TEXTBOOK PURCHASE PREFERENCE

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• The Franklin Pierce University main campus is located in Rindge, NH and consists of 1,394 undergraduate students and 391 employees.

• Franklin Pierce University has two, 14 week semesters, as well as two, 4 week summer sessions.
The purpose of this study is to see what the textbook purchasing preference is for students on the Franklin Pierce University campus and why they choose that specific source to purchase their textbooks.
PROBLEM STATEMENT

Research is necessary to determine Franklin Pierce University Rindge student textbook purchase preference.
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

• Asses the current literature regarding textbook purchase preferences related to traditional college students.

• Determine where students purchase textbooks.

• Determine what factors influence students to purchase a textbook at a given location.

• Determine what student characteristics are associated with purchase location preference.
LITERATURE REVIEW

The Usage of eBooks in a College Environment

• eBooks save money and time when compared to buying or renting textbooks.

• A survey released last year by the Pearson Foundation discovered that, “63 percent of college students and 69 percent of high school students believe that traditional textbooks will be phased out in the next five years. Slightly more than half of college students also said they preferred reading digital textbooks over printed ones for class.” (Lee, 2013)

• “Price is the biggest factor for students, and publishers are hoping digital discounts, in some cases up to 60 percent less than traditional texts, will make them convert.” (Lee, 2013)

• “Students can save even more by renting the e-book, which costs roughly $65.60 and expires in 180 days” (Pierce, 2011, p.1).
New Vs. Used and Rent Vs. Buy

• Students are saving money by buying used and online vs. in the FPU bookstore on campus.
  
  Ex. Chegg, Amazon, E Bay, Bookrenter

• Students are only buying books if its something they will need in the future, if not most are renting.

• Students are choosing to rent and return their books back after the semester, over buying them for the financial benefits.
Making Textbooks More Affordable

• Teachers allowing students to purchase the older version of the book, saving them money.

• Most updated versions of books are just grammar errors and small punctuation mistakes.

• Books being offered as “free e-Books”.

• School library’s should carry a copy of all books and have them available for students to use.
The Purchasing of Books on Social Media:

- Facebook is commonly used for students to exchange and sell their textbooks to other students.

- Group pages are made for every school and broken down into class standings.

- Facebook is a good place for students to get rid of their old books and for other students to purchase those books at a good price.
METHODOLOGY & PROCEDURES

• Problem Identification

• As a team, it was decided that textbook cost is becoming a huge problem in the college world.
• The data that was needed for the research regarded the Franklin Pierce University student population, in a study pertaining to their textbook purchasing preference and in conclusion, why that is their preference.
• What this research study was meant to solve is if Franklin Pierce University students purchase their textbooks more broadly than just the campus bookstore, versus another popular source.
METHODOLOGY & PROCEDURES

• Development of Survey

• A survey was formed during the week of October 19, 2014 asking questions such as the students’ preference on where they purchase their textbooks, how much money they spend a semester, what they believe is most convenient, their gender, class standing, GPA, etc.

• Once the survey was complete it was sent to be approved by the International Review Board (IRB) on October 27, 2014 at 12:24 PM.

• The IRB approved the survey the same day at 3:04 PM and it was ready to be handed out to 160 Rindge college students to gather data on their textbook purchase preference.
METHODOLOGY & PROCEDURES

• Definition of Population

The population in regards to this study was the student population of Franklin Pierce University in Rindge, NH. The University consisted of about 1,394 students at the time of data collection.

• Sample Size

We broke the sample into grade levels: Surveying 40 students from each grade level; 20 males and 20 females, with two males and two females that are international students.

• Data Collection Method

In order to collect the data from the 160 respondents, we used a non-probability sampling method, convenience sampling.

The surveys were distributed during the time period of November 5, 2014 to November 10, 2014 to 160 students of the Franklin Pierce University Rindge campus.

There were two specific data collection methods used throughout the course of our study; self-administered surveys and drop-off surveys.
METHODOLOGY & PROCEDURES

• Assumptions

• Results are going to be based on Franklin Pierce University students on the Rindge campus.

• To assess the entire demographic properly, there is a total selection of 20 females (2 international) and 20 males (2 international), from all four class standings. As a result, this will provide a thorough analysis of the entire campus’ textbook purchasing tendencies and preferences.

• We assume that the respondents will answer questions honestly and to the best of their ability.

