Marketing Students' Attitudes Concerning Traditional Classroom Resources

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Purpose of Study: This study examines marketing students' feelings as they pertain to using a course's required textbook and how these feelings relate to learning outcomes, actual textbook usage, the effectiveness of motivational techniques, and alternative study methods. The study develops the Textbook Relevance (TR) construct and examines it in relation to several variables such as time spent reading the textbook, GPA, and perceived value.

Method/Design and Sample: A sample of college marketing students is drawn from three different universities in the United States. Using the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) as a framework, marketing students are surveyed to obtain their feelings about motivations and expectations regarding their attitudes toward textbook usage as well as perceived textbook relevance.

Results: The findings indicate that students generally have a low TR and prefer other study methods to the reading the textbook. These findings indicate students do not find the textbook as a useful resource and it provides little impact on perceived outcomes. It may be concluded that the use of the textbook, by marketing students at the three AACSB accredited universities included in this research are not actively reading their textbooks and these respondents do not feel that textual reading is necessary for their success.

Value to Marketing Educators: From the academicians' perspectives, the findings suggest students expect their marketing professors to provide them with the bulk of the information that should be learned in the course.

Keywords: Marketing Students, Textbooks, Textbook Usage, Classroom Resources, Motivation

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For many marketing professors, college textbooks have been a core resource for decades. Professors often structure their class schedules around primary topics in the assigned text and cover much of the textual material in class. While professors sometimes cover additional material, the basic course textbook provides students with a foundation resource that can be accessed outside the classroom setting for additional learning and exam preparation. While it seems obvious to many professors that textbooks are an invaluable resource for marketing college students, completion of assigned textbook readings has been steadily dropping for the last 10 years (Lei et al 2010) and the decline is expected to continue (Aagaard et al 2014). Not only do college students resist completing the assigned readings, it has been reported that as many as 75% say they won't purchase the required textbook for every class (Nawotka 2012).

There have been relatively few studies in the marketing education field during the past decade addressing this pressing issue. Numerous studies have examined attempts to provide a solution to the lack of desire to read by exploring the implementation of strategies to motivate students to complete reading assignments (e.g., Aagaard et al 2014, Baier et al 2011, Taraban et al 2000, and Vafeas 2013). This past research is helpful and intriguing but fails to address the continued decline in student behavior with respect to reading assignments. It is interesting to note, that a search through the textbook literature reveals there is no conclusive data that gives a clear indication of either a general positive or negative attitude of students toward textbooks. It appears most published work assumes negative attitudes, but little work has been done to actually empirically ground these presumptions. To date, there doesn't appear to be a study that takes into account marketing students' feelings concerning the usefulness of the textbook as a core classroom resource, even when motivational strategies are employed. Another critical question to address is: *how do students study for exams if they do not complete the assigned textbook readings, and what effect does this have on classroom learning and performance*? Finally, *do college students no longer see the textbook as a core resource to the classroom and the learning experience*?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Relevance of the Textbook

Central to this research is an assessment of the general attitude of college students concerning obtaining and using a required textbook for a class. Much of the literature indicates a general negative attitude directed at required texts and subsequently the required reading of such texts (Burchfield and Sappington, 2000; Lester and Cheek, 1997; Sikorski et al 2001). Other studies have found that many students have expressed the realization that texts contain important or helpful information but many still view reading the textbook as something that is undesirable. The reasons behind this general dislike are wide and varied and probably begin with attitudes and habits developed as early as middle school. Murden and Gillespie (1997) found that middle school and high school students generally underestimated the importance of completing assigned readings and were often able to perform well in the classroom by utilizing rote memory tasks. Correspondingly, Ryan (2006) indicates that students search for alternative methods to reading based on the successes experienced prior to college and often resort to non-reading methods of study when the reading material is too long or presents challenging concepts.

