from a pedagogical position, for academics to choose a single technique and allow students to practice and engage with that method as it appears that consistency of the 'system' to be adopted by the users is essential for the 'system' to be accepted. Such consistency, however, would necessarily mean focusing upon one particular technique and potentially neglecting all others.

Notwithstanding that the research was a pilot study and there were limitations to the survey, the survey was not without benefits. One particular benefit being that the research 'opens the door' to the possibility of more discipline based discussion and research regarding the suitability and use of a method of legal problem solving for non-law students undertaking law subjects within non-law programs.

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