• We assume that they are undergraduate students attending FPU.

• Limitations

• Our study was limited by the sample size and also by the amount of time we were given to complete the study.

• The FPU bookstores location in the middle of campus creates a bias for the decision to buy books due to accessibility and convenience.

• The demographic could have been broken down more if more time was permitted, such as majors, athletes, etc. to get a thorough study of all demographics on the Franklin Pierce University campus.
We are a team of Franklin Pierce University marketing research students currently conducting research related to the preference of textbook purchasing by Franklin Pierce University Rindge students. Your individual responses will be kept confidential and all data taken from the survey will be reported as aggregate data only. Thank you for your time and participation.

1) What source are you most likely to purchase/rent a text from?
   ___Amazon (1)
   ___Course Smart (2)
   ___FPU bookstore (3)
   ___Chegg (4)
   ___Bookfinder (5)
   ___Ebay (6)
   ___A fellow classmate (7)
   ___Other: Please state (8) ______________________________________
2) What is your purchasing method?
___Rent (1)
___Buy (2)

3) Which purchasing source tends to be less expensive?
___Online (1)
___In-Store (2)

4) Approximately how much do you spend per semester on books?
___Under $100 (1)
___$150-$300 (2)
___$350-$500 (3)
___$550 or above (4)

5) Do you purchase textbooks from a variety of sources in the same semester? (online or in-store)
___Yes (1)
___No (2)

6) What format of textbooks do you prefer?
___E-text (1)  ___Printed (2)
7) Why do you purchase your textbooks the way you do?
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________

8) Does your living situation (on or off campus) affect where you purchase your textbooks?
   ___ Yes (1)
   ___ No (2)

9) What source do you consider to be the most convenient? (check only 1)
   ___ Amazon (1)
   ___ Course Smart (2)
   ___ FPU bookstore (3)
   ___ Chegg (4)
   ___ Bookfinder (5)
   ___ Ebay (6)
   ___ A fellow classmate (7)
10) What source do you consider to be the least expensive? (check only 1)
   ___ Amazon (1)
   ___ Course Smart (2)
   ___ FPU bookstore (3)
   ___ Chegg (4)
   ___ Bookfinder (5)
   ___ Ebay (6)
   ___ A fellow classmate (7)
   ___ Other: please state (8) ____________________________________________

11) What is your cumulative grade point average (CGPA)?
   ________________

12) What is your gender?
   ___ Male (1)  ___ Female (2)

13) What is your class standing?
   ___ Freshman (1)  ___ Sophomore (2)  ___ Junior (3)  ___ Senior (4)

14) Are you an international student?
   ___ Yes (1)  ___ No (2)
What source are you most likely to purchase/rent a text from?

- Amazon: 36%
- FPU Bookstore: 31%
- Chegg: 18%
- Course Smart: 8%
- Classmate: 1%
- Ebay: 6%
- Bookfinder: 1%

A fellow classmate: 1%
WHAT IS YOUR PURCHASING METHOD?

- Rent: 61%
- Buy: 39%
WHICH PURCHASING SOURCE TENDS TO BE LESS EXPENSIVE?

- 81% Online
- 19% In-Store
APPROXIMATELY HOW MUCH DO YOU SPEND PER SEMESTER ON BOOKS?

- 37% $350-$500
- 40% $150-$300
- 18% Under $100
- 6% $550 and above

- Under $100
- $150-$300
- $350-$500
- $550 and above
DO YOU PURCHASE TEXTBOOKS FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES IN THE SAME SEMESTER? (ONLINE OR IN-STORE)

- Yes: 47%
- No: 53%
WHAT FORMAT OF TEXTBOOKS DO YOU PREFER?

- 89% Printed
- 11% E-text
WHY DO PURCHASE YOUR TEXTBOOKS THE WAY YOU DO?

This was a more open ended question. The top three results observed:

1. Cheapest (75%)
2. Most convenient (20%)
3. I have no choice in how my books are purchased (5%)
DOES YOUR LIVING SITUATION (ON OR OFF CAMPUS) AFFECT WHERE YOU PURCHASE YOUR TEXTBOOKS?

- Yes: 12%
- No: 88%
WHAT SOURCE DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE MOST CONVENIENT?