Another issue that may contribute to students' low perception of textbook relevance is the student's involvement in the subject matter. Students reported that they are less likely to complete an assigned textbook reading if they found the textbook material boring (Bronzo and Simpson 1995). Even if students are reading material crucial to their selected area of study, they may not realize the importance of reading the textbook because they have yet to connect the concepts in the context of the workplace. Thus, the concepts encountered in the textbook readings may seem distant and irrelevant. Marketing students may also fall prey to the misconception that interesting is the equivalent of important (Hidi et al 1982). They may find an important concept or section of the textbook boring and consequently unimportant if the writing isn't organized in a way preferred by the student or isn't accompanied by visual aids (Clarke et al 2006). Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that many students may treat textbooks and the corresponding reading assignments much the same as how they react to low-involvement consumer products. Low-involvement students will be unwilling to devote time and energy into a product (i.e. the textbook) that doesn't hold a high personal relevance in their minds, resulting in a low-effort situation (Petty et al 1983).

Most of the literature identifies that if a low-effort situation exists for students or if students feel that textbooks have little or no relevance then the probability of textbook usage is diminished (Sengupta and Johar 2002). College professors can attest to the fact that if students spend little time with the textbook then the desired outcome, which is typically a satisfactory grade, is usually not what the student tends to achieve. Based on the aggregate discussion, the following is proposed:

- **H_1:** Textbook relevance will have a positive association with hours spent reading the textbook
- **H_2:** Textbook relevance will have a positive association with the perceived usefulness of the textbook.
- **H_3:** Textbook relevance will have a positive association with GPA.
- **H_4:** There will be a positive association between hours spent reading the textbook and the student's GPA.
- **H_5:** Textbook relevance will have a positive association with the percentage of textbooks purchased for classes that require textbooks.
- **H_6:** Textbook relevance will be lower for those who prefer study methods which may substitute for reading the textbook.

Motivation

Motivation is defined as an inner state of arousal that provides energy to achieve a goal (MacInnis et al 1991). Many students who demonstrate a low arousal, and a corresponding low energy often tend to procrastinate the reading of assignments (Tuckman 1991). Since students have difficulty completing their readings on schedule, textbook reading is often delayed until just prior to an exam. This delay may result in poor grades since many students postpone their reading until they simply do not have enough time to complete it before an exam or quiz that requires them to demonstrate knowledge found in the text (Lei et al 2010). Since many professors expect students' motivation to be low it is common for various motivational techniques to be employed (Hoeft 2012; Wier 2009).

Quizzes appear to be one of the more popular methods employed by professors to motivate students to read textbook material. Unannounced "pop" quizzes have some positive effect if given specifically over the material assigned and if they are administered at frequent, uneven intervals during the course. Other announced regular quizzes may motivate students to read the textbook on a more regular basis since they expect them. Even open-book quizzes provide some motivation, since there is not enough time in class to read the material. Students may attempt to only skim the material beforehand without comprehensive reading if they feel they can accomplish the rest during quiz time. Students' reading time and comprehension is also enhanced when students can later fix incorrect quiz answers and go over the correct quiz answers in class (Carkenord 1994).

Other examples of instructor-initiated techniques designed to motivate textual reading abound. Class participation points assigned for in-class discussion of assigned reading and student led discussions are effective motivators. Students also appear to react positively to assigned study guides that students complete from the readings to turn in for credit.

Student generated study aids developed from the reading material that can be used during a quiz or exam, may motivate students to spend time engaged with their textbooks. Some research has shown that simply offering extra credit for completing reading assignments is effective (Carkenord 1994).

Textbook authors and publishers can also employ methods to motivate students to read. Enhancing this motivation is crucial to these stakeholders because as students' time with the textbook continues to decline, other types of information dissemination may increase. A quick review of most marketing textbooks demonstrate publishers' efforts to increase motivation for reading. It is clear that publishers have employed various techniques suggested by researchers. These include breaking the text into shorter sections, thus giving students a way to read in shorter more frequent sessions. Additional vignettes, case studies, and attached articles are designed to enhance student reading interest as well. Visual summaries of the various concepts, theories, and the structure of the textbook material are also important and helpful to students who tend to learn visually (Clarke et al 2006). Publishers also provide multimedia materials to the professor so classroom time spent on the textbook content is varied and interesting. This variation in textbook content augmenting materials/activities appears to enhance students desire to read assignments (Aagaard et al. 2014). Finally, online enhancements such as access to videos, sample test questions, quizzes, and additional material all are designed to motivate students to use the textbook as a core element in course learning.

