

2015

# Perceptions of Mode Selection of Textbook Delivery across Course Subjects

Gail M. Spencer-scott  
*Walden University*

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Walden University  
2015

Abstract

Perceptions of Mode Selection of Textbook Delivery across Course Subjects

by

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Ed Specialist, Wayne State University

MEd, Wayne State University

BS, Western Michigan University

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Walden University

January 2015

## Abstract

Universities are exploring the use of e-books in order to mitigate the high cost of textbooks. The study university was providing both delivery modes to students but was considering adapting to using e-books exclusively. An investigation of users' perceptions on textbook delivery modes had not been conducted at the local site. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the perceptions of students about using e-books and the experiences of textbook directors in the decision-making processes regarding the use of e-books versus textbooks. The Davis' Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) served as the conceptual framework for the study and was used to establish an interview guide. A sample of 12 participants was recruited from the local university in Michigan and was comprised of 5 undergraduate students, 5 graduate students, and 2 textbook directors. For maximum variation, participants were recruited from a variety of courses, while textbook directors were recruited and interviewed based on their roles as university textbook buyers. Individual interviews were conducted and the transcribed data were open coded and analyzed thematically. Results of the data analysis indicated that 6 out of 10 students favored using hard copy textbooks versus e-books for a variety of reasons, while both textbook directors favored providing students with an assortment of delivery modes based on their experiences with student textbook preferences. Implications for positive social change include providing the administration at the local site with data on the perceptions of students regarding the mode of textbook delivery and textbook directors' recommendations for providing both e-books and hard copy texts. Being responsive to students' preferences for learning materials allows for the possibility of improved learning outcomes.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Without the strength of my God I would have never been able to accomplish this goal. I am so grateful for his guidance and encouragement toward my completion. When others gave up on me, I could always go to my God for solitude to help me through this difficult process. Others like my beloved sister, Maxine Harrell, husband, Attorney David Scott and mother and father, Willie and Mary Spencer who have since gone to heaven before the completion of this journey would have been very pleased to see me receive my degree. I would like to show gratitude to my niece, Minister Veronica Nicholas and her family (Marcus, David, and Maxine) for their prayers and love during this process.

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## Section 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Background**

Concerns abound regarding the high price of textbooks in colleges across the United States. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that college textbook prices have tripled within the last decade. The price of textbooks has risen exponentially, attracting national attention from state and federal legislatures and action from public interest groups, staff, students, bookstores, publishers, and higher learning institutions (U.S Government Accountability Office, 2013). The National Association of College Stores (NACS) has estimated that textbook costs have increased by at least 25-30% within the past 5 years (CSU Report, 2007). As reported by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG), 7 out of 10 undergraduate students who were surveyed at 13 colleges across the nation did not purchase one or more textbooks due to the high cost (Tyler, 2011). Allen (2010) indicated that college students feel textbook costs are “ridiculously” expensive.

The U.S. Public Interest Research Group (2005) reported that textbook prices skyrocketed 22% within the last four years. As a result, U.S. college students are choosing to cut down on textbook purchases in order to save money (Tyler, 2011). Parents and students are not the only ones concerned about the high cost of textbooks (Kamenetz, 2010). The University of Michigan Office of the Provost (2007) claimed that the Scholarly Publishing Office at University of Michigan has been alarmed about rising textbook prices. In 2009, the University of Michigan Library surveyed faculty regarding their awareness of the issue; results revealed that 66% of Michigan faculty were aware of

high textbook costs. According to the University of Michigan Office of the Provost (2007), federal and state governments are now taking action to find alternative ways to decrease rising textbook prices.

A study conducted at the state of Virginia by the State Council of Higher Education similarly revealed that more than 40% of students reported that they often go without purchasing textbooks (Kinize, 2006). Graydon, Urbach-Buholz, and Kohen (2011) claimed that textbooks often hamper rather than aid students because of the price issue. Cheaper textbook prices and higher resale values may assist students in purchasing required textbooks and materials for classes.

The textbook market is currently described as a *pharmaceutical market* in that it is the textbook manufacturing demand that drives purchasing and pricing even over student demand (U.S GAO, 2013). Manufacturers benefit from the high price points as students plunge deeper into debt. The U.S. GAO stated that in the last two decades, textbooks and college tuition inflation rates have exceeded overall cost-of-living inflation rates (U.S GAO, 2005). GAO's newest report on the high price of textbooks claimed that textbook costs continue to be an important aspect of the college affordability debate (U.S GAO, 2013).

In a 2-year, e-book pilot study at the University of Utah, students in business administration, math, mechanical engineering, and economics master's programs were surveyed (Marques, 2012). Students across these disciplines discussed their preferences for either e-book or printed text. The findings revealed that students experienced logistical problems using e-books. Some students also had major concerns regarding web



accessing, highlighting and note taking, portability, and poor quality when viewing e-book options. The findings also revealed that approximately one-quarter of the participants indicated that they would still be inclined to use textbooks over the e-books even if e-books were free (Marques, 2012).

Sharp (2005) claimed that advances in technology demand that college institutions and students alike take advantage of the e-book option. According to Reynolds (2011), textbook providers such as Flat World Knowledge (FWK) allow textbooks to be viewed by its users for free. In addition, students and professors alike are able to tailor their textbook content to fit a particular course. There are also companies like Course Smart that provide e-books and various course materials to its users and allow students an option to view online resources from digital catalogs (Graham, 2011).

Shiratuddin (2005) and Thomas (2006) suggested that e-book acceptance and usage by students could result in more accommodations from higher learning institutions and publishing companies—accommodations made easier because of the cost savings involved in e-books versus printed textbooks (Baumann, 2010). Murray and Perez (2011) reported that the digital age is constantly changing the textbook market by making textbook content available in electronic formats.

E-books can last for decades and possibly will outlast the printed text because of these economies (Downes, 2007). Additionally the author stated that e-books could possibly withstand the traditional printed textbook. E-books are also becoming popular due to the part they play in conserving national resources such as wood for paper and the

energy involved in manufacturing textbooks. To cite just one example, the Library of Congress has been involved not only in conservation strategies for existing books, but also in strategies to digitize books for both accessibility and longevity. Digital books do not suffer the same wear and tear of traditional textbook usage.

Section 1 includes information on the problem and purpose statements for the current study. Additionally, the research questions that I used to guide the nature and significance of the study are explored. This section also contains appropriate term definitions used throughout the research study, scope, assumptions, delimitations and limitations, and significance of the study. An in-depth analysis of information regarding e-books versus textbooks will be provided in Section 2.

### **Problem Statement**

E-books have emerged as a partial solution to the high cost of traditional textbooks. Often sold at a lower price than traditional books, e-books can offer an economical alternative for students. The problem is that although colleges are beginning to endorse the purchase of e-books and publishers are increasingly offering their titles digitally, not all students have embraced e-books. Students with limited technological prowess may find e-books threatening, while others find e-books difficult and time-consuming to use (EDUCASE, 2012). This process can hinder the adoption of e-Books, forcing students to pay higher prices for traditional textbooks.

Price inflation of textbooks for college students is becoming a problem in the State of Michigan. A preliminary review of the literature revealed that government allocations to colleges and universities have been reduced while tuition continues to

increase. The higher cost of college tuition and textbooks within the last two decades has become a major concern to students and their parents (Granof, 2007). The University of Michigan established a task force to monitor 21 high-enrollment courses, including engineering and psychology. According to the University of Michigan's Provost Office (2007), the average cost per course textbook is \$126, and students are required to purchase one to two new or used textbooks per class.

Granof (2007) indicated that the growing price of college textbooks is of major concern to students in middle and lower income families. Escalating costs have been attributed to a lack of used books and pre-packaged textbooks that contain supplemental materials that often cannot be resold (U.S. GAO, 2005; Allen, 2008). If nothing is done to lower textbook prices, students will face escalating debt, taking courses without the benefit of a textbook or the possibility of having to withdraw from school.

Understanding the perceptions of students regarding the use of e-books can help educators and publishers refine and improve the student experience with e-books so that they can become a more attractive solution for students. As insights are gained into the factors that support or inhibit students from enjoying their e-book experience, students can be guided in their purchase decisions based on their needs and preferences.

### **Conceptual Framework**

This conceptual framework was based on Davis (1989); who was responsible for the technology acceptance model (TAM). Davis proposed this information system theory to model how users come to accept and use technology. The TAM monitors how users feel about the use of new technology on a variety of levels. Other researchers such as

Adams, Nelson, and Todd (1992), Davis (1989), and Hendrickson, Massey, and Cronan (1993) have replicated Davis's original study to test the theory. Davis, Bagozz, and Warshaw (1992) noted that the complexity inherent in new technology causes indecision about the technology adoption in potential customers such as students. These authors also believed that people want to use new technologies but lack the necessary skills. These theories lay the groundwork for exploring the mindset of the students who are making choices regarding which textbook delivery mode will be preferred.

Davis's (1989) TAM provided a foundation for locating the influence of external variables on internal views, attitudes, and behavior intentions. Davis's (1989) *perceived ease of use* (PEOU) and *perceived usefulness* (PU) are considered the two most significant aspects in clarifying actual system use. Two significant updates to the TAM have been done, Venkatesh (2000) and Davis in (2000).

The TAM2 explores *theory of reasoned action* (TRA) that inspects the attitudes and behavioral elements assuming that people form a purpose to act, and they will be permitted to act without restriction (Davis, 1989). According to Lee, Kozar, and Larsen (2003), the TAM is used in studies and investigations related to user acceptance of technology.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate students' preferences and perception regarding textbook delivery modes and how textbook prices influence student purchase decisions. In a recent study, 74% of students were found to prefer using printed text as opposed to e-books (Marques, 2012). Other studies indicated that students

who do not wish to use e-books do not use them because of their unfamiliarity with how to operate the device. According to Shelburne (2009), another reason why students did not prefer e-books was because they could not locate e-book versions of their required textbooks. In addition, students reported having a hard time locating titles applicable to their research. Some earlier studies showed that students preferred traditional textbooks to e-books because of the possibility for resale. However, there are students who prefer using e-books over textbooks as indicated in a recent study. These students also felt that online versions were more economical than printed texts.

According to Boris (2012), students pay anywhere from \$40.00 to \$200.00 for a college textbook. Depending on the number of classes taken each semester, this process could become very costly. Even if a student rented a book for four months, the cost was approximately \$32.74, which can also be exorbitant. Another option for students is purchasing the Kindle device, an electronic book reader that costs approximately \$70.53. Boris (2012) alleged that with all the various options to choose from, the lower e-book price tends to outweigh other options. The aim of this study was to help colleges across the United States understand and appreciate textbook issues college students face and help explore alternative methods and strategies for price-sensitive textbook delivery.

### **Nature of the Study**

This qualitative case study explored the phenomenon associated with e-books and printed text delivery systems. Neuman (2003) posited that the purpose of qualitative research was to build social reality or cultural meaning. In qualitative studies, researchers ask general, broad, open-ended questions, and interpret participants' responses (Creswell,

2005, 2008; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010) in an impressionistic, biased way (Creswell, 2005). As explained by Creswell (2007), the qualitative approach of examination provides more in depth possibilities for investigation. In the proposed study, face-to-face interviews with undergraduate and graduate students were conducted. The findings may contribute to the research-investigative knowledge base on students' perception and preferences of e-books versus traditional textbooks.

### **Research Questions**

Three research questions guided this study. The research questions were as follows:

1. How do students characterize the convenience of using e-books in comparison to the convenience of using traditional textbooks?
2. How do students describe the influence of price on their purchase decisions when given the choice between e-books and traditional textbooks across content areas?
3. How do textbook directors at a university school in Michigan describe their decision-making process related to ordering traditional textbooks and E-books?

### **Operational Term Definitions**

Over this section of study, various operational terms were discussed along with the content meanings of words within the structure of this study. The following list of terms and definitions were used throughout this study:

*E-book*—electronic software devised that represents a printed book (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

*Electronic ink*—a precise brand-named type of electronic paper used in mobile devices such as e-Readers (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

*e-Reader device*—a device that is used for reading an electronic textbook. (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

*Electronic textbook*—an electronic version of a printed textbook obtainable in software format that can be read on a personal computer or hand-held device (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

*Kindle Reader*—an e-book reader that offers search technology allowing individuals to enter a keyword or phrase to find “every instance in your book” (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

*Hypertext Markup Language (HTML)*—the main markup language for displaying web pages and other information that can be displayed in a web browser (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

*Hyperlinks*—links to locations contained by the electronic text or to outside materials such as journals, publications, or Web sites associated to the document; The mixture of structural associations within an electronic document that enable the possible assimilation of graphic, audio, and video with the text(Oxford Dictionary, 2010)

*Open textbook* – a free authorized textbook offered online, free of charge by the author of the book. (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

*Portable Document Format (PDF)*—a document format developed by Adobe Systems intended for sharing documents with text and graphic using any computer on any operating system (Leurs, n.d.).

*Printing Press*—a machine used to transfer letters or images by connection with many forms of inked surface beside paper or related material that was guided into the machine. The machine was used for printing duplicates of a text on paper.

*Usage*—the degree to which an end-user will use an information system or particular technology (Davis, 1989).

*TAM*—a model which deals more precisely with the forecast of the acceptability of an information system (Davis, 1989).

*Textbook*—a book used in schools or colleges for the approved study of a subject (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

*Used Textbook* – a book that is purchased new from a retailer and then sold back at the end of the semester (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).

### **Assumptions**

In this study, I assumed that the anonymous and voluntary nature of involvement would increase the probability of participants' candid responses. If their identity was exposed, many individuals may fear possible punishment for the response(s) and embarrassment for their participation (Punch, 1994). Face-to-face interviews were conducted to collect data. I assumed that the interview questions were adequate to address the research questions and contribute to the knowledge on undergraduate and



graduate students' textbook preferences. Additionally, I assumed that students who prefer an e-book over a textbook did so for explainable reasons.

### **Scope and Limitations**

In this qualitative case study, I specifically explored students' textbook preferences. The study was conducted to explore students' perceptions about using e-books in place of traditional textbooks across subject matter. It was restricted to undergraduate and graduate students that attended a four year institution, and to textbook-ordering decision makers in the State of Michigan. Further, the study was limited to students using e-book textbooks and e-book formats provided by the colleges where the study took place. These limitations may reduce generalizability to populations beyond those included. These results were generalized to the specific group of students' studied, undergraduate and graduate females.

### **Delimitation**

This study was delimited to undergraduate and graduate students attending Michigan colleges. It was also delimited to decision makers at the university in charge of ordering the University's textbook and E-books. Perception and preferences were measured using interview questions that were developed specifically for the purposes of this study. The results of the proposed study were not generalizable to undergraduate and graduate students who have only used one type of textbook for their college courses.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study may prove important in contributing to the newly developed areas of research related to e-books and the influences on students' preferences and perception

toward this type of format. Although studies have been conducted on the use of e-books in higher learning institutions, there is little information on factors that affect college students' e-book preferences. This study provides in-depth information regarding what students look for in textbooks and what affects their perception and preferences. This needed study could be significant to adult learners, institutions of higher learning, publishers, and bookstores. A detailed review of the findings yielded valuable results in areas of weakness in both e-books and textbooks. The results of this study could be used to propose different approaches to improve outcomes such as ways for students to cut costs on textbook delivery and strategies to help students learn new material. It could also be used by e-book publishers to improve the technological aspects of that delivery system that students find challenging. The impacts that can be imagined include local and national institutions of higher education, college/university students, and textbook publishers.

### **Local Application**

Numerous school libraries and universities face challenges in developing reading programs to accommodate their students. Helpful instructional approaches related to students' choices of textbook delivery may be identified in this study along with students' perceptions using e-books in place of traditional textbooks across subject matter. The aim of this study was to determine whether local application of e-books versus textbooks linked technology and reading with online programs where students spend a vast amount of time. Finally, the outcome of this study can be used to help improve students' choices of textbook delivery.

**Professional Application**

The findings from this study may help improve social conditions for adult learners, helping colleges, publishing companies, and educators learn and/or develop new technologies and approaches. In addition, outcomes from this study may assist in the areas of (a) creating a learning environment that addresses students' preferences, (b) improving teacher pedagogy, and (c) honing specific teaching crafts.

**Positive Social Change**

Potential social change impacts in the area of student learning and educational environment are made possible with this study. The administration of institutions of higher education would be able to better understand the impact of students' perception and choices on textbook delivery. Thus, they may improve student achievement and ultimately their institutions' performance ratings. By applying new technology, students can expand their interactive learning, a critical factor in creating effective learners and leaders in a world that is increasingly digitally interactive.

**Summary**

In this qualitative study, I investigated the background of the e-book versus textbook debate, provide a present examination of students' preferences, and explore other related factors that influence students' preference in their decision-making process regarding type of textbook. An overview of the study, problem statement, purpose, research questions, assumptions, term definitions, limitations, local application, professional application, and positive social change were provided in this section.

In Section 2, I describe e-book and textbook respective histories and related studies pertaining to the issue are described. In Section 3, I discuss information on the method used in this qualitative approach along with the population and sampling, data collection, instruments, and data analysis. Data collection, as well as a report on the results and themes of the responses from the interviews, is discussed in Section 4. A review of the study with summary of the problem, review of literature, and results based on the qualitative analysis is presented in Section 5. In addition, recommendations to institutions of higher education and recommendations to promote further research along with ideas for social change are provided.

## Section 2: Review of the Literature

### **Introduction**

The increase in textbook prices has drawn national attention over the last decade, since 2004. These price increases have forced many students to take out more loans and work extended hours to cover the costs. Rising textbook prices have also resulted in several reviews from boards at the federal, state, and university levels to uncover solutions to the dilemma (GAO, 2005). Organizations such as the Interest Research Group, GAO, and the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance have been investigating the rising costs of textbooks to determine the impact it has on higher education and make textbooks more affordable (Office of Operation and Audit, 2007).