- **Amazon**: 29%
- **Course Smart**: 1%
- **FPU Bookstore**: 45%
- **Chegg**: 14%
- **EBay & A fellow classmate**: 4%
- **Bookfinder**: 1%

Legend:
- **Amazon**
- **Course Smart**
- **FPU Bookstore**
- **Chegg**
- **Bookfinder**
- **EBay**
- **A fellow classmate**
WHAT SOURCE DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LEAST EXPENSIVE?

- Amazon: 47%
- Course Smart: 7%
- FPU Bookstore: 7%
- Chegg: 12%
- Ebay: 3%
- Bookfinder: 23%
- A fellow classmate: 1%
- 23% fellow classmate
WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?

50% Male
50% Female
WHAT IS YOUR CLASS STANDING?

- Freshman: 25%
- Sophomore: 25%
- Junior: 25%
- Senior: 25%
ARE YOU AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT?

10% Yes
90% No
### Crosstabulation: What is your class standing? * What format of textbooks do you prefer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your class standing?</th>
<th>E-text</th>
<th>Printed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>143</strong></td>
<td><strong>160</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Crosstabulation: Are you an International student? * What is your purchasing method?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are you an international student?</th>
<th>Rent</th>
<th>Buy</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>97</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
<td><strong>160</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CROSSTABS

Crosstabulation: Are you an International student? * What source are you most likely to purchase/rent a text from?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are you an international student?</th>
<th>Amazon</th>
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<th>Bookfinder</th>
<th>Ebay</th>
<th>A fellow classmate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>160</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The table represents the distribution of class standings and sources for purchasing/renting textbooks.*
## Crosstabulation: What is your gender? * Approximately how much do you spend per semester on books?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your gender?</th>
<th>Under $100</th>
<th>$150-$300</th>
<th>$350-$500</th>
<th>$550 or above</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>59</td>
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<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Crosstabulation: What is your class standing? * Approximately how much do you spend per semester on books?*

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<td>40</td>
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DISCUSSION

The research obtained expressed that 89% of the sample population bought printed books instead of e-books. This data showed no correlation with the data reported by Lee (2013), which stated that 50% of students prefer e-books.

The research obtained noted that 69% of the sample rents textbooks. This data showed direct correlation with the information Dawkins (2006) reported, which stated that students are now renting more textbooks in order to save more money.

The research obtained showed that 57% of the sample spends less than $300 dollars on textbooks each semester. Lee (2013), reported that the average student spends between $400 and $600 dollars on books in a semester, which doesn’t correlate with the information shown by the sample.
CONCLUSION

• **Research Objective #1**: Assess the current literature regarding textbook purchase preference related to traditional college students:

  • The Literature Review was completed by the T.B. group and a vast amount of new information was discovered about the rising costs of textbooks, e-texts, and students trying to combat the cost of the books.

  • **Research Objective #2**: Determine where students purchase their textbooks:

    • 36% of students responded Amazon
    • 31% of students responded the Franklin Pierce University Bookstore
    • 18% of students responded Chegg
    • 8% of students responded a fellow classmate
    • 6% of students responded Ebay
    • 1% of students responded Course Smart and Bookfinder respectively
Research Objective #3: Determine what factors influence students to purchase a textbook at a given location.

The group received answers regarding this question in three main categories:

- 75% of students said the way they chose was most affected by cost
- 20% said that it was wherever most convenient for them at the time
- 5% was said they had no choice as to where their books were purchased from.
CONCLUSION III

• **Research Objective #4**: Determine what student characteristics are associated with purchase location preference:

  • Three questions pertained to this:

  • **International Student?**
    • International students textbook purchase location preference showed no distinct variation from non-international students.

  • **Living Situation?**
    • 88% of students said their living situation did not affect their purchase location.
    • 12% of students said their purchase location was affected by their living situation.

  • **Class Standing?**
    • **FPU Bookstore**
      • 35% of Seniors and Freshman purchased here
      • 25% of Sophomores
      • 30% of Juniors
    • **Amazon**
      • 47.5% of Sophomores
      • 20% of Freshmen
RECOMMENDATIONS

• We recommend that the professors at the school, curriculum permitting, older version of the textbooks to be used for their courses because the cost is far lower for the students and it could really help those who are struggling to financially take care of a higher education.

• We also recommend that the university hold copies of the textbooks in the library for students to be able to use, free of charge, as long as they do not leave the premises.
REFERENCES