Expectancy Theory

It is important for students to perceive that reading the textbook will produce the desired result of a positive grade. Expectancy theories provide the framework for such a perception. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) developed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) provides a foundation for many issues in consumer behavior, and has also been explored in the realm of class study and assignment motivation (Chen & Hoshower 2003; Lei et al 2010). TRA is well known, so only a brief explanation follows: TRA is a model developed to explain how consumers form attitudes from beliefs and the corresponding evaluation of how applicable those beliefs may be. An attitude is paired with subjective norms, which are a person's interpretation of how other people feel about an act that he or she is contemplating. Thus, an individual's attitude combined with the subjective norms influence behavioral intention and finally provides some prediction of the behavior itself. In application, students who believe that reading the textbook will produce knowledge and good grades, and who have professors providing external motivational methods to encourage textbook reading should be more inclined to read the textbook. The expectation from the student is that if they read the textbook then grades will increase to a satisfactory level. Conversely, if the student reads the textbook but feels they have not received the proper grade reward, their attitude becomes more negative which in-turn reduces their behavioral intention towards textbook reading.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), an extension of TRA, predicts that if students perceive they have control over their grades by reading the textbook then they will continue with this behavior (Notani 1998). This connection of reading the textbook and the desired result of satisfactory classroom performance establishes relevancy in the mind of the student (Holmes et al 2013). In sum, if students feel reading the textbook is useful in achieving the goals they have for any particular class, then they will see the text as a relevant, valuable core resource. Therefore:

- **H_7:** Textbook usage will be positively associated with teacher motivational strategies
- **H_8:** Textbook reading time will be positively associated with textbook motivational strategies

METHOD

A search through the relevant literature revealed few developed constructs as well as few single items available to accurately measure marketing students' feelings of textbook relevance, textbook motivational techniques, and preferred study methods. Building upon existing scales used in past literature, three items from Baier et al (2011) and five items from Taraban et al (2000) were selected for further analysis. One-on-one interviews were held with five marketing students at a small liberal arts university in the Midwestern United States to see if students thought the pre-selected items were relevant and to explore what other items could be developed from the students' insights. Approximately 25 general items were developed in addition to the eight pre-existing items as a result of student feedback.

A focus group was then held with 17 marketing juniors and seniors for item development as well as to provide relevant direction of items for inclusion on the survey. The focus group confirmed and helped refine the anticipated relevant items for data collection and two additional items were developed from the focus group findings.

A total of 45 items were included in an online survey and the link was distributed for completion in a small liberal arts university in the Midwest (university 1), a large liberal arts university in the northeast (university 2), and a medium-sized university in the northwest (university 3). The purpose of the survey was to obtain marketing students' feelings about textbooks and other study methods in general, without connection to a specific class. Thus, data about specific classes, professors, and textbooks were not collected because it was assumed that attitudes toward a specific class could greatly impact student responses and may obscure the general attitude students hold toward textbook usage. Most items were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale

positioned between "strongly disagree" (1) and "strongly agree" (5). Items focused on preferred study habits, factors preventing the reading of the textbook, and feelings toward textbooks. Categorical items were also recorded in the survey such as age, gender, major(s), GPA, and credit load.

Professors from marketing disciplines were asked to have their students take the survey and approximately a third of the students were offered extra credit for survey completion. The vast majority of the students included in the sample were enrolled in principles of marketing classes (a few students from a marketing research class were utilized at the small liberal arts university in the Midwest to provide a more balanced number of participants from the 3 participating universities). We received an initial sample of 340 but some respondents stopped answering questions early in the survey, leaving it incomplete so our usable sample size was n=303.

RESULTS

Gender composition was 39.7 percent male and 60.3 percent female and on average respondents had completed 87 (M=86.67, S.D.=13.96) credit hours prior to participating. The students were enrolled in an average of 5 (M=4.80, S.D.=1.78) classes per semester; approximately 3 (M=2.69, S.D.=1.83) of those classes had mandatory reading assignments from the textbook. Respondents indicated they would purchase textbooks for only 3 (M=3.33, S.D.=1.76) of the 5 classes for which they were enrolled. Finally, respondents indicated they spend about 4 (M=3.98, S.D.=1.34) hours per week reading directly from their textbooks during the semester.