According to the College Board (2011, 2012), the cost of textbooks and materials at both public and private colleges were high. The costs of materials at public colleges averaged \$1,168 while the costs at private colleges averaged \$1,213. Bell and Badolato (2008) indicated that in 2006-2007, undergraduate students paid an estimated \$942 for textbooks and supplies. Students and families spent approximately \$6 billion on university textbooks and supplies (Koch, 2006; National Association of College Stores, 2010). More recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that textbook prices increased 812% from 1978 to 2012—a higher inflation rate than medical services, new home prices, and the Consumer Price Index (U.S. Census Bureau, as cited in, Perry, 2012).

A 2010 study conducted by the Campus Computing Project revealed that 86% of students surveyed would use e-text and e-Readers within the next 5 years, making these

devices a vital part of colleges' curricular resources (Campus Computing Project, 2010). In 2003, a bill that required an investigation by the Committee of Education and the Workforce due to allegations that textbooks that were sold outside of the United States were sold for a much lesser amount was introduced in Congress by David Wu of Oregon. Then, in January of 2004, the bill was turned over to the congressional subcommittee, and an investigation was conducted regarding the high prices of college textbooks at universities (GAO, 2005).

The high cost of textbook prices has caused educators and students to explore digital solutions. In this section I presented a review of current and significant literature related to this study. Four major parts are addressed. The first part of this review includes relevant literature from both an historical and technical perspective to ascertain the most current and up-to date research on this topic. In addition, research results from various studies regarding textbook versus e-book delivery are presented. The second and third parts of this review include current literature connected to the research questions that guided the study, and students' attitudes that influence their purchase decision across content areas. The final part of this review includes the results and how this study could aid researchers regarding students' delivery mode choices.

In this review I acquired literature from multiple databases, including: American Journal, Educational Journal, News Week, Wall Street Journal, Questia Online, Higher Education, Education Research Complete, SAGE, Government Policy and Procedures, New York Times, and ProQuest Central.

### **Historical Background**

Nelson (1974) was credited for his role in pioneering the hypertext. He believed that information could be easily accessed by developing computer networks and be used to integrate anything ever written. Nelson assumed that an information structure could be utilized to link entire documents of literature around the globe. He called this system the *Xanada*. The argument behind this theory was that nothing ever needed to be written twice since a document could be accessed in its original form.

### **High Textbook Prices**

It has been reported that, “textbook prices are increasing at more than four times the inflation rate for all finished goods” (U.S. PIRG, 2005, p.7.). The Bureau of Labor Statistics Price Index reported that even the affordability of used books has been compromised. (U.S. PIRG, 2005). One of the main causes of high textbook prices is the practice of *bundling*. Bundling is defined as the packaging of textbooks together with additional books or add-on materials containing CDs, workbooks and online passcodes (Higher Education, 2008). The Student PIRG (2005) reported that nearly 50% of all such packages in universities are at least 10-50% more expensive than traditional textbooks. Nevertheless, 65% of professors at universities claimed that they rarely used the supplemental items in bundled textbooks (PIRG, 2005).

Retailers are often precluded from buying old editions for resale when publishers release new editions, rendering older editions obsolete (GAO, 2005). More importantly, GAO reported that university textbook prices in the U.S. are much higher than the prices

of textbooks in other countries. For example, textbook expenditures are at least 20% higher in the United States, as opposed to the United Kingdom (PIRG, 2005).

The controversy regarding the high cost of textbooks remains unresolved. The U.S. House of Representative's Committee on Education and the Workforce Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance (ACSFA) ordered the conduction of a study on excessive textbook prices in 2007. ACSFA is an independent and bipartisan organization whose goal is to provide advice and counsel regarding educational financial policies for the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Secretary of Education.

ACSFA's study resulted in a major controversy that led to massive criticism against publishing companies. Various solutions to the problem were suggested, such as provision of no-cost e-book versions of required textbooks; textbook donations to libraries to accommodate student use; and implementation of a textbook reserve program so that students could borrow instead of purchasing. ACSFA claimed that by implementing these recommendations, students could have more choices for learning through the use of e-books. According to ACSFA (2007b), e-books cost approximately 50% less than new traditional textbooks. ACSFA also claimed that the adoption of the Opening Education Resources (OER) could provide students with 21st century digital resources that could benefit the educational community by allowing free access to Internet-based courses. ACSFA believed that implementing updated technology for print on-demand devices could help save students money.

The University of Michigan is one organization that has implemented various initiatives to help cut the cost of textbooks. One such initiative is a partnership that the



University of Michigan Library formed with Google to help digitalize the university's printing collections. According to Geitgey (2011), the University of Michigan has acquired an Espresso Book Machine (EBM). EBM is an alternative to traditional textbooks and e-books that features quick and flexible print-on-demand technology. This newly pioneered machine has provided new options for matching content delivery to help students reduce their textbook costs. This new, innovative publishing technology is housed inside the University of Michigan Library Geitgey, (2011). The device automates the printing of documents, binds documents together, and provides soft cover trimmings.

### **Students' Options for Reading Given the High Cost of Textbooks**

The high cost of textbooks for universities and colleges in the United States and other countries has been covered in several literature reviews. According to Clark (2009), the price of textbooks in U.S. colleges has tripled within the past 20 years. Since that time, new technology and upstart companies have made major breakthroughs that have resulted in reduced textbook prices. Clark (2009) reported that any undergraduate student who decided to utilize e-Books could save an average of \$300 on their books. Clark further indicated that there are over 1,000 professors who have decided to assist in cutting the cost of textbook delivery for college students by consenting to use a new online application, called the *Open Textbook*. This application offers students an electronic, open-source textbook program for all their selected courses. The Open Textbook is free of charge that is available via the Internet (Student Public Interest Research Groups, n.d.).

Kolowich (2010) stated that many universities are now starting to find alternative solutions to textbook delivery issues. In 2008, the University of Texas conducted a pilot

study under contract from a publishing company to purchase mass quantities of e-books for approximately 1,000 students (Kolowich, 2010). The study's goal was to help defray the cost of textbooks for students by cutting the price of textbook delivery mode to \$20-25 dollar per book. In the study, students were allowed to have free access to e-books across subject matter. The university's ultimate goal was to move en masse toward e-books, and include their price in the overall tuition price for students.

### **The History of e-Books**

E-books originated in 1971 when a student by the name of Michael Hart (1992), who had studied computer operations, was given unlimited access to a Xerox mainframe computer at the University of Illinois. The Xerox machine was used for data processing that could be connected to a network now known as the Internet. Hart became famous for typing into the computer in 1971 and making the text available for people to download.

This was the beginning era of Hart's Project Gutenberg. Soon after, Hart began posting text copies of classics from bibles, Mark Twain, and Shakespeare. By 1987, Hart had posted a total of 313 books. This furthered the growth of the e-book era (Hart, 1992). Soon after Hart's initial experiment took off, others researchers became interested in building and creating e-books. Rothman (1992) was responsible for developing a national digital library that was completely stocked and available for all users, starting a new movement of technology. Kolowich (2010) said that electronic texts have been around for at least a decade. Folb, Wessel, and Czechowski (2011) said that a device for delivering books has been around 50 years before the time of Vannevar Bush's prominent composition, "*As We May Think*." Folb et al. indicated that models of e-Book readers can

be traced back to Alan Kay's Dynabook. Colleges and universities have taken their time taking full advantage of this new technology.

E-books have been around for at least since 2000. Kolowich, 2010; Folb, Wessel, and Czechowski, (2011) stated that this device was used to provide text that could be used to access thousands of books in several instantaneous forms that could be changed, searched, saved, and contributed to the world. Folb et al., (2011) concluded that the mode of content delivery, whether print or electronic, makes no difference to the learner. Folb et al., (2011) further concluded that the majority of readers who reported using e-Books as reference material looked for detailed information. McFall (2005) said that approximately 59.9% of students at one United Kingdom University used e-books as textbooks, while 52.4% used reference books and roughly 46% used research monographs. McFall (2005) said that students were impartial to using e-books versus textbooks when given a choice.

As the future of e-books is uncertain, further attention to this area and to compatibility and other issues relevant to students' adoption of e-Readers is needed. Sporkin (2012) said that within the past few years, e-book formats have changed significantly. This study will help unveil relevant issues, and provide usable, actionable information for students and institutions of higher learning alike.

### **The History of E-Books in Libraries**

E-books in academic libraries appeared just after vendors started recommending them in the latter part of the 1990s. According to Folb, Wessel, and Czechowski (2011), library e-books began in controversy, but have been more widely accepted as cataloging practice and user awareness and adoption have grown. Such authors as Connaway and

Wicht (2007), Diez and Bravo (2009), and Morgan (2010) indicated that the use of e-books in academic libraries have been discussed for well over a decade. “Issues addressed include identification of e-book users by demographic groups, cataloging practice and e-book access provision [6, 17-21]; meaningful comparison of statistics on use of print and e-books [9, 22-24]; variability in statistics provided by e-book vendors [25]; activities supported by e-book use [26-30]; use by type of book [31]; user characteristics affecting e-book use [28, 32-34]; and features desired in e-books” [5, 16, 27, 30-32, 35, 36] (Folb, Wessel, & Czechowski, 2011, p. 1).

Devices such as the Kindle and the iPad have propelled the rise in the use of digital books. The question remains to be asked: How are print publishers addressing the rise in e-books? According to a recent study conducted in libraries across the United States, the increase in e-book use has spread to libraries which have seen approximately 94 % increase in the checkout of e-readers (E-book, 2010).

Even though customers may continue to have use for hard copies of books and manuscripts, e-books have been reported to reach far more people while attracting the younger generation of new library customers. OverDrive, a prominent supplier of ebooks and digital audiobooks to educational institutions, libraries, publishers and retail establishments, has joined in partnership with Sony, Amazon and Barnes & Noble to make sure their books are accessible across various ranges of individual phone and e-Readers. E-book advanced models have been implemented into various public libraries, which offers downloadable copyrighted e-content (OverDrive(2012a)).

### **How Has Reading Changed Over the Years?**

Corso (2010) stated that reading used to be simple. A person who wanted information had two choices: he or she could either buy a book or borrow one from a library. Today, people can still do both, but there is an additional option: they are now able to download a book onto an e-Reader. The *Oxford Dictionary* (2013) defined an e-Reader as a device or application that assists or enriches the reading of electronic material. An example of a book reader is the Glass Book Reader (GBR). The GBR consists of a free downloadable software system that allows the user to read e-books from their notebook, laptop or even on their desktop (Barnes and Noble.com).

Weinstock (2010) stated that most academic library reading is prepared electronically, with numerous options for access: Amazon Kindle e-Readers, Sony e-Readers, or other web-based download programs. Libraries now will sometimes even provide the devices for students to borrow. Weinstock (2010) concluded that students now have the opportunity to search through a diversity of online reference materials as libraries work to facilitate easy access to data. This data creates immeasurable amounts of journals made available for users. Weinstock (2010) further concluded that this cannot be compared to bound reference books that never leave the shelf. It was reported by authors Towle, Dearnley, and McKnight (2007) that, in 2005, there were approximately 23 million users who were able to retrieve e-books on line.

According to the American Library Association (ALA) (2012), reading habits have been changing rapidly, particularly since the onset of e-Books. Some studies reported that at

least 78% of adults claimed to have read at least one book within the last year. More importantly, the American Library Association (ALA) stated that 14% of these readers borrowed their last book from a library. Raine, Zickuhr, Purcell, Madden, & Brenner (2012) noted that a 2012 study conducted by Pew Research Center (PRC) reported that 21% of Americans claimed to have read an e-book in the past year. The authors indicated that the increase in e-Book use appears to be based on a holiday season where a majority of people received tablet, computer, and e-book reading devices as gifts. Corso (2010) questioned whether this new way of acquiring reading materials will be able to change reading habits forever. Corso reported that only one in ten Americans use some type of electronic reader device, so any genuine changes may still take some time. However, research studies continue to hold contrasting views regarding students' preferences and attitudes regarding e-book versus printed text. According to Soules (2009), there are a few studies which indicate that librarians appear in some ways mindful of student's attitudes regarding e-books; and that there are opposing and inconsistent views among universities librarians, faculty and students.

Moran (2013) of the *New York Daily News* indicated a claim that original e-Readers had been patented more than 60 years ago, by a Spanish teacher named Angela Ruz Robles. The author claimed that in 1949, Ms. Robles invented the Mechanical Encyclopedia. According to Moran (2013) Robles discovered a way to reduce the weight of books in students' book bags. She also envisioned this gadget would make reading reachable for all. According to Moran (2013), this device worked with loaded content.

The author stated that the prototype has now been placed on display at LaCorruna in the National Museum of Science and Technology.

### **Studies Conducted on e-Books vs. Printed Text**

Folb, Wessel, & Czechowski (2011) conducted a study that evaluated e-books used by all subject groups in the field of Library Health Science. The authors indicated that 871 subjects participated and completed the assessment. They reported that 55.4% of respondents who used e-books indicated that they preferred print textbooks.

Shelburne (2009) conducted a survey on students' attitudes and behaviors regarding e-books, student awareness, and student usage or lack of usage. The study surveyed 1,547 students from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Ten percent of students claimed that they had no knowledge of where to locate e-books. Fifty-seven percent claimed that they had used e-books. Only 7% indicated they preferred printed books to e-books, but 15% indicated that they disliked reading from a screen. In the final analysis, student users favored the e-books over the printed books. The students claimed their reasons for favoring the e-book over the printed text were related to availability, accessibility and storage capacity.

The National Association of College Stores (NACS) 2010 stressed that there has been a great amount of attention on e-books and e-Readers for their usage in higher education. In October, 2010, NACS requested that its campus research panel conduct a study to determine which devices students preferred when accessing e-books. There were 627 students in the study, which showed many positive findings related to e-book use. For instance, it was reported that at least 13% of the students who participated in the

study had purchased an e-book within the last three months. The study also revealed that nearly six out of every ten students who claimed to have purchased e-books did so solely because of a course requirement. One-third of these participants claimed to have purchased an e-book primarily for pleasure and entertainment. Another 10% of the participants claimed to have purchased an e-book for no specific reasons. The outcome study further showed that at least 77% of the students that carefully weighed purchasing an e-book preferred to use a laptop computer or Netbook when reading their e-book. Thirty percent of the participants indicated they preferred to use a desktop, and 19% preferred to use a smartphone such as an iPhone or Blackberry. Only 4% of the participants preferred using a tablet, and 19% preferred to use an e-Reader, Reader gadget such as the Nook or Kindle. The tablet was reported to be the least popular type of reading device used by any of the participants.

NACS (2010) stated that approximately one-third of students who read the e-book claimed that the e-book was better than the print book. Twenty-nine percent claimed the e-book was not as comfortable reading as the printed book, and 25% remained impartial to either delivery format. The study also revealed that the college students preferred the printed text over all the others. Seventy-four percent claimed that if the choice was totally left up to them, they would prefer the printed textbook for all their college courses (NACS, 2010).

According to Allen (2010), a survey conducted by PIRG (2008) on the affordability preferences for textbook delivery mode had varied responses. The survey reported that students were divided between the use of printed text and digital e-books. In



fact, the survey reported that 75% of students preferred the print, and only 25% preferred the digital e-Book. The study further reported that students' attitudes regarding the switch from printed text to e-book had not changed much.

### **Students' Preference Regarding e-Books vs. Printed Text**

According to Kolowish (2010), prices are the main factor in students' choice of e-book versus printed textbook. The author claimed that e-books are not likely to catch up with the printed text unless they can be purchased more inexpensively. The author further claimed that students are not yet persuaded that e-books are the best way to purchase. Kolowish cited that the Student Public Interest Research Group (STPIRG) reported that e-books cost an average of 39% more than used textbooks, and that e-book prices needed to drop to 50% or more of textbook prices before students and faculty would consider them as primary preferred sources. In an earlier study conducted on students' preferences of e-books over printed text, Knutson and Fowler (2009) said there were mixed reviews. According to Baumann (2010), the wholesale adoption of e-books should only take place if educational values warrant the change, rather than simply by the decline in market demand for textbooks. The author further believes that if faculty and students are given the option to select either e-book or printed text, both parties would likely choose the low-priced, reliable and more efficient option.

Slater (2009) conducted a study at Oakland University in Michigan on e-books versus printed books. The study separated responses by subject matter. Results indicated that participants majoring in technology and the sciences showed a strong preference for

e-books, while history, language, linguistics and humanities students preferred the printed formats.

Croft and Davis (2010) conducted a study on students' preferences for e-book versus printed text. The study revealed that only 5.5% of students who indicated that they were not content with their understanding of using e-books, and 33.7% were "content" or "very contented."

Studies conducted on e-books versus printed text for Folb, Wessel, & Czechowski (2011); Ebrary (2010); and EDCUASE (2012) all showed similar results. Students overwhelmingly reported great appreciation of e-book features such as reduced costs and an ability to copy and print documents easily.

### **Format of e-Text**

According to Young (2009), the original electronic text delivery format simply allowed students the version of the printed book on a computer. The latest, up-to-date models introduced additional features, from allowing professors in the university to grade students' homework to allowing students the option to review their class notes online with other students.