While the purpose of the research was to determine students' attitudes toward textbook usage – in general, it was noted that potential differences in terms of student characteristics and university characteristics between the 3 participating universities could potentially influence the results. Therefore, prior to merging the data obtained from the 3 institutions it was determined that the participant responses and gender characteristics should be compared to determine whether significant differences might exist that would preclude combining the data sets. To accomplish this objective, chi-square analysis was performed to determine whether differences existed between the 3 universities in terms of respondent gender. The findings indicated no significant (Chi Square = 5.243, p= .073) differences among the respondents from the three institutions based on respondent gender. Next, an ANOVA analysis (Table 1) was conducted to examine the similarity of the data sets in terms of the responses to specific questions. As shown in Table 1, the findings indicated no systematic statistical differences in the responses based upon the students' institutional affiliation and based on this finding it was assumed that the data sets could be combined for the purposes of the research.

Table 1. ANOVA Comparison of Data Sets

Item	ANOVA	University	Mean	Post Hoc Differences*
Hours Completed	F=4.17	1	82.48	N/A
	Sig. = .010*	2	71.85	University 3
		3	95.99	University 2
Classes Enrolled	F= 1.778	1	4.44	N/A
	Sig. = .171	2	4.92	N/A
		3	4.75	N/A
Classes w/ readings	F= 1.336	1	2.47	N/A
	Sig. = .264	2	2.43	N/A
		3	2.80	N/A
Textbooks Purchased	F= 9.386	1	3.12	University 2
	Sig. < .001*	2	4.02	University 1, 3
		3	2.81	University 2
Hours Reading/week	F = .126	1	3.53	N/A
	Sig. = .881	2	3.94	N/A
		3	3.71	N/A
GPA	F= 21.437	1	3.61	University 3
	Sig. < .001*	2	3.38	N/A
		3	3.27	University 1
Textbook Usefulness	F=3.533	1	3.69	University 3
	Sig. = .030*	2	3.56	N/A
		3	3.34	University 1
Quiz over text	F = .309	1	4.12	N/A
	Sig. = .734	2	4.17	N/A
		3	4.05	N/A
Open book quiz	F = .022	1	3.49	N/A
	Sig = .979	2	3.51	N/A
		3	3.47	N/A

Study guide for credit	F= .608	1	4.25	N/A
	Sig. = .545	2	4.24	N/A
		3	4.12	N/A
Discuss the content	F= .1.708	1	3.42	N/A
	Sig. = .183	2	3.42	N/A
		3	4.12	N/A
Test over the text	F= .073	1	4.17	N/A
	Sig. = .929	2	4.11	N/A
		3	4.15	N/A
Shorter reading assignment	F = 8.546	1	4.29	University 3
	Sig. < .001*	2	3.93	N/A
		3	3.76	University 1
Textbook Relevance	F = 2.481	1	2.52	N/A
	Sig. = .086	2	2.65	N/A
		3	2.37	N/A

**Significant at the .05 level*

Student rating of factors preventing them from reading a course textbook revealed the following insights. The top three factors based upon student ratings were: 1*) the textbook was too expensive* (M = 3.72), 2) *the textbook was too long* (M = 3.70), and 3) *the power point slides repeat the text* (M=3.66). Having the lowest average rating, student disagreed that *Greek life activities* (M=2.16) prevented them from utilizing the textbook. All reasons explored in this study are listed in order of average rating in table 2.

Students also rated preferred study methods for learning course content. The top three answers were 1) *completing examples and practice problems* (M=4.22), 2) *reviewing in-class lecture notes* (M=4.10), and 3) *going over handouts and worksheets* (M=4.07). The results indicated that students' least preferred study method was *reading the textbook* (M=2.77). Table 3 shows all study methods ranked in order of average preference rating.

Table 2: What Prevents Students from Reading the Textbook

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average
Textbooks are too expensive.	5.95%	12.75%	19.83%	26.63%	**34.84%**	3.72
The textbook is too long	4.53%	9.92%	18.41%	**45.33%**	21.81%	3.70
The Power Point slides repeat the text	3.40%	11.05%	21.25%	**44.76%**	19.55%	3.66
Work	5.70%	12.82%	15.10%	**46.15%**	20.23%	3.62
There are better ways to study	4.01%	11.75%	21.78%	**46.42%**	16.05%	3.59
Disinterest in the subject matter	4.55%	11.65%	22.44%	**49.72%**	11.65%	3.52
Credit load	4.01%	15.19%	20.92%	**44.13%**	15.76%	3.52
Required readings are not a priority	5.41%	23.93%	29.91%	**31.34%**	9.40%	3.15
The textbook does not help me	8.81%	22.16%	**31.25%**	30.11%	7.67%	3.06
School sponsored clubs	17.33%	**28.69%**	26.70%	20.74%	6.53%	2.70
Participating in NCAA athletics	**33.71%**	18.57%	24.29%	13.71%	9.71%	2.47
I did not purchase a textbook	**33.24%**	24.15%	25.28%	11.65%	5.68%	2.32
Greek life	**38.97%**	22.06%	26.93%	8.02%	4.01%	2.16

Percentage responding is shown. Rating Average on 5-point scale. 1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree. Bold represents the top answer.

Table 3: Student Preferred Study Methods.

Answer Options	Strongly Not Preferred	Not Preferred	No Preference	Preferred	Strongly Preferred	Rating Average
Completing examples and practice problems	.84%	3.92%	8.68%	**45.38%**	41.18%	4.22
Reviewing in-class lecture notes	1.11%	4.46%	11.42%	**49.03%**	33.98%	4.10
Going over handouts and worksheets	.00%	5.87%	14.25%	**47.21%**	32.68%	4.07
Reviewing Powerpoints	.56%	8.64%	13.65%	**48.19%**	28.97%	3.96
Watching tutorials	6.44%	14.85%	27.17%	**36.41%**	15.13%	3.39
Forming study groups	8.64%	20.89%	22.28%	**34.26%**	13.93%	3.24
Reading textbooks	14.01%	**35.29%**	17.37%	26.33%	7.00%	2.77

Percentage responding is shown. Rating Average on 5-point scale. 1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree. Bold represents the top answer.

Scale evaluation for the Textbook Relevance construct was completed following Gerbing and Anderson (1988). Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted using the Principal component method in SPSS for clarification of the Textbook Relevance (TR) construct. Inter-item correlations were calculated and the results are shown in table 4. This analysis revealed one component of 6 items with a Cronbach's alpha of .812. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was then conducted in AMOS for TR and it revealed an adequate level of fit. Several goodness of fit measures were used such as RMSEA (.077), NFI (.945), and CFI (.964) all demonstrating appropriate fit for the construct (Brown and Cudeck 1993). (See table 5 for complete EFA and CFA results.)

Table 4: Inter-Item correlations (Textbook Relevance)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1.00					
2	.615*	1.00				
3	.591*	.572*	1.00			
4	.323*	.482*	.458*	1.00		
5	.506*	.543*	.567*	.379*	1.00	
6	.697*	.518*	.528*	.361*	.413*	1.00

**=Significant at .01 level*

Table 5: EFA and CFA Results for Textbook Relevance

Item	Factor Score
1.There are better ways to study (R)	0.814
2.Same grade without reading the textbook (R)	0.754
3.Reading the text is preferred	0.745
4.The textbook is helpful	0.712
5.Textbooks are worth the cost	0.672
6.Textbooks help me more than other methods	0.603
Variance Explained	51.822
Factor mean	2.42
Factor standard deviation	0.756
Cronbach's Alpha	0.812

CFA Goodness of Fit: CMIN/DF=2.672, NFI=.945, RFI=.872
IFI=.965, TLI=.916, CFI=.964, RSMEA=.077

Composite scores were generated for TR by taking the mean of the items used in the CFA. Linear regression analysis was employed to test the association of TR with textbook usage (H1), perceived textbook usefulness (H2), grade point average (GPA) (H3), and percentage of textbooks purchased for classes that require textbooks (H5). (See table 5).

The analysis revealed there was a significant and positive association of textbook usage (β=.041, t=3.349, p=.001) and a positive association of textbook usefulness (β=.243, t=5.198, p<.001) with TR. There was no significant association between TR and GPA or percentage of textbooks purchased for classes. Thus, H1 and H2 were supported, but H3 and H5 were not.