Nelson (2008) reported students most appreciated the digitized e-books. The digitized e-books features allow users the opportunity to create drawings and pictures, and gives students access to integrated dictionaries, allowing them to look up words as they find them in the text. The author indicated that there has been an invigorating growth in purchases of e-books. Studies show that almost 90% of content is accessed or delivered throughout campus resource centers, libraries, learning management systems

and college bookstores. Nelson predicts that if a solution to this problem is not resolved, there could very well be high textbook price increases and as much as a 20% increase in e-textbook prices in college bookstores. The author further indicated that a study by Ugaz and Resnic (2008) revealed that there has been some growing development in the use of e-textbooks among colleges. A study conducted involving medical student participants claimed that they did not have to read a book cover-to-cover to complete their assignments. Nicholas (2008) said that significant numbers of students who used e-books read only bits and pieces online without reading the entire book. Nicholas (2008); Shepperd, Grace, and Koch (2008) and EBrary (2010) concurred that a large majority of students who used e-books do not read the complete book.

According to Folb, Wesse,l and Czechowski (2011), an experimental study was conducted at the University of Iowa that compared medical undergraduate students' usage of printed medical books to three online resources that supported patient care and learning throughout their clinical rotations. The authors stated that the students in the study were engaged in an intensive learning environment where they frequently sought the advice of key medical publications on a daily basis in their preferred format. The findings from this study reported that students preferred materials that have current information by 53%, reference materials by 33% and printed materials by only 14%. The authors also concluded that ease of access was not the most important driving factor in their selection preferences for e-books versus printed text; students reported that both print and e-books were relatively easy to get to in the various wards of the hospital. The

survey revealed that students' choices were mainly based on their perception of how quickly they were able to find their answers.

### **Reading Print vs. Digital Text**

According to Liu (2006), although students want to enjoy the satisfaction of an online digital text, some university studies have revealed that college students still prefer to read the printed books. Students believed that the printed books were favorable than e-text when reading for pleasure (Shelburne, 2009). Liu and Huang (2008) participated in a study survey of college students at a university overseas. The study examined students' gender disproportion as it related to paper/electronic preference. The author findings discovered that 73% of females' students favor print, versus 51% of male students.

### **How Functional are e-Books?**

E-books are extremely accessible; they can be read on laptops, standard desktops, or e-Readers (Oxford Dictionary Online, 2010). In addition, e-books can hyperlink to other online resources, and are easily navigable to other content/topic sections. E-books can perform many tasks such as integrate multimedia with textual components, allowing, for example, a reader to listen to a composer's music as they simultaneously look them up online.

Woody, Daniel, Baker (2010) have conflicting views about e-books. Even though they are becoming progressively more acceptable, there still has been very little academic research regarding its usefulness as a learning device. Educause Learning Initiative (ELI) has differing views. ELI believes e-books can serve many functions, such as providing a digital simulator to help bring content alive. ELI states that it is important to know,

however, that e-books depend exclusively on hardware and software that is made available for its users.

### **Studies Who Favored e-Books to Printed Text**

A study conducted by EBrary (2010) on e-text versus printed text revealed students' favorable reviews for the use of e-books. Some reasons students offered for wanting to use e-books were user-friendliness, ease of storage and ease of information searches. EBrary (2010) and Boroughs (2010) stated that the number of e-book users is reaching critical mass for general acceptance.

Another study conducted by Woody, Daniel and Baker (2010) involved both students and faculty. The study reported that 55% of student participants would use the e-books and 25% preferred printed text, while 29% of the faculty preferred printed texts. These authors investigated students' preferences for e-text versus printed text at a university. There were 91 students who participated in this study. Again, this study reported that students seemed to prefer the printed book over the e-text. This study also revealed that student learning styles were not a significant factor in their choice.

### **What Are Some Other Benefits of e-Books?**

According to ELI (2006), e-books have various benefits. Their benefits accrue to the producer and consumer, including the condensing of production times and costs, the ability to widely share materials, and the ability to represent complicated content in a variety of ways that can enhance reader understanding. Clark, Goodwin, Samuelson, and Coker (2008) reported that students favored e-books when it came to its easy access and portability.

Like Clark, Goodwin, Samuelson, and Coker (2008), McFall, Dershem & Davis (2006) noted the positive features e-book had to offer its students, such as note-taking, text highlighting ability, forum sharing, animated images, graphics and much more. The authors further claimed that many of the new e-book features allowed students to learn and absorb material more effectively.

From an in-depth literature review, a majority of studies that examined e-books versus printed texts showed that students' preferences regarding e-books versus textbooks have been mixed. Some reviews showed that not all students were reading the entire e-texts (EBrary, 2010; Shelburne, 2009; Shepperd, Grace & Koch, 2008). For example, it was discovered from a study by EBrary (2010) that students were just going through the book and picking and choosing what they wanted to read, rather than reading the entire book.

### **Issues and Implications Concerning the Use of e-Books**

Although e-books are used widely among colleges, there are still some issues, such as copyright infringement, that affect both producers and consumers. For instance, copyright owners are faced with rising concerns in shielding their content from being used by unauthorized reproductions. E-book producers must continue to make every effort to balance ownership issues with features that can potentially enhance or impede student learning and study (ELI, 2006).

Although some studies indicated there are benefits from using e-books, there are other studies that indicated some limitations when it comes to e-books, ranging from price considerations to ease of use. Jamali, Nicholas, and Rowlands (2009), and Kang,

Want, & Lin (2009) found that student e-book users had major concerns. For example, these authors found problems with the usability of e-books. Some students felt stressful when sitting down using the computer as opposed to relaxing on the couch or sitting in a chair while reading a printed text. A study conducted by EBrary (2008) claimed that only 13% of student users favored e-book for reading. However, the majority of all students claimed that the e-book was user friendly, accessible, and easy to store.

College book costs can exceed \$1,000 per student per school year. The development of technology innovation has provided advanced applications for e-books in addition to reduced prices. According to Educause (2006), products like Noble's Nook, Kindle, Amazon, Barnes and Apple's iPad are all slowly beginning to embrace the burgeoning e-book trend. When comparing e-books versus textbooks, research studies such as Educause (2012); EBrary, (2010); and Folb, Wessel, & Czechowski (2011) revealed that students significantly favored e-books as the textbook delivery mode. According to Shelburne (2009), library student users favored the use of e-books for portability, but favored the printed text when used for relaxation reading.

### **Comparing the Features of Traditional Books to e-Books**

In 2012, Amazon Company reported that Kindle e-book sales had increased, while printed books sales had declined rapidly. During the summer of that same year, some authors and writers found they preferred reading from a printed book as opposed to the e-book touch screen. "Ugly advertisements" appearing on screens was also a problem for authors. (Gray, 2013)

E-Book online compared the features of traditional books to e-books. The informational guide from *e-Book.com* (2010) covered 12 main categories of interest: features, accessibility, cost, environment, eye strain, format, note-taking, platform, portability, signing, textbooks, and water damage. Accessibility for traditional books versus e-books is fairly consistent for libraries who sometimes make the e-book available after business hours for patrons. Any cost consideration must take into account the price of the e-Reader device, which can range from a one time charge of \$79-\$850. Eye strain was of minimal concern both for the traditional book and the e-book and was dependent upon factors such as lighting and font size. (*e-Book.com*, 2010)

### **The Effects of e-Readers' Availability in College Settings**

The e-book reader can be traced as far back as the 1940's. Many students in colleges around the United States are embracing the idea of using e-Reader, Reader devices to complete course assignments. The fact is that this technology is becoming more advanced each year, and students are beginning to appreciate the ability to download PDF files instantaneously. Campus Books (2011a) conducted a study, which examined the top 1000 textbooks. The study revealed that retailers offered a limited range of e-Reader choices for returning students; only about 50% of them could use the e-Readers to download textbook material because of compatibility issues. The study also revealed that there has been a shortage of digital and e-books to meet students' course needs. CampusBooks (2011b) claimed that the e-book digital movement is still in its infancy, and that students may have to do some additional searching to find the course material they need in this option.



### **Piloted Studies Regarding the Use of e-Readers**

Thayer and Lee (2010) conducted a study at the University of Washington, one of seven U.S. universities that participated in this pilot study. The study was focused on the Kindle Dx, one of the larger versions of the popular e-Reader. The researchers conducted interviews with 39 participants who were first year graduate students from the University of Washington in the design and engineering department, and focused on academic reading levels. The subjects consisted of seven women and 32 men, ranging in age from 21 to 53 years. The authors found that the majority of the students used e-Reader, Readers for relaxation reading and not academic reading.

The authors found that reading was only one of the activities for which students used the e-Readers; and none of the e-Reader, Readers were able to provide documented information on what those activities were. They found the process of examining designs for the e-Reader, Reader to be complex. The authors also observed that several of the other schools that participated in the pilot project had conducted a very succinct study, which dealt only with a small slice of e-Reader, Reader data, focusing on advantages and disadvantages for course users.

### **Studies on Students' Textbook Delivery Preferences**

Shepperd, Grace, and Koch (2008) conducted a study on e-Reader, Readers focused on introductory psychology students' academic performance. Participants were allowed to choose printed text versus a CD electronic format. The results of the study revealed that 90% of students purchased the paper text, with 10% opting for the electronic version. The study showed no significant impact of gender, grade point

average, or geographic location on students' chosen delivery methods (Shepperd et al., 2008). However, the researchers found that students who had more years of education tended to select the electronic version. Students who used the electronic version spent an average of 2.0 hours per week studying, and those who used the printed text spent 2.3 hours per week studying. Students' grades in the course were not linked to their preference of textbook delivery. The 10% of students who used the e-book were asked to report on its usability. The study showed that the majority of the students who used the electronic version remained biased towards the e-book delivery, but stated that they would not recommend it to any of their associates. The study did not indicate why that was true. Only one-third of the 10% indicated they would be willing to use it for class again in the future.

### **The History of Smartphone and Other Technology Devices**

According to Weintraub (2010), the 1980s saw the revolutionary rise of the personal computer. Then, in the 1990s, the rapid growth of the Internet gave individuals a tool by which an enormous amount of information could be shared with others. Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the "smartphone" has propelled the technology revolution even further as it allows users to more freely and readily connect to the Internet.

Several types of technology devices are used with e-books. For example, the Soft Book is an electronic device that automatically starts up when opened. According to SoftPress.com, (2012) this device features annotated text and underlining capabilities, weighs 2.9 pounds and stores up to 50,000 pages of content. One advantage of the Soft Book is that a person does not need a personal computer to use it.

Another device is the Rocket Book. This device weighs 1.25 pounds and is 7.5 by 4 inches. It can be downloaded to a PC, and files can be transferred from the Rocket Book to a serial port. It will also convert any document or HTML file to its internal software format.

According to Komarraju, Karau, Schmeck & Avdic (2011), conducted a study that tested the correlation between the Big Five Personality Traits which consisted of: Extraversion – talkativeness, Agreeableness – kindness, Conscientiousness – thoughtfulness, Neuroticism – irritability, and Openness – imagination. The study included 312 participants, and was considered the first of its kind to examine Smartphones users purposely. Findings revealed that persons with extraverted personality traits were reported to have a higher propensity to use the texting function on the Smartphone, while those with more compliant personality traits (e.g. “more agreeable”) used the Smartphone more for calls than texting. The study also showed that males were more likely to purchase and use a Smartphone than females, by 53% to 47%. In addition, Roth (2010) reported that people who use the Smartphone most often have the personality trait called “Openness.” These are individuals who have a broad range of interests.

### **Are e-Books Cost Effective? The Pros and Cons of e-Books**

According to Roth (2010), e-books have become a rapidly growing business and will eventually own a considerable share of the marketplace, but will never completely take the place of paper texts. The author concluded that a person can only read an e-book

on an electronic device, which means that a person must own a device that costs money. Although a majority of people own an iPad, Smartphone, or computer already, that number has not reached 100% and may never do so.

Roth (2010) suggested that e-books are excellent for original release, acceptable for classic and not optimal delivery choices for the majority of titles published during 1923-2008, because the technology during that time was not specifically designed for downloading content. The author stressed that if people are not avid readers of new books, they should stay away from the Kindle and concentrate on free Kindle applications or a device that they already previously own to provide easier access.

The transition from printed text to digital materials is greatly expanding. IDPF (2009) reported that e-book sales have reached considerable volume in the marketplace. The technology has had a profound effect on students, publishing companies, bookstores, universities, and faculty. According to Caldwell (2008), numerous undergraduate students now prefer e-books over printed text.

A report from Farris and Berg (2005) presented findings showing an examination of student disposition, insight and state of mind related to the use of e-Readers. The findings from this review concluded that students were very much in favor with the increased growth in technology options for handheld e-Reader computer devices for required course readings. The authors found that use of e-Readers in the classrooms allowed students an opportunity to engage more during class because of their accessibility to connect easily to the internet.

### **Students' Perceptions and Impacts of the Amazon Kindle Device**

A study conducted by Larson (2010) examined the possible impact of e-Reader, Readers on elementary school students. The main aim of this study was to expose these students to the Amazon Kindle. Students were introduced to the basic functions of the device. In addition, they were given training on how to use the dictionary, take notes, and change the size of the font. The study revealed that the majority of the students were able to take notes and look up words from the dictionary, but some students needed additional training on placing notes in a proper writing format. The study demonstrated students' ability to integrate technology and literacy skills into the classroom (Larson, 2010).

A Research Unit Media Convergence program at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (JGU) conducted a study that compared methods of reading electronic screens versus traditional printed text to see which readers preferred. Participants in the study were given a variety of texts to read with various levels of understanding. Two e-Reader devices were selected for the study: the Amazon Kindle 3 and the Apple iPad. Participants' reading performance and brain activity were examined by means of an EEG

machine and eye tracking tools, including the Apple iPad. The study revealed that although there was no dissimilarity in reading performance, the iPod participants' reading comprehension times were faster than those who read printed text. Other participants expressed that they were more comfortable reading from a printed text than a screen. The study revealed that the e-book reader was definitely on the rise, even in libraries. In fact, check outs for e-books at libraries have risen approximately 200% since 2010 (Mashable, 2011).

Ostrow (2011) reported in 2011 that Amazon Kindle books were outselling paperbacks on Amazon's website. This appears to be a major development for the entire publishing industry. Amazon's earnings for six months for e-books skyrocketed over hard covers; 115 Kindle books were sold for every 100 paperback books purchased. This significant increase in sales of the Kindle 3 helped Amazon accomplish for the first time in 2010 earnings of approximately \$10 billion in a single quarter (Mashable, 2011).

### **New Ways to Cut Costs on Textbooks and e-Books**

According to Herther (2011), Google presently offers about 3 million e-books. In addition, Herther reports that Amazon profits from having 1.8 million free books along with 750,000 books on hand for retailing. According to Boroughs (2010), in 2009 e-book sales tripled, and the Kindle DX was launched to add to the growing stable of e-Reader options. The author stated that approximately 9,000 textbooks that have e-Reader options and one-third of college texts are now available as e-books on *CourseSmart.com*. The author indicated that the price of an e-text is typically 50% the cost of a printed text. The author further stated that the e-book generally expires around 180 days after purchase.

This could be a major drawback in adoption of the technology for individuals who want to keep their texts even after the course is completed.

### **Has the Printed Text Been Replaced with the e-Book?**

Howard (2013), in the *Chronicle of Technology of Higher Education*, reported that universities still favored printed text over e-Books. The author indicated that even though there is excitement about e-books, the classic textbook has not yet disappeared. “In fact, the hold-it-in-your-hands book remains the first choice for many instructors and students” (Howard, 2013, p.1). Howard indicated that the *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, which recently celebrated 50 years in the business, does not offer an electronic version at this time. The book is thriving so well that it is now in its ninth edition, with more than 15 million copies in print. The author further specified that this does not mean that Norton has disregarded the Internet, or that the present initiative in educational publishing is not important enough to investigate an online assessment tool that includes a tutorial alongside textbooks. Howard stated that even the Norton anthology does provide an access code that gives students the opportunity to review printed material online, which is currently popular with students. Furthermore, students at this time are not necessarily calling for a digital edition. According to Michael Wright Howard, Director of College Sales at Norton, students still prefer using the printed text over digital. Howard goes on to say that those publishing companies that have agreed to invest in new digital features still do not want to do away with the printed text.

Woody, Daniel, and Baker (2010) conducted a study that examined factors influencing preference for e-books and e-book content. The study revealed that even

though students are one of the most technologically savvy groups in our universities today, they still preferred the textbook over the e-books. In spite of the ability for students to be able to access supplemental content and other features with ease, students still preferred to use special features in print books rather than in e-books.

A study conducted that compared students' performance using e-books versus paper-based text found no significant difference in how students performed. The study also revealed that the adoption process to e-books from printed text was likely to continue to progress slowly unless e-text format and features could become more standardized, and business models could be produce at a reasonable cost savings (Murray & Perez, 2011).

Howard (2013) stated that Julie K. Bartley, an associate professor of geology and department chair at Gustavus Adolphus College, reported that her students favored printed text over e-books because they like the "feel" of holding the book in their hands. Howard stated that Bartley's department's decision to continue using the printed textbook has been motivated by both students' and the college's preferences. Howard stated that Bartley's students' major concerns about textbooks have been cost-related. She indicated that her department found a way to keep textbook prices down by releasing fewer new editions of textbooks. Bartley stated that her university has not taken into account student preferences for online content.

Howard (2013) also references Biology Department Chair Tanya C. Noel at the University of Windsor in Ontario. Noel stated that her undergraduate students have not switched to e-books, nor are they interested in doing so. Although students do have



access to online tutorial and assessment systems promoted by publishers, she prefers her students not use e-books due to quality and consistency of content concerns. Noel believes that e-courses will become more prevalent when publishers are able to perfect the products as the open-text movement moves forward and produces course alternatives that are low in price or free for students. She added that print is still favored over e-books. Even for those companies like Norton where the textbook has become the main publishing focus, and where sales report a growing trend for digital editions, the majority of sales remain in printed books. Norton claims that it will offer more digital editions when the company can produce those that will satisfy both the company's needs and its customers' needs.