Table 6: Regression Model #1 - Factor Association with TR (Dependent variable Textbook Relevance)

	B	*Std Error*	*Std beta*	*t*	*Sig.*
(Constant)	1.173	0.417		2.816	0.005
Hours reading	0.041	0.012	0.216	3.349	0.001*
Percent of classes	0.099	0.155	0.041	0.636	0.526
GPA	0.022	0.118	0.012	0.189	0.851
Textbook usefulness	0.243	0.047	0.337	5.198	<.001*

Notes: R=.446, Rsqr=.199, AdjRsqr=.183, Std error=.684, F=12.843, Sig<.001
VIF<2.0, **=Sig at .05 level*

Pearson's correlation was conducted to see if there was a positive association between GPA and textbook usage (H4). H4 was not supported as no significant positive association between GPA and textbook usage was found. ANOVA was used to test the assumption that students who preferred other study methods to reading the textbook would have a lower TR (H6). The sample was separated between those who agreed or strongly agreed that reading the textbook was preferred and those who had no preference, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the preference of reading the textbook. There was a significant difference (t=11.988, p<.001) between the two groups, with those who preferred reading the textbook having a higher TR (M=3.11) than those who did not (M=2.11). Thus, H6 was supported.

Linear regression analysis was used to test the association of teacher motivational strategies (H7) and textbook motivational strategies (H8) with textbook usage. Only one motivational strategy of *providing a study guide to complete for credit* was significantly (β=-.725, t=-2.006, p=.046) associated with textbook usage but in the opposite direction than hypothesized. The analysis indicates that this strategy actually reduces textbook reading time. The regression model, which examined the impact of motivational strategies implemented to encourage textbook reading, was not a significant predictor of reported textbook usage (see table 6). Thus H7 and H8 were not supported.

Table 7: Regression Model #2 - Instructor Motivational Factors (Dependent variable Hours Spent Reading the Textbook)

	B	*Std Error*	*Std beta*	*t*	*Sig.*
(Constant)	0.667	1.711		0.39	0.697
Quiz	0.627	0.426	0.134	1.472	0.143
Open book quiz	-0.81	0.289	-0.2	-2.80	0.780
Study guide for credit	-0.725	0.362	-0.156	-2.006	0.046*
Discussion	0.516	0.299	0.13	1.729	0.085
test over textbook	0.076	0.38	0.018	0.199	0.842
Shorter readings	0.525	0.329	0.117	1.597	0.112

Notes: R=.257, Rsqr=.066, AdjRsqr=.040, Std error=4.287, F=2.585, Sig=.019
VIF<2.0, **=Sig at .05 level*

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study generally support the notion that marketing students view the textbook as being a relatively unimportant core tool in the classroom learning experience. The TR construct had an overall mean of 2.42 on a 5 point scale with a standard deviation of .756, indicating that students may feel textbooks are not the most helpful way to learn and may not be useful in obtaining the grade desired. When students have a higher TR scores they are more likely to prefer reading the textbook as opposed to other methods of study. Students with high TR will spend more time reading the text and find it is a useful valuable resource.

The above findings are not surprising if viewed separately from other findings of this study. When taken as a whole, however, the results seem to be much more alarming to instructors who regard the textbook as a core educational resource. Overall, students have a tepid TR and most (69.3%) prefer other methods of study to reading the textbook. This study indicates that the majority of the motivational factors employed by instructors and textbook publishers seem to have little effect on changing this preference.

It appears students have adapted to efficiently use other methods of study rather than the textbook because textbook reading seems to have little impact on student perceived learning outcomes. While higher TR does correlate with textbook reading time, a high TR and high reading time did not seem to lead to a higher GPA in the sample of students used for this study. While this lack of association seems disturbing, there may be several factors that could explain this phenomenon. This survey allowed students to self-report their GPA. While there is little research on self-reported success measures in the classroom, a discussion with a sample group of professors at an academic conference revealed that inflated GPA reporting by students is generally expected. If this error exists in the data, much of the true variability may have been removed due to false reporting, thus making the association with TR and GPA appear insignificant.

Students indicated they find lecture notes and forming study groups as preferable to spending time reading the textbook for learning. This confirmed data obtained in the focus group. The survey collected open-ended responses relating to how students might study if they choose not to use the textbook, but few responses in addition to the ones provided on the survey were given. Based on the limited responses, a pervasive indication was the students may simply look up the topics on the Internet using popular search engines rather that reading the textbook. Over 51% of students reported in this study they preferred or strongly preferred watching tutorials as a study method, supporting the notion that material found on the Internet could be replacing some textbook usage. Regardless, students are finding a way to achieve their desired grades without spending the majority of their preparation time with the textbook.

This finding seems to perpetuate the feeling students have that textbooks are not as useful for learning as are other alternatives and that the benefit of having a text does not exceed the costs associated with purchasing and using the textbook. Thus, this study found students are only buying texts for 71% of the classes that require textbook readings because they feel they can achieve the same outcomes without the use of the textbook. Our focus group findings may provide some clarification here, as they indicated they might borrow the textbook for some classes if they have a roommate or close friend who is willing to share. This may also contribute to lower reading times since those who borrow textbooks simply do not have the same access as students who own their own textbooks.

As confirmation to findings by Lei et al (2010), the current study suggests that a general resistance to using textbooks is a pressing issue. This is exemplified by the lack of connection between textbook publishers' motivational strategies and the time students spend using the textbook. This study collected data on various textbook usage enhancement strategies such as summaries, practice problems, visual aids, and case vignettes. None of these strategies seemed to entice students who already have a low TR.

Instructor motivational strategies fared no better. None of the various strategies (e.g. quizzes, class discussion of the material, study guides) appeared to have a positive impact on textbook usage. Surprisingly, if a student is given a study guide to fill out for credit it actually decreased reading time for respondents in this study. Thus, a student may spend time searching the textbook for the study guide answers, but little time may be spent reading for content. Students may never revisit the textbook after the study guide is completed because now the student has created a preferred way to study by using the guide instead of the textbook.

One explanation for the failure of motivational factors may stem from the possibility that students could view textbooks as an unsought/unwanted good. These types of goods and services are those that consumers typically do not seek out and the purchase of such items may evoke negative feelings (Kotler and Keller 2009). If students perceive obtaining a textbook for a rigorous class that requires hours of intensive study then it is clearly viewed as an undesirable purchase. Thus students may avoid reading the text, search for more desirable methods of study, or possibly avoid purchase altogether.

If one looks at these findings in sum then several theories may predict the future. The aforementioned involvement issues developed in TRA accompanied by TPB suggest that students simply may be motivated to use other study strategies because they may perceive the textbook to be irrelevant. Operant Conditioning (Nord and Peter, 1981) suggests that if students feel there are few rewards accompanied by few

punishments connected to a failure to read the textbook, then TR and textbook usage will continue to diminish. Attribution Theory (Mizerski et al, 1979) would articulate that if students perceive that reading of the textbook did not contribute to a satisfactory grade, then usage will fall. Thus, these findings indicate students do not find the textbook as a useful resource and it provides little impact on perceived outcomes. Low TR by the general marketing student population is a likely indicator that a shift to other study methods away from the traditional textbook is underway.

IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings, it may be suggested that there are potential practical implications for academicians, publishers and authors. From the academicians' perspectives, the findings suggest students expect their marketing professors to provide them with the bulk of the information that should be learned in the course. In other words, the marketing professor is responsible for making certain that the critical information to be gleaned from the course is presented by means other than the textually assigned readings (Vafeas 2013). This places significant responsibilities upon the educator as (s)he is now required to provide students with a means to learn the information other than expecting the students to acquire the critical knowledge from their texts. Thus, lectures, cases, and other assignments must now substitute as a source of knowledge for the information that is NOT obtained from the text.