In the meantime, Norton is publishing e-textbooks in subjects where e-texts have not been previously available. A three-part e-course book is currently being designed for the Sociology Department. Howard indicated that this course book is stylistically different from the traditional textbooks. In addition, this kind of product is often four times cheaper than the traditional textbook.

Another product that uses the e-technologies is My Lab. Howard (2013) stated that Jerome Grant, the company's Chief Learning Officer, describes My Lab as a program that accentuates arrangement of content, applications, platform, and services. The course content is designed to help test students' knowledge. My Lab comes with a value pack that includes a printed text bundled with digital material and services. According to Howard (2013), Grant sees this product as representative of a new course content delivery system that will dominate the market.

Stookesberry (as cited in Howard, 2013) claimed that less than 50% of the company's revenue from higher education comes from "pure print product"; he says the company's print sales are down by more than 50% within the last two years.

The surveys and comments cited in this review all point to two primary facts: digital delivery systems are growing, but the printed text remains strong. Howard (2013) said that university student surveys and publishers alike point to a continuing favorite for the printed text over the e-book. The review also uncovered that there are some companies that would be willing invest in the new digital technologies, especially for text updates.

### **What is New in the Way of the Alternate Textbook?**

According to the America's Debt Help Organization (2013), online libraries are alternative resources for students and faculty to help cut the high price of textbooks. In 2012, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded an initiative at Rice University to provide online textbooks for the five best-attended college courses of which 42 community college courses have already received books. It is projected that students could save approximately 90 million from 2012 through 2017 in a quest for alternative ways to keep textbook prices at \$30 or below.

According to Young (2013), textbook publishers are disputing the moniker "textbooks" for their latest digital creations. Others claim these digital "textbooks" are merely software programs that deliver videos, text, and homework assignments to students. Young reported that some problems are already surfacing with this method of software, and that publishers are still trying to find ways to customize this product for

delivery into the classroom. Young indicated that one publisher praised the development as a “tailored education experience” for its user.

Young (2013) cited a Follett Higher Education survey of 940 bookstores where survey results indicated that only 2% of textbooks had digital editions. The study also showed that a limited number of professors were using digital editions. Young’s opinion is that the new technology/software offerings should not be called “textbooks.” “‘It is not a textbook; it is an entire course,’ stated Jean Wisuri, Director of Distance Education at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, describing a product called Course360, from Cengage Learning... ‘it has activities built right into the textbook itself’” (Young, 2013, p.1).

Young reported that some professors are using Course360, an online resource designed so that students can complete the bulk of a given course’s material without a professor and teach themselves online by linking into the university’s virtual classroom system. This virtual classroom allows professors to select the materials they want to incorporate into their curriculum. Young further stated that some university professors believe that these online programs will eventually diminish the role they play as educators.

Young (2013) claimed that publishers are not the only ones developing new textbook technologies. For example, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) feature online lectures, quizzes, and tests in various topics for universities that can be used by students free of charge (EDUCASE, 2012). The purpose of the MOOC is to help bring education to the forefront by empowering all people to gain a quality education with the

opportunity and capability to be able to access the Internet by studying online university level courses. Coursera, Udacity and edX are three leading providers of the MOOC. Each provider has its own online learning program. The key difference among the three providers is that each provider offers its own unique structure, style, and delivery method. Of the three providers mentioned, Udacity appears to stand out among the others because all of its courses are openly available and not as structured as Coursera and edX courses. (Round, 2013).

The concept came out of a fairly recent trend in which organizations (not necessarily educational institutions) offered learning resources such as documents and media free of charge to anyone who could connect to the Internet. The phenomenon grew quickly (Bady, 2012), and colleges began developing MOOCs as a replacement to textbooks, a practice known as “flipping the classroom” The main objective of “flipping the classroom,” Young said, is to allow students the opportunity to view lectures, videos, and complete online homework exercises for homework outside of class, cutting down on the time professors spend lecturing. Students are allowed to use the rest of their educational time in class for discussions or group projects.

According to EDUCASE (2012), there are no established models for flipping. Some professors may limit the practice to student viewing of short lectures, while others may expand it to allow students to take quizzes and tests online, effectively turning classroom time into student work sessions either individually or in teams. Meyer (2013) reported on a three-year study—one of the first of its kind—that examined student performance in a “flipped classroom,” where students were engaged in watching brief

lecture videos at home while working on activities during class time. The study reported that the flipped methods led to final exam score improvements, 2.5% in the first year, and an additional 2.6% improvement in the second year. Carnegie Mellon, iTunesU, Stanford, UC Berkeley, MIT, Duke, Harvard, and Yale are free educational MOOCs sites (bdpa-detroit.org/portal), Table 1 presents a description of what they offer.

Table 1

*Top Eight Sites for Free Education with Elite Universities*

Institution	Offerings
Carnegie Mellon free courses	No instructors and no charge
iTunesU free courses	Students access courses in a single place
Stanford free courses	Offers students a variety of free courses
UC Berkeley free courses	Offers students a variety of free courses
MIT free courses	Offers open courseware
Duke free courses	Offers students a variety of courses on iTunesU
Harvard free courses	Offers students a variety of free courses
Yale free courses	Offers students free access to introductory courses

Young (2013) indicated that universities may seek to cut costs by increasingly relying on MOOC content from companies like Coursera or Udacity. In response, major publishers have bought software companies to enhance their competitiveness in the higher education market. In 2010, McGraw-Hill Education purchased Tegrity, a software company that computerizes and streamlines recordings of lectures in colleges to meet the demands of their students. The author indicated that companies like Panopto, OpenClass (OC), and other publishers have now begun to enter into such partnership agreements.

OC offers free software learning management systems to universities that replace the traditional blackboard with another e-technology known as the “whiteboard,” a display that connects to a computer or other data device and allows electronic documents to be displayed on a large classroom screen. However, there are many universities who still are not ready to move from the blackboards to OC.

### **Is it Ethical for Students to Download Textbooks for Free?**

According to Parry (2013), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSOSE) reported projections that at least one out of every three seniors and one in four freshmen rarely will pay for textbooks because of the price. Parry stated that technology and finances are redesigning the textbook industry and driving student price concerns, making students more likely to find other methods for securing or accessing course content. Technology has played a major part in helping students to change the way they make their textbook decision purchases. Parry (2013) stated that some students have opted not to go to the college bookstore, but instead search the Internet for options to purchase, rent, and share or even steal books. Online sites like Facebook and “Rate My Professors” have begun seeking ways to acquire textbook deals for students.

The digital technology world has skyrocketed the music industry money-making model, and the textbook industry is not far behind. Some university leaders are proposing that e-textbooks should be a requirement for college reading programs, and that universities should also be the ones charging fees for them (Young, 2013).

As a result of the significant developments in textbook delivery modes, and to shed some light on the problems of high textbook prices, the *Chronicle Technology of*

*Higher Education* (CTOHE) conducted focus groups with undergraduate participants from two institutions of higher education, Foothill College and University of California at Berkeley. More than 12 students from a diversity of majors participated in the focus groups. CTOHE allowed students to answer questions anonymously, to allow for more accurate and frank answers, especially in the area of textbook piracy.

The anonymous process was effective. Parry (2013) reported that one 19-year-old economic major called textbook acquisition “a process”, explaining that knowing that Amazon sold the textbook for \$123.00; he simply got a friend to e-mail him a PDF copy free of charge. He indicated that his friend had gone to a peer-to-peer file-sharing protocol to retrieve the file. The economics major claimed that textbooks can be found from various sites, including Torrentz, Pirate Bay, and TorLock. He also further claimed that the downloading process was simple and that this is a common practice among students.

Parry (2013) reported that in 2012, at least 21% of students admitted going to these pirate websites for textbooks, a 13% increase from 2011 according to the Book Industry Study Group. In fact, the economics major claimed that downloading a book is not any different from going online to retrieve music or a TV show. Parry (2013) indicated that while technology has made it easier for users to steal books, it has also produced a plethora of legal and easy options for obtaining them online. For example, students have begun pursuing international editions of textbooks. Parry (2013) reported that a 21-year-old student at Berkeley claimed he has never had to purchase a textbook in college. He says he simply goes online to a website that mails him printed copies of

books that are produced outside of the United States. He indicated that the book only cost him \$23, but would have cost him \$120 elsewhere.

### **Rental Cost Alternative Options**

Schick and Marklein (2013) of *USA Today* reported a rising number of faculty are publishing or finding alternative ways to cut the high cost of textbooks by adopting free online course materials for their students. According to Parry (2013), rentals of textbooks are now as easy as purchasing a movie from Netflix. Students pay for their rental up front and send it back when they are finished. The availability of textbook rentals is much more prevalent now than it was five years ago, with innovative websites such as Chegg, which links with college bookstore chains to help accommodate student purchases. The focus group study suggested that Facebook appeared to be the best option— specifically for a 21 year old history major at Foothills to acquire a book. The history major indicated that he knew many people and friends who had already taken the class, and was therefore he was able to obtain the book very inexpensively on Facebook. According to Parry (2013), Facebook has become a leader in the industry for students networking to find affordable book options. Because Internet options have grown so rapidly, other students can obtain books through Craigslist and copycat sites like Outhand. Table 2 presents the costs associated with e-books and printed text.

Table 2

#### *Foothill's Focus Group*

Political science class	E-book	New printed text	New rental	Used rental
purchase options cost	\$62.00	\$159.00	\$107.00	\$59.00



The Foothill's Focus Group comparison chart in Table 2 showed the price options for e-books, new printed text, new rental, and used rental. After looking at an array of choice comparison prices, a 19-year-old student majoring in economics in the focus group preferred to buy the e-book version outright as opposed to renting, since the rental-purchase price differentials were significant.

The Book Industry Study Group (BISG) (2013) held a seminar led by Steve Paxhia, President of Beacon Hill Strategies Solutions on "Students' Attitude Content in Higher Education." During the seminar, Paxhia reported that his study showed students' preferences for print over Digital texts had declined from 72% in November 2011 to 60% by the end of 2012. Paxhia reported that his company is now engaging in more new digital products.

Reynolds (2011) of Digital Textbooks says that higher education textbook industry is at a "tipping point," and that digital course material will outstrip print course material in the next 5 to 7 years. Companies such as Barnes & Noble offer students several options to help cut the high cost of textbooks such as purchasing new, used, rental, and digital books. Students can save up to 40% when they rent, 90% when they purchase a used book and 60% with e-textbooks (Barnes & Noble.com, (2012).

Parry (2013) suggested that this generation is being gradually taken away from the textbook and is now entering into a rapidly growing digital era. Ultimately, students are headed toward a paperless education.

In 2006, The Advisory Committee (TAC) (2006a) was tasked to investigate for one year a study on the cost of textbooks and make recommendations on finding ways to

help affordability of textbooks for its students. TAC appointed Dr. James Koch, a former college president, to provide a cost-effective analysis on the textbook market. Dr. Koch was also responsible for investigating other aspects connected to textbook pricing with an eye toward searching for solutions to the problem.

During an eight-month investigation from 2006 and 2007, three hearings featuring testimony from various stakeholders were conducted in Chicago, Illinois; Santa Clarita, California; and Portland, Oregon by The Advisory Committee (2006a). The data gathered from these hearings, along with an extensive review of the literature was used to help determine the findings.

### **The Methodological Insights**

The examination of the literature indicated a number of e-book trends in students' textbook delivery preferences in the areas of cost, availability, student attitudes, insight and behaviors. In particular studies conducted on e-books versus printed text such as Folb, Wessel, and (Czechowski, 2011; E-Berry, 2010) and EDUCASE (2012) revealed similarly favorable preferences toward e-books for their copying and printing abilities, search and highlighting capabilities, and reduced costs. McFall, Dershem and Davis (2006) and Clark, Goodwin, Samuelson, and Coker (2008) were favorable toward the positive features e-book had to offer students, in the areas of note-taking, text highlighting ability, forum sharing, animated images, and graphics. Connaway and Wicht (2007), Diez and Bravo (2009), and Morgan (2010) agreed that the use of e-books in academic libraries has been argued for well over a generation. The review also revealed that there have been great concerns regarding price inflation of textbooks across

universities campuses. The study conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics Producer Price Index reported that the cost for students purchasing new textbooks has risen so that now it has stopped students from purchasing even used textbooks (U.S. PIRG, 2005).

In an earlier study conducted by Slater (2009), students in history, language, linguistics, and humanities courses preferred print textbooks, while students in the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) preferred e-book formats. In regards to textbook delivery, various studies conducted on e-books versus printed textbooks indicated that participants would be willing to use the e-text if it was cheaper. Studies conducted by Farris and Berg (2005) all concurred with the findings that showed the increase the growth in and adoption of technology for handheld e-Reader computer devices for the college classroom. Other delivery modes cited in the literature review would provide students with alternative purchasing options. Schick and Marklein (2013); Young (2013) and Barnes & Noble (2012) all offered alternative plans for helping students cut high textbook prices. Many of the sites offered MOOC's free online courses.

### **Summary**

The literature review demonstrated that rising textbook prices for university students are out of control. The literature review also confirmed that e-books were on the rise. At public universities the cost of text books and supplies averaged \$1,168, and \$1,213 in a private university. Some academic libraries found trends in new technology such as soft book devices that could serve as an alternative to higher-priced textbooks. However, because e-book readers still have some ways to go in terms of wider adoption vs. printed books, this remains a complex and a dynamic issue. University libraries

should continue to explore the various technology options to help students defray high textbook costs. The literature review also showed that a plurality of users in every study was positively disposed to the growing e-book trend. It was also reported that only 29% of students claimed that reading an e-book was not as comfortable as reading from a printed text.

The review also showed that the students' use of electronic textbooks in higher education was rapidly developing and that colleges must change with the times (Woody, Daniel & Baker (2010). One reason for the expanded growth in e-books was clearly the price differential. Several studies conducted revealed that students overwhelmingly preferred laptop computers and net books for their e-book hardware. The review showed that some students preferred to use the e-book for classes, where students that preferred the printed text only wanted to use the e-book for discretionary reading. The review also provided a detailed comparison about the convenience of e-books versus traditional textbooks. In addition, the review provided an in depth look at students' influences when it came to purchase decisions given choices between e-books and traditional textbooks across content areas.

Publisher adoption was another area of study that yielded interesting and rich information. The literature review showed mixed attitudes from publishers; not all were positively disposed toward the e-book trend. Still other publishers have embraced new textbook delivery methods such as the My Lab program. In the final analysis, the literature review revealed that the traditional text still remained strong, and that it would not be advisable to make a wholesale change to digital-only textbook delivery modes.

There is a paucity of research on the best options for students regarding e-books versus printed text, including data on the typical profile of the e-book adopter versus the student who prefers printed text. Such a qualitative study would enrich the body of research on the growing e-book trend and prove useful for educators and students.

Throughout the review, there appeared to be mixed evidence of student preferences for e-books versus printed texts. However, what is clear is that there is a great need for a study on preferred textbook delivery modes. College and university students, as well as professors and management, could benefit from the results of such a study.

The study results could serve as a catalyst for changing the delivery mode for textbooks. Finally, because technology is changing every day, further study is needed to ensure that the technology meets the actual needs of students and faculty for ease of use as well as other auxiliary features.

### Section 3: Research Methodology

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate students' preferences and perception regarding textbook delivery modes and how textbook prices influence student purchase decisions, and to find optimal technology configurations, optimal costs, and study/learning features that can boost student achievement. In this case study design I focused on university students from one university in the state of Michigan along with textbook-ordering decision-makers. Section 3 contains information on the methodology and research design that was used to conduct this study. Specifically, it contains research questions, details on the population, the rationale for conducting a qualitative study, responsibility of participants, ethical considerations, and responsibility of researcher. The final segment of this section contains information on types of data gathering procedures, data analysis methods, validity and reliability.

#### **Research Design and Approach**

Qualitative design is appropriate when studies are complex in which case content-centered analysis is required to recognize and understand patterns that affect the interpretation of findings (Creswell, 2009). The qualitative study model allows for an in-depth examination and will provide the chance to collect valuable information in a natural setting (Creswell, 2009). This research design allowed me to uncover the thought processes of participants and to gain a better perspective of the school culture (e.g., Hatch, 2002). Because a detailed understanding is required and more exposition of the topic is needed, a qualitative approach was appropriate for this type of study (e.g., Yin,

2009). The sampling size consisted of five undergraduate and five graduate students from one university in Michigan and textbook decision-makers for ordering E-books or textbooks.

### **The Reason for Conducting a Qualitative Case Study**

This research design enhanced the description and examination of how instructional practices drive students' preferences of textbook delivery mode at one university in the state of Michigan. The methods that I employed in this research were open-ended questions, emerging approaches, text, and imaging data. Other research designs such as phenomenology, grounded theory, narrative, and ethnography were considered but would not fit appropriately into this study.

### **Research Questions**

Research questions are an essential and significant part to the investigation process of a study as they provide direction to the study (Hatch, 2002). I guided this study with three research questions. I developed these research questions exclusively on the review of literature regarding students' perception toward e-books versus textbook across subject matter and. They were:

1. How do students characterize the convenience of using e-books in comparison to the convenience of using traditional textbooks?
2. How does price influence purchase decisions for students when given the choice between e-books and traditional textbooks across content areas?

3. How do textbook directors at a university school in Michigan, describe their decision-making process related to ordering traditional textbooks and e-books?

In my qualitative study, engaging students through interviews explored students' preferences and perceptions concerning textbook delivery across subject matter. Textbook directors also were interviewed at the university to explain their process for ordering textbook and e-books. Research question one explored how students characterize the convenience of using e-books in comparison to the convenience of using traditional textbooks.