For textbook authors, the findings may have conflicting implications. On the one hand, it could be noted that if the textbook is not read/used that it would seem logical for marketing professors to discontinue the use of traditional texts and thus save time and resources for the students by accepting the fact that the text is not used in the course. This means that authors stand to lose both financial resources and professional recognition if demand for their texts wanes in the face of decreased usage. Alternatively, to maintain their livelihoods and academic positions, authors may endeavor to create textual materials that are more interesting, easier to read, and less expensive. Further, textbook authors may discover that many of their ancillary materials may make the text redundant. For example, many students contend that they focus on the PowerPoint slides because they reflect the critical material presented in the text (thus, rendering the text unnecessary). This could imply that PowerPoint slides, which are composed using textual materials, could actually be counterproductive in terms of their impact on the students' textual reading habits.

From the publisher's perspective, the research implications may be particularly critical – as one could reasonably conclude that 'if the textbook isn't used, then perhaps it should not be required'. In this situation, demand would seem to be in jeopardy, and the industry may experience increased turbulence. Thus, the textbooks publishing industry could be well-advised to focus their production and develop efforts seeking methods to increase textbook usage or refocus their efforts on new offerings (e.g., expand multimedia) that meet the changing desires of the student population.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

While this research was conducted using a carefully designed model using theoretical and realistic survey instruments, there are some limitations. One limitation is sample composition. Great care was taken to gather data from various locations in the US, but it is possible the sample may not be representative of students as a whole. For further study, the sample may need to include more students from other US locations. The sample is also from the US alone and may not be generalizable to other countries. Thus, a study comparing the US to other countries could provide much needed data and insights.

Further, the current study was developed using students enrolled in on-ground – traditional classrooms courses. However, the findings may be different if students enrolled in online courses were included in the sample. Thus, future research might investigate whether these findings can be generalized to other modes of course delivery, particularly online. It may be discovered that online students engage in more extensive use of the text as a means of attaining their educational objectives.

More exploration is needed to ascertain the effectiveness of study methods other than reading of the textbook. Analysis in this area would be helpful to instructors and textbook publishers since they might use this data to enhance learning for future students. Finally, a longitudinal study observing the trends in textbook usage as well as other study techniques would provide much needed insight into this area.

In addition, despite evidence that students aren't reading traditional textbooks, there is ample evidence that many students find the e-version of textbooks even less appealing (e.g., McNeish et al. 2012; Rosenwald 2015; Woody et al 2010). McNeish et al. (2012) found that students feel paper textbooks facilitate learning in a superior way to e-textbooks and Rosenwald (2015) suggests that research indicates that if they must read, students would much rather read in print than in electronic form. Further research is needed to examine this seemingly paradoxical relationship and whether new educational material design may provide a resolution.

The contribution of this study gives researchers a starting point to further research into what and how marketing students will approach course content as they pursue learning goals. Instructors can also use this information to develop new and innovative ways to motivate students to expose themselves to primary course topics. And finally, textbook manufacturers can explore various factors to make study materials more relevant to the current student and classroom structure. Thus, future research may examine means by which marketing faculty could effectively encourage

increased textual reading. It may be suggested that faculty have been trained by their students to provide the student with an EASY means of acquiring the necessary information in class. Seemingly easy methods such as review sheets, Power Point lectures, etc. may actually dissuade the reading of the text and may be contributing to the decline in textual reading. This is consistent with a YouTube video posted by Heineman Publishing where high school students talk about why they choose not to read assignment textbook material (Kittle 2010). Research might also examine the impact of possible grade inflation on the students' motivations to read the textbook and the resultant fact that reading is no longer a necessary endeavor related to successfully passing collegiate marketing courses. In fact, such research may analyze relationships existing between perceived course rigor and textual reading – with the a priori hypothesis that rigor may be positively related to reading. Other avenues for future research may examine similar areas – for example, do more highly motivated students read the text?

In conclusion, whatever path future research may take, these results indicate that the students included in the present sample do not feel that textual reading is a necessary requirement for class success. In fact, one could conclude that the paradigm has changed over the years to the point that the classroom experience no longer supplements the text, but instead the text supplements the classroom experience. Perhaps, this represents the new model of higher education. Perhaps the new model of higher education is one that has less rigor, less challenge and fewer demands upon students to engage in reading and other self-education activities. In any case, it may be concluded that the use of the textbook, by marketing students at the three AACSB accredited universities included in this research are not actively reading their textbooks and these respondents do not feel that textual reading is necessary for their success.

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