The second research question I explored to determine how price influences purchase decisions for students when given the choice between e-books and traditional textbooks across content areas. The third research question was used for directors at that university to explain their decision-making process pertaining to ordering textbooks and e-books. Data were gathered using interviews from students and textbook decision-makers. Study results offered insight into information on students' perceptions and choices for e-books versus printed text.

### **Context of the Study**

**Participants.** In my qualitative study I investigated how students characterize the convenience of using e-books vs. the convenience of using traditional textbooks, and how price influences purchase decisions and choices regarding e-books and traditional textbooks across content areas. I conducted interviews with a textbook director in charge of ordering the University textbooks to explore their decision-making process pertaining



to ordering textbooks and e-books. The qualitative approach consisted of participatory information assertions, narrative design, and open-ended interviewing (Creswell, 2003).

The criteria for selecting participants for this study were based on the following:

according to Creswell (2003), a qualitative approach is one in which the inquirer regularly makes knowledge demands based mainly on the constructivist viewpoint (i.e., the innumerable meanings socially and historically accumulated with the intent of emerging a concept or pattern of distinct practices).

A qualitative case study method was used for this study to help the researcher discover an in-depth program, a time, an activity, and a method or one or more persons. Study participants were composed of five undergraduate students, five graduate students and two textbook ordering decision makers. The sample of participants for this study was purposive, which means that data obtained from these participants was used to better understand the study.

Participant selection criteria were based on population, age, purpose of the study, students' flexibility, and meticulousness of the study. Only those students 18 years and older were allowed to take part in this study from one university. Selection criteria for participation in this study were based on those participants in an undergraduate or graduate level course that required them to use both e-book and printed text. A professor from the selected university students was randomly selected in a reading program class to participate in this study. At a planned orientation, I gave students the consent form to help them understand their involvement in the study.

**Contact with subject participants.** I had no prior relationship with the university or with the participants where the study took place. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from both Walden's IRB (Appendix E) and Marygrove College IRB (Appendix F). I was allowed access to meet with school officials and potential participants in an orientation session to discuss the study. Potential participants were selected by email inquiry. Orientation sessions were organized by me with all participants during April and May of 2014. The main reason for this session was to introduce the students to the study objectives and process, and obtain signed consent forms from each potential participant (see Appendix A). I gave a duplicate signed copy was given to all participants agreeing to take part in the study. I conducted all interviews and all interviews were conducted and completed in April 2014 and May 2014.

**Ethics.** I closely studied and monitored all study procedures to protect the rights of all participants guided by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Every precaution was taken to protect anonymity by following closely the guidelines put in place by the IRB. According to Creswell (2009), the study must be carefully monitored to safeguard the rights and privacy of all participants and to uphold the grounds of the study.

Ethical guidelines were included in a consent form that participants received prior to interviews. I explained to each participant the related risks and benefits to participating in the qualitative research study. All participants selected were informed of their rights to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Information collected from each participant was closely monitored to protect the human rights and privacy of all subject participants, and to sustain the validity of the study (Creswell, 2009).

**Role of the researcher.** Ethical guidelines were closely monitored and followed to ensure the confidentiality of all participants to maintain validity of the study. (Creswell, 2009). I obtained permission from the IRB with the approval # 04-14-14-0055455 on 04-14-2014 to conduct the study before data was collected. I respected all participants' opinions and reassured those that the minimal risks did not go beyond the possible harms of daily life. Participants chose a pseudonym for their names. I used during the interviews and in the discussion of the results in this document in order to protect their identities.

I maintained a professional relationship with participants at all times. I did not coerce, deceive, or force any participant to take part in the study. During the interviews, all participants were treated with the upmost respect. I informed participants that any research data would be secured and eventually destroyed; and that the data would not be used for any purposes other than research. I was responsible for collecting responses from face-to-face interviews with participants. All interviews were done in a private setting for each participant (students and textbook director for ordering). I discussed transcriptions privately with each participant independently. This process was used to avoid any misinterpretation and to provide and validate clarity from each interview response. I was responsible for setting the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

### **Data Collection**

Yin (2009) noted that the collection of information involves an extensive assortment of events to develop an in-depth explanation of the study. According to Hatch (2002), researchers need to make every effort to acquire information that will answer

their research questions. Janesick (2004) also stated that the collection of information must be detailed, up-to-date, and triangulated in order to produce sufficient verification of issue explored. The procedures that I used to collect the data were in agreement with those in the literature review and consistent with the research questions as addressed by Creswell (2009). Yin (2009) revealed numerous ways of reporting data, and Hatch (2002) revealed an assortment of ways to collect information for a case study. Data can be obtained by establishing rapport with participants during the intensive experience, so that numerous viewpoints can be collected and understood to decrease potential for social desirability replies in interviews (Krefting, 1991).

The data collection methods were suitable for the objectives and settings of the study. The primary sources of data collection for this proposed study began with face-to-face interviews with five undergraduate and five graduate students who attend a single university in the state of Michigan. In addition, I also interviewed two textbook directors in charge of ordering the University's textbooks.

I also used the triangulation approach to measure data collected from an assortment of sources to confirm answers to all three of the research questions. Thematic Analysis was used in analyzing data emanating from all three groups. The face-to-face interviews approach included using an audio-taping of the interviews, note taking of interviews, and transcribing the notes from the interviews. The data were collected during April and May of 2014. Interviews were considered the best data collection tool to use for this case study based on the research questions, which allowed participants to be studied in their natural setting (e.g., Janesick, 2004; Yin, 2009). The administering of a survey for

this case study, would not have been a good choice, because It would not allowed me the affordability to examine participants' thoughts that produced sufficient evidence of deeper opinions as the interview process does. Observation would not have been a good selection for this case study, because students were not being evaluated or observed from instructional practices and learning activity within a school setting, and this would not be the best choice to use when addressing open-ended questions pertaining to the research questions. According to Hatch (2002) open-ended questions allow participants an opportunity to explain their individual involvements and experiences for the researcher to gain a better understand of the participants.

### **Interview**

I interviewed the undergraduates' first, graduates second, and textbook directors last. All participants' interviews took place in a private office on campus in the bookstore. All interviews lasted approximately 15-20 minutes. The interview with each textbook director took approximately 120 minutes and 3 weeks to complete. I provided an integrated process of member checking procedures to make sure the interpretation of the data could be shared with the participants to determine whether the data on what the participants stated was accurate.

During the interview process, participants were given the opportunity to converse, elaborate, and clarify the interpretation and shed light on additional perspectives that they may have discovered during the interview. Purposeful sampling was the approach that I used in this case study to clearly identify specific types of sampling strategy and tie context into the research objective. To check for additional clarity from the interview

questions, I reread the questions over and over to make sure they were accurately answered. In addition, I implemented a field log, during data collection to help monitor and track a detailed account of time spent when on-site during the audio recording and transcription phase. After the interview, a follow-up conversation was held with the participants to confirm that responses given by the participants were accurately stated. This process took approximately 15 minutes per participant to complete.

According to Yin (2009), the interview process is an essential source of evidence in a qualitative study. The face-to-face interviews are conversations in which the researcher involves the participant. Janesick (2004) stated, “The most rewarding component of any qualitative research project is interviewing” (p.71). More importantly, it is considered one of the most important types of information gathering in a case study because the data relies on human involvements. For accuracy, I used field notes and a tracking log to avoid missing information during the interviews. The questions pertaining to the face-to-face interviews were developed in advance and provided specifics details regarding students perceptions of e-book versus printed text. I transcribed the interviews questions taken from the audiotape recording, and handwritten notes, into a word document.

### **Data Analysis**

According to Hatch (2002) true data analyses is an organized approach to process data and seek for meaning. Hatch further stated, “Analysis means organizing and interrogating data in ways that allow researchers to see pattern, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate

theories” (p.148). In this qualitative research, the data from this study provided an in-depth approach used to address precise information and detailed subject practices.

Creswell (2007) and Smith (2008) outlined steps for phenomenological qualitative data analysis. I utilized the steps in this study outline by Creswell (2007 and Smith (2008) by exploring and understanding a specific phenomenon that people make sense of the practices and the meaning that they give to them.

According to Corbin and Strauss (2007) the term coding is described as the process of examining the unrefined qualitative data used in the form of words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs by the assigning of codes or labels.

Open coding was used in this case study to analyze qualitative data to include labeling concepts, defining and developing categories based on their properties and dimension. According to Creswell (2003), with coding, you can make sense of the data by placing the data into themes. The information that I investigated was data related to students’ perceptions of e-books versus printed text. These general concerns were recognized throughout the literature review. The data was reviewed for ease of comprehension, and to facilitate the search for patterns of importance in data. The process of the data being reviewed was done by circling and highlighting words and phrases that described sections of the text. I assigned labels and codes from the meaningful segment of text in the transcript. I also created abbreviations to produce codes for every theme, which made the themes easier to sort and identify. Next, I grouped them into themes and categories. This process was done until I segmented all the data for the initial coding. I reviewed the texts to find relationships between the codes and labels. This process was

repeated over and over until the codes were applied to new segment of data each time until an appropriate segment was encountered. Opening coding was also used to review the data for ease and to search for patterns of importance in data, categorize frames of analysis, and produce descriptive theme statements (Thomas, 2006).

Inductive analysis was used to make sure all transcripts were read closely several times, so that the data was coded item-by-item. I repeatedly reviewed all field notes, and reviewed audio taped-interviewed to ensure that they were transcribed word for word.

I used the inductive analysis approach (IAP) in the data analysis to help identify patterns in the data information by way of thematic codes. “Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis” (Patton, 1980, p. 306). The inductive approach identified patterns, themes, and categories of analysis that were derived from the data. In addition, the data I obtained from participants were used to develop themes and topics and draw out key issues (Moustakas, 1994). I used data from each category or thematic idea to explore subject by subject to see what changes or variation in relationship occurred to other factors from within the setting.

According to Merriam (2009), qualitative research is an approach that examines how groups understand their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences. The concept of epoche was used in this case study. Researchers (Creswell, 1998; Field & Morse, 1985) claim the theory of epoche is central everywhere the researcher brackets his or her own predetermined ideas about the phenomenon in order to comprehend it through the voices of the informants. I utilized



epoche by describing my own experience and bracketing out my own views before proceeding with the experience of other (Creswell, 2007). These bracketing essentially were used to help limit any biased conclusion I may have had to the research data, which should only consider the perspective of the participant (Creswell, 2007). After successfully bracketing, I collected the data. The projected outcome of this study was dependent on careful selection of the participants involved in the research. I continued to model the inductive analysis by searching for patterns of importance in data, categorizing frames of analysis and producing descriptive statement as themes (Thomas, 2006). The generated themes implemented in this study, were aligned with reviews in the literature to develop a rich description form the participants standpoint. The inductive approach that was utilized in this study, gave meaning and support to complex data through the description of themes and codes generated for the raw data (Yin, 2009).

### **Reliability and Validity**

To ensure legitimacy, honesty, and dependability of the researcher, I utilized a number of devices in this study such as member checking and note taking to ensure reliability. Triangulation for comparing and member checking data from various sources that included interviews were used throughout to safeguard that the results were reliable with the data. According to Creswell (2009), qualitative validity directs the researcher to look for the exactness of the results by employing specified procedures. Yin (as cited in Creswell, 2009) suggested recording as many techniques as necessary to safeguard the dependability and validity of results. Confirmation of results in qualitative research happens throughout all stages of the research process (Creswell, 2009). To protect the

privacy of each participant in making sure that data obtained during the interview was reliable and accurate; all interviews were audio tape-recorded with permission granted by each participant. I used a triangulation of data processes in this qualitative study to support the principles in this case study (Denzin, 1970). Coding was used to identify the themes throughout by “careful reading and re-reading of the data” (Rice & Ezzy, 1999, p. 258). Multiple data sources were utilized that provided a rich, solid explanation of the participants’ perception of their experiences with e-books versus printed text (Creswell, 2003). An assortment of sources of data collection was selected to “increase the accuracy and credibility of the findings” (Patton, 2002, p.93). I used Triangulation in this qualitative case study, to define two or more methods of data collection in the study regarding students’ perception of e-book versus printed text. The triangulation was also used to examine diverse theories and different methodologies. Thematic analysis was used to analyze data emanating from all three groups. Thematic analysis was further used to investigate themes that appear as being significant to the description of the phenomenon (Daly, Kellehear, & Gliksman, 1997). In each set of answers, I was careful to identify factors that were significant in either students’ or administrators’ delivery mode choices; these factors emerged as key “themes” in the discussion of results. I utilized reliability in this study through addressing my role as the researcher, the involvement of participants’ roles, and the perspective from which the data was collected (Creswell, 2003).

Creswell (2007) stated that inner and outer essentials are completed all the way through the triangulation by members’ enforcement to check continually to make certain

of the soundness of the study. I utilized the member checking to recheck transcripts to make certain for accuracy and safety of all raw data (Athens, 2010). I took consistent notes throughout the face-to-face interviews, and consistently transcribed and coded the notes afterwards. I used the data collection method to compare data from multiple sources such as interview scripts that were sorted into concepts that emerged into codes and themes I read the organized interviews repeatedly to help confirm that the data were accurate. According to Patton (2002), a researcher can use multiple source of data collection to help further the exactness and reliability of the findings. Both Creswell (2007) and Yin (2009) agreed that the triangulation technique provides effectiveness to the study and makes use of multiple sources of information to present corroborating confirmation that sheds light on the sensitivity of the study, strengthening the accuracy of the study. I provided a rich explanation of the finding to conceptualize the content and safeguard external validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### **Conclusion**

Included in the methodology section are a narrative explanation of the selection of participants and data gathering and data analysis procedures. I used triangulation in this study to ensure reliability, credibility, validity, and trustworthiness. In this section, the case study explained the data collection process, the ethical protection and methods. Subsequent sections will elaborate on the discussions, results, recommendation and future study regarding e-books versus printed text mode delivery.

Numerous school libraries and universities face challenges in developing reading program to accommodate their students. Helpful instructional approaches related to

student choices of textbook delivery was identified in the study along with student perceptions about using e-books in place of traditional textbook across subject matter.

The aim of this qualitative case study was to investigate students' preferences and perception regarding textbook delivery modes and how textbook prices influence student purchase decisions. Finally, the study findings may provide data that could be used to help improve students' choices of textbook delivery; to guide publishers in a more effective and deep grasp of the product development that could impact student educational outcomes; and to guide and inform university decisions regarding the structuring and provision of educational texts.

## Section 4: Results

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate students' preferences and perception regarding textbook delivery modes and how textbook prices influence student purchase decisions. This section of study is a presentation of the outcomes, including the three research questions and themes that emerged from the interview responses. Specific information on the data collection and organization, analysis of interview responses and the data coding into themes are discussed in detail. Each research question was addressed using the responses from 12 interviews.

Three research questions were investigated and discussed in this section of the study. The study was based on the following research questions:

1. How do students characterize the convenience of using e-books in comparison to the convenience of using traditional textbooks?
2. How do students describe the influence of price on their purchase decisions when given the choice between e-books and traditional textbooks across content areas?
3. How do textbook directors at a university school in Michigan, describe their decision-making process related to ordering traditional textbooks and E-books?

Several themes that emerged from the research will be discussed and applied to the appropriate research questions throughout this section of the study in more detail.

Both undergraduate and graduate students, along with textbook directors' involvement in

the study provided data and are presented in the study as descriptive illustrations to highlight detailed points.

### **Data Collection and Organization**

Interviews that I conducted were with five undergraduate and five graduate participants at a university in Michigan, along with two textbook directors who were responsible for ordering e-books and printed textbooks. Upon receiving approval from the Walden's IRB, data collection was conducted during April 2014 through May 2014. A research log was used to keep track of the data received from the interviews. The sample of participants' for this study was purposive, meaning the participants met all criteria for inclusion in the sample. Participants had to meet these criteria: students who were 18 years and older, and enrolled in undergraduate or graduate level courses that required them to use both e-books and printed and printed text. Ethical guidelines were included in a consent form that participants received prior to the interview.

### **Interview Process**

During the interview process, a professor from the university where I conducted study allowed me access to randomly select in undergraduate and graduate reading classes to participate in the study. Textbook directors who were in charge of the ordering process at the university were selected for interview for this study. Textbook directors who were in charge of the ordering process at the university were selected for interview for this study.

I held an orientation session for potential participants to understand the purpose of the study. In these sessions I explained related risks and benefits to participating in the

qualitative research study. Participants selected for the study were given the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Ethical guidelines included the consent form was given to each participant prior to the orientation. Participants at the end of the orientation meeting that agreed to participate in the study signed the consent form and kept a duplicate copy of the signed consent form for their record (see Appendix A). The five undergraduates and five graduate participants were all female. One textbook director was male and the second participant chose not to reveal their gender.

The process of meeting with participants was rather challenging because the appropriate meeting time had to be rearranged to fit the schedule of each individual participant. I was given time by the professor in charge of the reading class to meet with each student participant in a private room to conduct the interviews during class sessions. The interviews for both undergraduate and graduate students were completed close to schedule. During the interview protocol (see Appendix B) I recorded all interviews and documented both verbal and nonverbal responses in my member's log. This was used to help avoid any misplace data during the interviewing transcription protocol. The orientation of one of the textbook directors was held over the phone; the other director orientation was held in his private office. This process took longer to complete due to the unavailability of the directors for interviews.

### **Demographics**

Four undergraduate participants were juniors between 18 and 24 years of age, with one participant, a senior, who was between 25 and 30 years. The ethnicities of the

students were diverse; including African American ( $n = 3$ , 60%), Caucasian ( $n = 1$ , 20%) and bi-racial ( $n = 1$ , 20%). The yearly family income for one participant was more than \$100,000 and the other participants indicated annual family incomes between \$30,000 and \$40,000. One participant chose not to report her family income. The five undergraduate participants were enrolled in a reading class at the university. Table 3 provides demographic information on the five undergraduate participants according to participant code, education status, gender, age, ethnicity, and yearly income.

Table 3

*Undergraduate Participant Demographics*

Participant Code	Education Status	Age Group	Ethnicity	Position	Yearly Income
PU01	Junior	18-24	White	Student	\$100,000+
PU02	Junior	18-24	Black	Student	n/a
PU03	Junior	18-25	Black	Student	\$30,000 -\$40,000
PU04	Junior	18-24	Bi-racial	Student	\$30,000 -\$40,000
PU05	Senior	25-30	Black	Student	\$50,000 - \$70,000

The five graduate participants were African American females who were enrolled in a reading class at the university. Three (60%) participants were from 31 to 40 years, with two (40%) between 41 and 55 years of age. Three (60%) participants had yearly incomes between \$50,000 and \$70,000 and two reported annual incomes between \$30,000 and \$40,000. Two participants had been at the university for 1 to 2 years, two participants had attended for 3 to 4 years, and one participant had been at the university for 5 to 6 years.



Table 4 provides demographic information on the five graduate participants according to years attending college, gender, age, and ethnic status, position and yearly income.

Table 4

*Graduate Participant Demographics*

Participant Code	Years at College	Age Group	Ethnicity	Position	Yearly Income
PG01	3-4	31-40	Black	Student	\$50,000 - \$70,000
PG02	5-6	41-55	Black	Student	\$30,000 - \$40,000
PG03	1-2	31-40	Black	Student	\$50,000 - \$70,000
PG04	1-2	41-55	Black	Student	\$30,000 - \$40,000
PG05	3-4	31-40	Black	Student	\$50,000 - \$70,000

### **Analysis of Interview Responses**

I used inductive analysis in my study to reduce diverse raw material into a summary that reflected the evident patterns in the results (Thomas, 2006). During the analysis of the interview process, I safeguarded for accuracy by matching the recorded files to the transcriptions. Transcripts were reexamined repeatedly to make sure the coding and themes were appropriate to the objective of the study. The inductive codes were developed throughout by reexamining data, categorizing text segments, and producing labels to reflect new themes that were then assigned a new text segment.

## Undergraduate and Graduate Responses

### Research Question #1

The first research question was: How do Students Characterize the Convenience of Using e-Books in Comparison to the Convenience of Using Traditional Textbooks? When decoding the data from the interviews to identify the themes regarding e-books or traditional textbooks, several interview questions I used to understand what students both undergraduate and graduate students, views were regarding the convenience of e-books. The two themes emerged were convenient positive and inconvenient negative. The subthemes consisted of: ease of using e-books, ease in viewing, ease of enlarging font, ease of transport, enjoying technology and ecofriendly. There were part of the convenient positive. The subthemes were comfort, highlighting, hand use and turning pages were part of inconvenient negative shown on table 5 below for the undergraduates.

Table 5

*Undergraduate Themes Research Question 1 e-Books*

Themes	Subthemes
Convenient positive	Ease of using e-books Ease in Viewing Ease of enlarging font Ease of transport Enjoy technology Eco friendly
Inconvenient negative	Comfort Highlighting Hand use Turning pages

### **Undergraduates Theme 1: Convenient Positive**

Undergraduate participants noted that the use of e-books were convenient and positive. Three of the five undergraduate participants noted that the use of e-books was not only convenient it was preferred. Of the three that prefer e-books all three noted enjoyment in using technology and that being technologically savvy was one of the reasons they preferred e-books to traditional texts and found them more convenient. The other two undergraduate participants found it more convenient to use traditional textbooks. When explored further, the following subthemes emerged.

#### **Ease of Using e-Books**

The three undergraduate participants all noted that using e-books was an easy task. When explored further PUG05 stated, “I just enjoy using e-books every chance I get; also I am able to see the print from the screen clearer because I can enlarge the font.” Additionally, PUG04 stated, “I have always been computer savvy and I enjoy working with e-books more than working with printed text.” PUG03 stated, “The ease of carrying my books on a tablet that can fit in my purse make it more convenient than a book, I can easily flip from one screen to another with a simple push of a button or swipe of my finger; you just can’t do that with a textbook which is big and bulky.” The other two undergraduate participants all noted that using the traditional text was much easier than e-book. PUG01 stated, “I like being able to turn the pages is much easier than using e-

books.” PUG02 stated, “I like the idea of placing a bookmark in my printed text so I can keep track of my reading.”

**Eco Friendly.** All five undergraduate participants noted that e-books are in fact, eco-friendly in that they do not require the use of trees to print. PUG01 stated, “Yes it is more eco-friendly because it uses less trees. PUG02 stated, Yes, because less paper is used.” PUG03 stated, “Yes, it is more eco-friendly than printed.” The responses from the remaining participants were similar in that participants’ agree 100 percent that less paper, fewer trees cut, and the ability to recycle all can improve the environment.

### **Undergraduates Theme 2: Inconvenient Negative**

Two of the five undergraduate participants noted inconvenience or negative interactions with e-books. PUG01 “I have basic computer and technology skills, and some e-book levels are good, it is much more stressful when using e-books.” PUG02 stated, “Although I have some computer skills, I still feel uncomfortable using e-books.” While both participants revealed that they had computer/technology skills and ability, they regarded e-books as more burdensome because of the technological functions than efficient. Students noted the following subthemes noting that e-books did not offer the comfort when reading, highlighting ability, hand use, or ability to turning pages.

**Hand Use and Comfort.** Comfort when reading was noted as an important factor when deciding on the convenience of e-books or traditional texts. PUG01 noted that the feel of the textbook mattered regarding convenience and reading. The participant stated, “I enjoy the fact that I can interact with the text up-close and personal.” PUG02 stated, “There is nothing like a good old fashioned book, an e-book just doesn’t have the same

feel as a book.” These two participants noted that comfort and use of traditional textbooks make them more convenient than using e-books.

**Highlighting and Turning Pages.** Interacting with the actual text was noted as being a factor in convenience for two of the undergraduate participants. Maintaining the ability to feel the pages, write on them, highlight, and refer back to specific pages was noted as convenience factors. PUG01 stated, “I appreciate the fact that I can turn the pages and highlight, which can’t be done the same with an e-book.” PUG02 stated, “I like the feel of a book in my hands and it is what I am use to, and I can make notes and go back to them and highlight areas that need to be revisited.”

Based upon the literature review, when examining the themes and results of the responses from the undergraduates it was demonstrated that more students thought that e-books were more convenient than traditional textbooks. PUG03, PUG04 and PUG05 all believed e-books to be preferred over printed based on the various e-books features. PUG05 stated, “various features, and user friendly are all excellent features that I enjoy using.” Although the spread indicated that only three to two, the sample still reflected a preference for e-book over traditional textbooks. According to Ritchie, Lewis, and Elam (2003), there is a point where there is a declining of profit in a qualitative sample. This process can occur when the study continues to find the data under study is not leading to additional information. In this study, a similar has occurred when relating to this research question. This often occurs when a portion of data, or a code is all that is needed to confirm, and then it becomes part of the analysis of framework.

Table 6

*Graduate Themes Research Question 1 e-Books*

Themes	Subthemes
Convenient positive	Flexibility Features Tangibility Comfort User friendly High computer use Eco-friendly
Inconvenient negative	Inability to relax and read Inability to highlight Inability to bookmark Inability to hold book

Three of the graduate participants thought that e-books were convenient and had positive responses. Of the three participants the reasoning for the convenience was associated with technology preference and frequent computer use. PG03 stated, “E-books are so convenient and easy to use and I prefer working from a computer screen.” PG04 stated, I like using and working from e-books because it allows me to switch screens. PG05 stated, “e-books are so easy and convenient to use for all of my classes.” There were three themes that emerged from the three participants who thought it was more convenient to use e-books among graduate students.

PG01 and PG02 preferred using the printed text because they were not computer savvy. PG01 stated, “I have a hard time trying to use the various features on the e-books I am not computer savvy.” PG02 stated, “I do not like to use the e-books, I feel more comfortable accessing from the printed text.”

### **Graduate Theme 1: Convenient Positive**

PG04 and PG05 had positive and convenient responses to the use of e-books and noted specifically that they preferred e-books because of their frequent use of the computer. PG04 stated, working with e-books gives me easy access to my reading materials, its right in front of me.” PG05 stated, “I use e-books every chance I get for all my class work, it is the smart way to go.” While working on the computer they had easy access to the reading material and thus it was more convenient for them to read e-books instead of the traditional textbook.

**Flexibility, Features, and Tangibility.** Two graduate students have noted that flexibility and features offered by e-books contribute to the convenience of using e-books rather than traditional textbooks. PG04 and PG05 noted that that with e-books using the computer screen offered more flexibility than printed text because of the ease of navigation. PG04, stated, “I like the fact that I can navigate, search, download, and print none of this is possible with a traditional textbook.” Additionally, PG05 stated, I personally prefer working from computer screen rather than reading from printed text.” One graduate student, PG03 finds benefits in both e-books and printed text. PG03 stated, “I preferably like using e-books for some things and the printed texts for other things; I do not have a problem using the features by e-books.”

PG01 and PG02 both felt that the features offered by e-book books were very complicated to learn. “PG01 stated, “I do not like using the e-book features because I get confused on how to use them.” PG02 stated, just give me a printed text, I feel overwhelmed trying to figure out the different features use by e-books.”

### **Tangibility, Comfort, and High Computer Use**

The two graduate students who noted that e-books were more convenient noted that tangibility, comfort, and high computer use contributed to their preference of using e-books over printed text. PG05 stated, “I personally spend a lot of time working on the computer and I would not want to revert back to using a printed text.” So, this would explain the reason PG05 considered using e-books as the convenient choice as the majority of the day is already spend using and navigating on the computer. PG04 stated, “Using the e-book makes more sense for me because I use the computer quite often and it is easy to read, and because I am already at the computer it is more comfortable and tangible than trying to use a traditional book.”

**Eco Friendly.** Findings showed that 100 percent of the graduate participants noted that e-books were more environmentally friendly because it does not require the use of trees; however, PG04 stated that recycling is always another option in the reduction of paper waste. PG02 stated, “Using e-books eliminated the need for paper use altogether, it only makes sense that less paper would be wasted or used if no paper is required.” 100 % graduate participants mirrored the sentiments of the undergraduate participant’s in that e-books are better than regular printed texts for the environment.

### **Summary of Research Question 1**

The findings supporting the literature review on e-books versus printed text were grouped based on the research questions that guided the case study. Quotes received from the participants interviews were written as accurate as possible to their original transcripts. Findings revealed a split in the responses of participant’s preference to printed



text as opposed to e-books. No discrepancies were found in the data related to students characterizing the convenience of using e-books compared to the convenience of using traditional textbooks. The data from undergraduate and graduate participants revealed that both groups with the exception of two participants per group preferred the printed text over e-books did so primarily because they liked the idea that they could hold the book in their hand, or that they felt more “comfortable.” Two participants agreed that printed text was their preference for leisure reading because they were able to hold it in their hand, highlight and curl up and relax on the couch. Further research indicated that those students that favored e-books did so primarily because they were computer savvy and able to utilize e-book features; they were able to search, find on-line resources, carry the E-reader inside their purse, and found using e-books an overall enjoyable experience. One individual in particular who preferred e-books versus printed text did so mainly for physical convenience and comfort; she indicated that e-books were lighter, could be carried inside her purse and freed her of heavy books.

**Research Question 2: How do Students Describe the Influence of Price on Their Purchase Decisions When Given the Choice Between e-Books and Traditional Texts across content areas?**

When de-coding the data from the interviews to identify the themes regarding the influence of price on the purchase of e-books or traditional textbooks across content areas High Influence and No influence themes emerged from both undergraduates and graduate students. The sub-themes for high influences consisted of: download e-books cheaper/availability, rent book and did not purchase. The sub-themes for no influence

were: purchased regardless and refusal to purchase. The results are displayed in table 7 below.

Table 7

*Undergraduate Themes for Research Question 2*

Themes	SubThemes
High Influence	Download e-books cheaper/availability Rent Books Did Not Purchase
No Influence	Purchased regardless Refusal to Purchase

**Undergraduate Theme 1: High Influence**

Regarding the undergraduate participants, four of the five interviewed noted that they did consider the price of the textbook or the e-book prior to purchase. Also, three undergraduate students noted that they spend between \$100-\$200 annually for printed texts, yet noted that downloading the e-books had an annual cost of \$50 -\$200. An examination of data received from this study, revealed that two undergraduate participants claimed that not all e-books are cheaper; however, sometimes they are the only option. PUG01 stated, "I have purchased e-books, but only because I had to." PUG02 stated, "I go online and search for e-books that can be downloaded for free."

**Download of e-books Cheaper/Availability.** There were mixed responses regarding downloading e-books for cost effectiveness as well as availability. While two participants have stated that they purchase e-books for cost effectiveness, one undergraduate student noted that she actually obtains e-book free downloads as well as

other texts, which reduces costs. PUG05 stated, “I always get free copies on-line, therefore I do not have to purchase traditional texts or e-books.” One undergraduate noted a preference for e-books because of the price. PUG03 stated, “I prefer e-books because of the price.” Another undergraduate also expressed their preference based on the cheaper price. PG04 stated, “I like using e-books especially if it is cheaper than the printed text.”

**Rented Books.** Two students noted that they have in fact rented books instead of purchasing texts or e-books. While both undergraduates noted cost as the reason for choosing rental rather than purchase, one undergraduate noted the use of e-book rental. PUG03 stated, “Finances are tight and rentals are the only way I can make sure I have the necessary material for class.”

**Did Not Purchase.** While purchasing the required text would seem to be the practice of students, from the literature review, at least 40 percent of students claim to be using other text delivery options that do not include purchasing the text. This includes text rentals, borrowing from the library, e-book rentals, and free downloads from the Internet. Yet, when deciding which text to purchase or use alternate delivery methods, at least 60 percent of students make the decision based on the importance of the text in their respective majors. Additionally, when the only available text has been an e-book one undergraduate has noted that they have never purchased an e-book. PUG05 stated, “I have never purchased an e-book simply because I simply did not want to.” She further mentioned that she could go on line and obtain free copies of e-books if needed.

**Undergraduate Theme 2: Research Question 2**

While there was not one student that did not consider the price of the required text for their classes, five stated that they purchased the required text or simply opted out of the purchase of any text, as it was not important to their respective majors. For example, PUG05 noted that she never purchased texts for any classes; however, PUG01 and, PUG02 noted that they always purchase texts and that the cost does not make a difference. 1 out of 5 undergraduates indicated that they have found it beneficial to re-sell their textbooks back to the bookstore in an effort to reduce the cost in purchasing their required texts.

**Purchased Regardless.** Four of the five undergraduate participants noted that they did in fact purchase their texts for the class, noting that they only purchased text once per year. PUG01 stated, “I purchased a printed text for this class, I usually purchase once per semester.” While one student noted that she purchased the printed text twice per year, and once per semester. Three undergraduates claimed that they experienced higher learning potential from the printed text and the purchase of printed text was not optional. PUG02 stated, “I prefer printed text and I have experienced very low learning potential from e-books.” Additionally, the preference for printed text removed the cost effective factor for one undergraduate. PUG01 stated, “I am willing to pay a higher price for printed text, I have it in my hand and I learn better from interacting with the text.”

**Refusal to Purchase.** There was only one undergraduate student who noted refusal to purchase text for the required reading for the class. In this instance the only text was in the form of e-book and the student had no desire to use e-books, however this

was the only form available. PUG03 stated, “I have never bought an e-book and I do not want to use an e-book.” Other reasons students did not buy text were the option to utilize other delivery methods such as borrowing from the library or renting the text at a reduced price. Table 8 provides high impact and no impact as emerging themes for graduate participants. The sub-themes included: download-e-books, cheaper/availability, rent books, refusal to purchase regardless.

Table 8

*Graduate Themes for Research Question 2*

Themes	Subthemes
High Impact	Download e-books cheaper/availability Rent Books Refusal to Purchase
No Impact	Purchased regardless

**Graduate Themes 1: Research Question 2**

Finding revealed that two out of five graduate students have indicated that their annual textbook cost range from \$100 -\$500. While one graduate student noted that she has not purchased printed text in a while, she estimated that the cost she would have paid would have been similar to the price range of the other graduate students. Graduate students decided on which text form to purchase based on cost and preference of text.

**High Impact.** Two of the graduate participants noted that e-books are cheaper and that is one of the deriving factors in their preference for their use. PG05 stated, “Yes e-books are cheaper and you can always find a bargain on-line.” While one graduate student does not prefer e-books the choice is easier to make given the financial savings.

PG04 stated, "I would opt to pay the lower price for e-book because the cheaper the price, the better." PG03, stated, "I would opt to pay a lower price for an e-book; being able to save money is important to me." Given the responses from the graduates, saving money is a great factor in their choice to purchase the e-book over the printed traditional textbook.

**Download e-Books Cheaper/Availability.** The two graduate students who prefer e-books also noted that it is much easier to download e-books than to go to a bookstore to purchase textbooks. PG04, stated, "e-books are a lot easier to download than trying to buy a printed text." While not all of the graduates share this sentiment, for the two that prefer e-books the availability on-line versus going to a bookstore or ordering a book and waiting for them and saving money, the e-book seems to offer them more convenience. PG05 stated, "The e-books are cheaper and easier to access."

**High Learning Expectations.** Two graduate students noted high learning expectations using e-books. Easy access to information and utilizing the Internet simultaneously were noted as reasons for higher learning. PG04 stated, "I feel that e-books have a very high learning potential for this class when I have to do research on a particular subject." Additionally PG05 stated, "Using e-books is very important to me because I enjoy using them and I experience very high learning potential because I am able to find all of the information I need for my class assignments when I use my e-books."

**Graduate Themes 2: Research Question 2**

**No Impact.** While two out of the five graduate students noted that price was a factor in the decision to purchase and use e-books, there were two out of the five noted that the price ultimately did not matter because they needed the text and it was not available in e-book form. One graduate student was just the opposite; she preferred printed traditional textbooks and was willing to pay more for it. PG01 stated, “I like the feel of the printed text in my hand and I also feel that traditional textbooks are a higher quality of reading than an e-book.” Additionally, three out of five graduate students noted that they did not believe that e-books were cheaper than printed traditional texts. In fact, PG03 stated, “No, I do not think e-books are cheaper than printed text for this class and besides all the prices vary.” Another graduate student felt that e-books were more expensive. PG02 stated, “I think e-books are more expensive because you can find printed copies that are a little older version and much cheaper.”

**Purchased Regardless.** All of the graduate participants noted that they purchase their required text whether printed traditional textbook or e-book regardless of pricing because it is a necessary tool to their education. When faced with the decision, graduate students purchased the text form that was most comfortable and familiar to use. PG01 stated, “I prefer to have printed text in front of me; I enjoy holding the book and manually turning the pages.” For instance, 3 out of 5 graduate students noted that they prefer printed texts for several reasons including building a personal library to utilizing the text for reference material. PG03 stated, “I choose a printed textbook, if it is a good book I would like to put it in my library collection.”

### **Summary for Research Question 2**

This research question provided insight on how students' influence of price would impact the purchase decision for e-books versus printed text.

How do students describe the influence of price on their purchase decisions when given the choice between e-books and traditional textbooks across subject?

Interview responses from both undergraduate and graduate students' regarding the above research Question #2 revealed mixed responses. Three undergraduate participants preferred printed text to e-books. The reasons given for this selection included participants' ability to hold the printed text (tangible) in their hands and in front of them if price was not an option. Two undergraduates favored the use of e-books because of convenience, fast, easy to use, and storage capability.

Three participants preferred the printed text for tangibility. Throughout the review, graduate participants' responses were similar to the undergraduates. For example, they favored textbooks over e-books primarily because they enjoyed holding the book while reading. One graduate participant favored e-books. She based her decision to use it later as a resource for her personal library. Throughout research Question #2 the findings were, three to two, of both graduate and undergraduate students perceived that if price was not an option they still would prefer the printed text over e-books. The participants still thought the need to hold the book in front of them was an important consideration. The one individual who had problems with the price of textbooks borrowed them from the library. Another individual was able to go on line and access e-books for the class



because she lacked the funds to purchase one. There appeared to be no discrepancy and nonconforming data for Research Question 2.

### **Introduction to Research Question 3**

How do textbook directors at a university school in Michigan, describe their decision-making process related to ordering traditional textbooks and e-books? At the university where I conducted the study, I learned that there was no centralized decision-making process for purchasing- decisions were left up to individual professors or departments. I interviewed Dr. T, who was the director in charge of the Masters of Arts in Teaching Graduate Program for Teachers and Aspiring Teachers (MAT) department. The interview took place in the participant's private office, and lasted approximately 20 minutes. Dr. T was responsible for overseeing two campuses, Marygrove A and Marygrove B. I chose to interview him for both campuses. Prior to the interview, I received special permission from college administration to complete this interview process. This process took approximately 3 weeks to complete. Contact was made with the individual in charge of ordering, and this representative subsequently arranged the interview with Dr. B, director for Barnes and Noble bookstore at the college. The same questions were asked of both Dr. T. and Dr. B. The interview for Dr. B. was done via the internet (e-mail) and via phone conversations. The orientation was held over the phone where I discussed with Dr. B. the consent form procedures as well as reviewed the interview questions. Dr. B. agreed to participate in this qualitative case study by participating in the interview process. Complete transcriptions of the interviews were returned to the participants and reviewed for accuracy.

**Research Question 3: How do Textbook Directors at a University School in Michigan, Describe Their Decision-Making Process Related to Ordering Traditional Textbooks and e-Books?**

Table 9

*Textbook Directors' Textbook or e-book Ordering*

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-Themes</b>
Enrollment	Supply and Demand Faculty Request Book Buy Back
Cost	E-books Used Books
Preference	Selection

There were three main themes that derived from research question 3 in table 9 as it related to the Ordering or e-book or textbooks by the textbook directors. These themes were: Enrollment, cost and preference. The sub-themes consisted of: supply and demand, faculty request, book buyback, e-books, used books and selection. The results are displayed in table 9 above with a breakdown of the themes and sub-themes. A further explanation of the themes and sub-themes are discussed throughout this section.

### **Research Question 3**

#### **Enrollment**

According to both University textbook directors student enrollment numbers and classes decide what textbooks are ordered. When students enroll in the university and register for classes, the numbers are generated and the bookstore gets an idea of how

many books will be required to ensure availability of required texts for all students. Both Dr. T and Dr. B. oversee the ordering process at the college. According to the directors, student enrollment plays an important role in textbooks directors' decision-making processes for ordering traditional textbooks and e-books. Both directors provided various sources that are used in obtaining textbooks for students. When discussing the ordering process, Dr. T. stated, "How we order books is all based on enrollment, which means I have to submit the numbers to our vendors by a certain deadline each academic semester."

**Faculty Request.** In addition to enrollment, the bookstores rely on the university's faculty to advise the bookstore of the required textbook for classes. According to the directors faculty members have the decision regarding which texts are required for their respective courses taught; including the option of e-book availability. For instance, Dr. B stated:

We have a program in place called Faculty Enlight that professors can use to order textbooks. It provides all the necessary information that we need to make sure the bookstore orders the correct book. If professors would use this system accurately at the bookstore, ordering would increase.

Both textbook directors indicated that they would like to change the decision-making process as it related to ordering traditional textbooks and e-books. One textbook director wanted to convert completely to e-text; the other wanted to have the professors at the university used the Faculty Enlight program to help with the ordering process for students. Dr. T indicated that faculty and administrators all have input into the ordering

process. However, he is in charge of making sure the order is placed. Dr. B stated that the amount of textbooks ordered was based on the enrollment for each class as well as faculty, students and administrators. Both textbook directors described their decision-making processes related to ordering based on the input of faculty, students and administrators.

**Supply and Demand/Book Buy Back.** The law of supply and demand also applies to the University bookstores. Yet, in the instance of university bookstores, it benefits the student when the supply is lower; students can receive more money for their used textbooks. Dr. T stated, “That information is determined by the market. Dr. T stated that the market is based on students’ preference selection and he think that this is more of a bookstore question. Dr. B stated, “If we need copies for the next term, based on adoptions from a professor and we can rent/sell used copies, we will pay 50% of the purchase price back to the student. If not, we will pay what a used book wholesaler will pay us.” Dr. T. described the process as being a bookstore issue; while the other bookstore text director, Dr. B. stated, “The professors need to provide information to them through the adoption program setup.”

## **Textbook Directors’ Textbook or e-Book Ordering Themes 2:**

### **Research Question 3**

#### **Cost**

When considering cost for textbooks both directors agreed that students want to get a good deal on their textbooks. According to both directors, the average amounts students spend on textbooks vary by class and major. For instance, Dr. T stated, “Usually

they spend about \$100 – \$300 for college textbooks and the cost is contained.” Yet, Dr. B stated, “This can vary widely. An English major will spend far less say a Biology major based on the different type of materials used for their area of study. Also depends greatly on what materials each instructor is requiring each student to have. Then there is the variable of used copies and or rentals being available. A guess at an average for all students and types of materials blended together would be the \$400-\$500 range.”

**e-Books.** One of the factors that reflect whether or not a student purchases an E-book has been generalized as cost. Although bookstores do not order e-books, they are made available to students if they so choose. Dr. T explained that any text book whether it be e-book or text is always ordered each semester. Dr. B stated, “E-books are not really ordered. We automatically adopt them for a class when they are available and students are given the choice to purchase one. This is done through access codes as there is not anything physical for them to get.” One textbook director stated that the process for ordering is done each semester. The other textbook director explained that the ordering process is done through access codes that are available to students by way of purchase.

**Used Books.** Students have access to purchasing used books at a reduced cost. Used books offer the same material as a new book; however, another student previously owned it. Buying used books is a cost effect way for students to purchase their texts without the cost associated with a new text. Dr. T stated, “Off the top of my head, students can receive a savings of 40 to 50 percent on buying used books.” Dr. B explained: “Used book are typically sold at 75% of the new price so right up front there is

a 25% savings. Then if the book is sold back at 50% the next cost is only 37.5% of the new book price for a total savings of 62.5%.”

### **Textbook Director’s Textbook or e-Book Ordering Themes 3:**

#### **Research Question 3**

##### **Preference**

Students purchase books according to their personal preference and learning styles. When considering printed text or e-book text students gravitated to what was most familiar, comfortable, easiest to read, and convenient to access. Dr. T stated the students look for “ease of reading and comfort level.” Dr. B selected (a), cost, (b), Ease of reading, (c), convenience, (d), and ability to highlight and take notes, and (e) can keep it as a reference book for future use, (f) weight. Both directors stated that students favored ease of reading and comfort level when it came to the decision-making process related to ordering printed text when purchasing. The themes were cost, ease of reading, convenience, ability to highlight and take notes, and future storage.

#### **Summary of Research Question 3**

How do textbook directors at a university school in Michigan, describe their decision-making process related to ordering traditional textbooks and e-books? Throughout this section regarding the textbooks and e-book decision making, it was clear that both directors were willing to find alternative modes of delivery based on student/faculty needs and preferences. The finding revealed that the interview questions that were addressed by both directors, Dr. T. and Dr. B, were similar in responses.

Looking at the ordering process, in particular, if a student needs a textbook for a class starting up at the beginning of the semester, what happens if the textbook is placed on backorder? Would this cause a delay in students receiving their textbook on time for the first day of class, and if so; what measure are in place to provide for alternative solutions?

Dr. T. explained, because of his role directly with the university, he was able to as a professor, provide students with alternative solutions with no down time when it came to students being able to acquire their book in a timely manner for the beginning of classes. Dr. T. also acknowledged that students never have to be concerned about a back order because he has corrective measures in place if that happens. Dr. T explained that eventually the corrected book would be sent out, so students would not have to miss any school time for not having book for the first day of class. Dr. T stated that books can be scanned and sent out as an e-text until the actual book comes. Findings revealed, although both directors have options for ordering traditional textbooks and e-books, there were similar differences in their delivery system. The differences within the two ordering systems was that one textbook director constituted the availability of students being able to receive their books without delay or downtime for the first day of school by using the on-line system. The other textbook director does not provide a concrete plan for making sure students received their textbooks on time for the first day, because he relied solely on the publisher promises to ship the books to the campus bookstore from orders received.

The slight difference is that only one text director can guarantee that students will obtain text books for the orders they placed, on time for the first day of the new semester. Textbook director Dr. B acknowledged that he tries to get books to students from a

number of resources, but if all resources fail and the book is still out of stock, students have no choice but to wait until he acquires the book back in stock from the publisher. During that time, students will have the opportunity to pre-order the book that is on back order. Once they are able to obtain a copy from the back order, students can pick up their books from the bookstore or they can be mailed out. Dr. T.'s plan was to send students an e-text for the first two weeks with the information taken from the textbook. If all else fails, Dr. B. for students to receive their books on time for the first day of school was not established. Students would have to wait until they were notified by the bookstore for their order.

When asked, If there is anything you would like to change about the present delivery mode for ordering what would it be? (Q7) Textbook director, Dr. T. stated that he would like the entire college to convert to e-text. Textbook director, Dr. B. stated that he would like to see professors more involved in the using the *Faculty Enlight* program more accurately. This program allows the faculty to place orders and at the same time, provides the bookstore with a check and balance of the ordering process to make certain orders are correct.

### **Discrepant Data**

While reviewing the data coding of the interviews, I identified no discrepant data. A careful review of the data revealed that there were no discrepancies anywhere where one set of the questions yielded answers that appeared contradictory by another set of similar questions. The analysis of both data sources was consistent. There was evidence of nonconforming data throughout the examining of themes and coding related to the



three research questions. Some of the nonconforming themes reviewed showed very little difference as relates to textbook delivery modes on how textbook prices influenced student purchase decisions.

It was clear from the review of findings that the 80 % of undergraduate and graduate participants enjoyed being able to make decisions on their delivery preferences. It was also discovered that 20 % of students in both groups were not able to make a clear decision when it came to choosing e-books versus printed texts. These patterns were consistent throughout the data collecting and coding phase. Prior to the findings at least two of the codes were refined and re-categorized in order to make sure each source was clearly match appropriate for labeling. There were no discrepant data that linked to participants' views of e-books being more environmentally friendly than printed text. Although three of five participants in each group preferred traditional text books in hand, 90 % of both groups of participants interviewed felt that e-books were good from the standpoint that they use less paper and fewer trees.

Finally, from the interview data reviewed, there were participants in both groups who faced challenges when using e-books, and as a result, did not feel comfortable using them, and those two out of five participants in both groups, continued using the printed book without giving e-books a try. This mode of delivery selection may not be a problem now but in the near future one of the university textbook decision makers indicated possible plans to transition the entire campus to e-text. Students, who face the challenge of reluctantly not wanting to switch from printed text to e-books now, in the future, may propose a problems for those who still feel some inadequate when using. While this is not

a data discrepancy, it is important to note as it has implications for student action as well as university policy.

### **Evidence of Quality**

I closely studied and monitored all procedures to assure accuracy of the data. Every precaution was taken to protect the anonymity by following the guidelines set and enforced by the Walden's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Ethical guidelines were included in the consent forms for all participants, and received prior to the interview. A detailed description of the interview process and consent forms was reviewed. Invited participants were informed of their rights to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. All information that was collected on each participant was carefully monitored to protect the human rights privacy of each participant, and sustain the validity of the study. The triangulation technique used in this study provided effectiveness to the study and made use of multiple sources of information to present corroborating by checking and establishing validity through the analyzing of research questions from multiple perspective. I found that there must be some restraints established on the common fallacy that the goal of triangulation was to arrive at consistency across data sources or methods; in fact, such inconsistencies may be likely given the relative strength of altered methods. (Patton, 2002). Participants, undergraduate, graduate and textbook directors were identified in this study by conducting interviews, and the reviewing of transcripts, used to gain insight on students' preferences and perception regarding textbook delivery modes on how textbook prices influence student purchase decisions. Validity methods drew similar conclusions from the research questions, which were

established in this study; it supported the findings, which made certain that there was truth in the sense that the investigation of findings truthfully mirrored the conditions and made certain that the research findings presented had been accurately supported by the evidence.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this study was to explore students' perceptions about using e-books in place of traditional textbooks across subject matter. Throughout the literature review, it was reported by a number of universities that at average, at least 60 percent of the students attending school still preferred the printed text over e-books. This process of converting universities to e-books is still a work in progress. There are still institutions that are working toward converting in the near future to e-books just like the one that was discussed in this study. But for now, it appears that the average number of students, six out of the ten participants, still like the feel of holding their printed text in front them while flipping through their pages. The main themes derived in this study were price, comfort level, ease of use, alternative modes of delivery, and impact of modes of delivery on study and academic achievement. Unless students are forced by universities to convert to e-books, it is believed that there will be students still reluctant to change from printed to e-books. The study conducted at this university revealed that there were two to five students who actually favored e-books over printed text, but not enough to indicate that they would use it permanently instead of the printed text. The students felt the tangibility

and comfort of having the printed text in front of them outweighed their decision to change. Price in this study was mentioned and at least 6 out of ten students that were interviewed wanted to look at a cheaper delivery mode, but other students felt that if price was not an option six out of ten participants still would favor printed over e-books.

The two textbook directors interviewed revealed some altering perspectives on various aspects of textbook ordering and processes. It became clear that one director answered from the perspective of faculty, and the other from the perspective of bookstore manager. These perspectives yielded slightly differing outcomes when it came to assessing used textbook value, the future pervasiveness of e-books, and the desirability of e-books over the printed text but not enough of a difference to change.

## Section 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate students' preferences and perception regarding textbook delivery modes and how textbook prices influence student purchase decisions. In Section 5, I present the analysis of the findings and the interpretation of findings as they related to the research questions for this qualitative case study. In addition, this section includes the final discussion, conclusion, recommendation, and action for future research and implications for social change.

Throughout the data collection, there appeared to be evidence of student preferences for printed texts versus e-books. Participants that I selected for this study were undergraduate and graduate students along with individual decision makers for ordering e-books and printed texts from two universities in the state of Michigan. Several factors influenced students' preference regarding e-books versus printed texts. This qualitative case study contributes to the body of knowledge as it relates to students' perceptions of textbook delivery modes across academic disciplines.

### **Summary of Findings**

The findings of this study confirmed that students desired an alternative delivery mode for purchasing e-books versus printed textbook. The qualitative analysis showed that there were little significant differences in students' preferences at the undergraduate and graduate levels; six out of ten students in both groups consistently preferred the printed text to the e-book, even when costs were considered.

One finding of this study was that a six out of 10 participants preferred holding a book in their hands instead of looking at an e-book. Those students believed that the idea of having something tangible was rewarding and satisfying. The theme deriving from this pattern was comfort when reading. Several other reasons participants chose printed text over e-books were based on the subject matter. One participant preferred to use the printed text as a resource book. Findings revealed that at least two participants from both groups felt uncomfortable using e-books, citing for the most part a lack of technological expertise. Findings showed that at least three participants in the combined groups' preferences varied on e-books choices. Finding revealed that at least two participants in both groups, felt uncomfortable using e-books, citing for the most part a lack of technological expertise.

The study also revealed that four out of 10 participants, including both groups, had poor skills when it came to using e-books. The study confirmed that, when it came to e-books, not all participants were comfortable using the various features such as screen reading, navigation, highlighting, bookmarking, and searching. In particular, at least one participant from the undergraduate group was reluctant to use e-books for any classes because she did not feel comfortable using these features.

One of the findings of this study indicated that six out of 10 participants were not ready to embrace the change of using e-books for every class. Two participants felt that it was good to use e-books for some classes but not for every class. Four out of 10 participants in particular were not able to pay the high prices for printed text and as a result they opted to find other alternatives such as library borrowing, rental, or used book

purchasing. In all, six out of 10 students still prefer to pay a little more for the printed text, rent it or borrow from a friend, the library as opposed to using e-books for all class assignments. From the literature review, I further concluded that the 90 percent of readers who reported using e-Books as reference material looked for detailed information.

This study revealed that there was no significant difference in the decision making process based upon demographic backgrounds. Neither age nor race played a significant role in students' preferences for choosing e-book versus printed text and vice versa. The study also revealed that only four out of 10 students embraced the change of e-books over printed text. One student preferred to use e-book mainly because she felt that the printed text were too heavy for her to carry due to an illness. Another student selected e-books based on the fact that she could not afford to buy a printed text. She was able to go online and get an earlier version for free. There were only four out of ten students who were against the printed text. The main themes throughout the data collection were familiarity and comfort.

The textbook director interviews revealed their decision-making processes related to ordering traditional textbooks and e-books. Findings indicated that the textbook directors showed similar genuine concerns about trying to accommodate students when it came to price sensitivity. Both textbook directors explained their roles in the ordering process at the university. One textbook director in charge of ordering textbooks at the university explained that their main role was helping to accommodate the needs of students. Each textbook director played a major role when it came to decision-making process related to ordering traditional textbook and e-books.

Finally, both textbook directors indicated that they would like to change the decision making process as it related to ordering traditional textbooks and e-books. One of the textbook directors wanted to convert the entire college to e-text, while the other textbook director wanted the professors at the college to utilize the program called Faculty Enlight with the ordering process for student by inputting the data more accurately.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

In this section, I used several research questions to discover various patterns and themes revealed in the interview data along with the evidence gathered from the literature review on each research question.

#### **Research Question 1**

How do students characterize the convenience of using e-books in comparison to the convenience of using traditional textbooks? This study revealed that the students characterize the convenience of using e-book in comparison to the convenience of using traditional textbooks in the following ways: The bulk of the participants interviewed still favored traditional textbooks versus e-books. The patterns revealed that the six out of 10 participants, in both groups, undergraduate and graduate, preferred using printed text for leisure reading rather than e-books. My study also found that four undergraduates' preferred printed text; and only one undergraduate preferred e-books. Shelburne (2009) reported that library student users preferred the use of e-books for portability, but favored the printed text when used for relaxation reading. Woody, Daniel and Baker (2010) stated



that from a study on e-text versus printed text at a university, the majority of the 91 students participated preferred the printed book over the e-text.

In the literature review, a study conducted by Shepperd, Grace, and Koch (2008) focused on e-Readers for an introductory psychology course that allowed participants to choose printed text versus a CD electronic format. They reported that 90% of the participants purchased the paper text, and only 10% opted for the electronic version. Shepperd et al. (2008) also revealed no significant impact of gender, grade point average, or geographic location on students' chosen delivery methods.

A study conducted by Woody, Daniel, and Baker (2010) observed factors influencing preference for e-books and e-book content. The study discovered that even though participants in the study were one of the best technologically savvy groups in our universities today, students still favored the textbook over the e-books. Despite students' having the ability to be able to access additional content and other features with ease, the study also revealed that students still preferred to use special features in print books rather than in e-books. In the Literature review, Goodwin, Samuelson, and Coker (2008) stated that students favored e-books when it came to its easy access and portability—a departure from my study and some of the other studies in the literature review.

Murray and Perez (2011) compared and contrasted students' performance using e-books versus traditional text. My study results found that there were no significant differences in how students performed. Liu (2006) reported that although students still wanted to enjoy the satisfaction of an online digital text, some university studies have

revealed that college students still prefer to read the printed books. Shelburne (2009) stated that students still favored the printed books than e-text when reading for pleasure.

Research Question 1 also focused on the conceptual framework guided by Davis (1989), who was responsible for the technology acceptance model (TAM). Davis's (1989) TAM has been used in studies and investigations related to user acceptance of technology. Davis offered this information system theory to model how users come to accept and use a technology. Similarly, these findings from the research question align with Davis's (1998) TAM examination on how users felt about the use of new technology on a variety of levels. It also provided a foundation for locating the influence of external variables on internal views, attitudes, and behavior intentions. Finally, the literature review for Research Question 1 supports a strong preference for traditional texts versus e-books.

## **Research Question 2**

How does price influence purchase decisions for students when given the choice between e-books and traditional textbooks across content areas? My study also inquired of participants whether they would be willing to pay a higher price for a printed text vs. an e-book. The results demonstrated that three out of five undergraduate participants would be willing to pay a higher price for the printed text vs. the e-book. The graduate participant interviews yielded different results, with four out of five being willing to pay a lower price for an e-book. When participants were asked their preferences if price was not an option, undergraduates still preferred the printed text over the e-book. Graduates preferred the printed text as well.

The literature review supported strong influences regarding which delivery mode would be considered if price was not an option. Kolowich (2010) indicated that several universities had started to find alternative solutions to textbook delivery issues. In 2008, the University of Texas conducted a pilot study under contract from a publishing company to purchase bulk quantities of e-books for nearly 1,000 students. The pilot study's main goal was to defray the cost of textbooks for students by decreasing the price of textbook delivery mode to \$20-25 dollar per book. In addition, students were permitted to have free access to e-books across subject matter.

In conclusion this study revealed that price was not a big influence regarding participants' purchasing decisions when given the choices between e-books and traditional textbooks across content areas. Like the present study, it was revealed that student decisions in this pilot study were based on personal preferences and convenience.

### **Research Question 3**

How do textbook directors at a university school in Michigan, describe their decision-making process related to ordering traditional textbooks and e-books? The two textbook directors who were interviewed at the college where the study was conducted on the decision-making process as it related to ordering traditional textbooks and e-books revealed the following responses.

When asked both directors the question, "Who determines the type of delivery mode for order? both textbook directors explained that this process was based on students' enrollment. The findings however revealed similar findings and no discrepancies as well as a few challenges when it came to backorders. One textbook

director stated that students never have to worry about not receiving a book when on backorder for the first day of school, because if a student did not receive his/her textbook in time, the first two weeks of pages are copied for the students and sent to them electronically until the book comes in.

The second textbook director claimed that he tries to get books to students from a variety of resources, but if the book is still out of stock after trying the various resources, students have no alternative but to wait until he acquires the book back in stock from the publisher. He explained that while waiting students have the option to pre-order the book that is on back order. Once they are able to obtain a copy from the backorder, the book can be picked up from the bookstore or mailed.

Although there was only a slight difference in the ordering processes, the finding indicated that both textbook directors would eventually allow its participants to receive their book. The alteration in the two situations is that one textbook director provided an immediately backup plan that assured students would be given an e-text until their book came in from back order for the first day of school; the other textbook director stated that students may have to wait until it can be sent to them by a publisher, but they had the option of preordering while waiting for their book, with the knowing that eventually students would receive their book. Young (2013) cited a Follett Higher Education survey 940 bookstores which indicated that only 2% of textbooks had digital editions. The study also showed that a limited number of professors were using digital editions.

### **Implications for Social Change**

This study identified a preference for exploring other delivery mode for students. E-books versus the printed text have become a major topic in colleges today. With the price of textbooks sky rocking, many universities such as the one in this case study, are looking for alternative delivery mode. The findings of this case study will help to uncover the growing needs for positive social change relating to alternative delivery modes. Student in both groups were exploring alternative ways to cut the costs of expensive printed text as well as school professors. Therefore, it is vital to explore how the various alternative methods played a role in helping students decide which delivery mode students prefer. This study, and follow-up research, has the potential to impact the student learning environment by further looking at ways that current and future content delivery modes can help students better learn and retain knowledge.

Implications for positive social change include providing the administration at the local site with data on the perceptions of students regarding the mode of textbook delivery and textbook directors' recommendations for providing both e-books and hard copy texts. Being responsive to students' preferences for learning materials allows for the possibility of improved learning outcomes.

### **Recommendations for Action**

This qualitative case study recommends the following suggestions to improve students' perception of mode selection of textbook delivery across course subjects. The findings of this study confirmed that six out of the ten participants said that they enjoyed holding a book in their hands instead of looking at e-books. The findings also revealed

that at least four participants out of the two groups had very poor skills when it came to using e-books. The findings also confirmed that when it came to e-books, not all participants were comfortable using the various features such as screen reading, navigation, highlighting, bookmarking and searching. In particular, some participants were reluctant to use e-books for any classes because they did not feel comfortable using it.

The findings indicated that at least four out of ten students were not provided with alternative options for textbook delivery across course subjects. The study suggests the need for professors in the university to study the prices of text books versus printed text more thoroughly. This will help students, teachers, and publishers work collaboratively to find solutions to the rapidly growing price of textbooks. In addition, findings from this study revealed that of the ten student interviewed, eight out of ten, along with both textbooks directors are not satisfied with the high costs of text books and are looking into alternate ways of cutting the cost for students and the university. The university should be perceptive and act promptly on finding ways to resolve this problem. One of the textbook directors mentioned that his future plans would be to convert the entire university to e-text. This could aid in helping to save students money on the cost of high text books.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

The present study focuses on the students' perceptions of textbook delivery modes across course subjects. Future research could offer vital information to make informed decisions regarding e-books versus printed text. Since this was a small pool of participants of only ten undergraduate and graduate females and two textbook directors, it

is recommended that the future study provide both genders to get a better overall student perspective and to study and address possible gender differences. In addition, the study could also be done as a quantitative study that would provide more subject groups and explore other types of delivery modes such as online learning.

The study results could serve as a catalyst for changing the delivery mode for textbooks. In conclusion, because technology is changing every day, further study is needed to ensure that the technology meets the actual needs of students and faculty for ease of use as well as other auxiliary features. A further possible future research project would be a quantitative study that evaluates teacher preferences for students using e-books versus printed text at a larger quantity of participants. Finally, it would be most informative to assess student preferences of delivery modes based on their respective learning styles, in order to determine which mode is most effective given a student's style.

### **Reflections of the Researcher**

My doctoral journey has been one of the greatest challenges of my life. This doctoral journey has enabled me to believe that all things are possible for them that believe, and that what you are pursuing is worth going the extra journey to accomplish. My strong faith in God has helped me to overcome many massive obstacles while pursuing this degree. This experience has been bittersweet, somewhat painful, and joyful but most rewarding personally and professionally. It has taught me to never give up even when it seems like there is no way out; persevere to the end. When I first started the doctorate program, no one in my family was sick or deceased. Since that time, my

mother, husband, nephews, cousins and most recently my sister, and fiancée have all been deceased. This experience has helped me to be more humble and never take anything for granted, even life. This experience has also helped me to grow academically and professionally.

My study topic has been very dear to me. Reflecting back over some years when I was completing my second masters I can definitely relate to paying a lot for textbooks. I always said that if I could find a way to help cut the cost of text books, I would do it. That thought became a dream but now it has become a reality. The literature review provided an enormous amount of information on e-books versus printed texts, so much that at first it was overwhelming to digest. The knowledge that I received during the research, interviews, and formulating the qualitative data helped to provide me with a clearer understanding of my vision of the topic. My classes at Walden along with educational training, have allowed me to understand and visualize challenges that I have encountered during this journey. Being able to interact with my peers and instructors has helped me to renew my commitment to educating students—including addressing the college affordability challenge which increasingly involves textbook costs. My passion for e-books versus printed text was based on my past experience while in undergrad and in graduate level of education. I remembered a lot of my friends as well as myself having to pay so much money for textbooks. The price of textbook was skyrocketing. Also revealed in this study is that one out of five students cannot afford textbooks. As a result of the rich information received from both the literature review and the findings from this qualitative case study, this study will help to provide additional insight on students’



perception of e-books versus printed texts and alternative delivery mode. Being able to help students find alternative solutions to textbook delivery modes is very inspiring. As I continue to promote education, I believe that student can definitely benefit from having instructors who are able to inspire, comprehend and understand that a commitment to education goes far beyond the classroom. It is a mindset that has to be carried out into society so everyone else that has a passion about education can join on the team to successfully help in finding ways to educate our students.

### **Conclusion**

Throughout the literature reviews as well as the data analysis, it was uncovered that students still preferred printed texts to e-books. There were series of questions, themes and subthemes addressed in the various sections to support these finding. The most used themes were: preference, comfort, price, and convenience. Although many universities, publishing companies and institutions are headed toward the transitioning of e-books, not all schools are on board with this decision. The research information gain from this study could aid in helping to inform and enlighten faculty, students and publishers on the most up-to-date information regarding the future e-books versus printed textbooks is headed; and in spurring further research that explicitly explores how to make printed and e-texts alike, as well as other content delivery methods, more accessible to students and facilitative of their academic success.

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### Appendix A: Consent Letter to Conduct the Study

Consent for Students Participants 18 years and older and Decision Maker for ordering E-books and Textbooks.

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled, “A Case Study on Students’ Perception of Mode Selection of Textbook Delivery Across Course Subjects” Marygrove University students, who are at least 18 years old, and enrolled in courses where e-book and print text are used as well as the textbook director are invited to participate in this study. The data collected will also be assumed to be adequate to address the research questions and contribute to the knowledge based on undergraduate and graduate students’ textbook preferences and with a textbook director in charge of ordering the University textbooks, to explore their decision making process pertaining to ordering textbooks and E-books. Participants will be given a consent form to help them understand their involvement in the study.

**Background Information:**

My name is Mrs. Gail Spencer-Scott and I am presently a student at Walden University working on my doctorate degree in the college of education. I am doing a research case study to learn more about the high price of textbooks, in hope to finding alternative solutions to the textbook delivery mode. I have no pre-existing relationship with Marygrove College other than the intended purpose to conduct a case study. Therefore, declining or discounting participation will not negatively impact your relationship with me or your access to college services.



**Procedures:**

If you decided to agree to participate in this case study, you will be requested to:

- Take part in an audio taped interview setting during school hours for about 15 minutes arranged by your instructor or person in charge. To protect your privacy, each participant will be interviewed in a private room within the university.
- The interview questions will be regarding your preferences of e-books versus printed text.
- There will be no compensation of any pay for this interview. Subsequent to the interview being completed, a duplicate copy of your consent approval to do the interview will be given to you. The overall process will take approximately 15 minutes.
- The estimated time needed for the follow-up “Member Checking” meeting will be about 15 minutes per participants during school hours.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Your participation in this case study is solely voluntary.

Therefore, your decision to take part in this study will be your choice. If you decide to be a part of this study you will not be treated differently at your university for your participation. If in the event, that you start the study and then later decide to drop out; you have the right to do so without any problems. If you feel pressured or stressed at any time during the interview, you are welcome to stop at any time. Any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering during the interview, you may opt to skip.

**The Risks of Being in the Case Study:**

There are minimal risks involved in this study, however; these are risks that do not go beyond the possible harms of daily life. The researcher will not interfere with any instructional time you have within your classes during the interviewing done by the research. *Participants will choose a pseudonym for their names to be used during the interviews.* Any research data will be secured and eventually destroyed; the data will not be used for any purposes other than research.

**The Benefits of Being in the Case Study:**

This study could provide an in-depth information regarding what students look for in textbooks and what affects their perception and preferences. The benefits could be significant to adult learners, institutions of higher learning, publishers, and book stores. A detailed review of the findings could yield valuable results in areas of weakness in both e-Books and textbooks. The results of this study could be used to propose different approaches to improve outcomes such as ways for college students to cut costs on textbook delivery and strategies to help students learn new material. Local, professional, and social changes are additional possible impacts of this study.

**Contact and Questions:**

You may ask any questions you have now or latter regarding the study. If you have any further questions, you may contact the researcher at xxx-xxx-xxxx and via e-mail at [xxxx.xxxx@xxxx.xxx](mailto:xxxx.xxxx@xxxx.xxx). If you want to discuss your rights as a participant in the study you may contact **Dr. Leilani Endicott;1-xxx-xxx-xxxx or email [xxxx@xxxx.xxx](mailto:xxxx@xxxx.xxx).**

**The date of the study to be conducted is from 4-7-2014 – 5-16-2014.**

Walden University's approval number for this study is 04-14-14-0055455 and it expires on April 13, 2015.

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**Statement of Consent:** I have read and understood the above consent information. My questions about the research have been answered. I understand that I may withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time without penalty. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to my participation in this study and give my assent.

Participant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Investigator's signature Gail Spencer-Scott Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of consent

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Interview Protocol

**A Case Study on Students' Perception of Mode Selection of Textbook Delivery Across Course Subjects**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher: Gail Spencer-Scott

Participants No. \_\_\_\_\_

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you an undergraduate or graduate student? If undergraduate student, which of the following represents you?
  - a) Freshman
  - b) Sophomore
  - c) Junior
  - d) Senior
  
- 1a. If you are a graduate students, how many years have you been attending?
  - a) 1-2
  - b) 3-4
  - c) 5-6
  - d) 7+
  
2. What age group do you represent?
  - a) 18-24
  - b) 25-30
  - c) 31-40
  - d) 41-55
  - e) 56+
  
3. What gender are you?
  - a) Male \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Female \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. How would you describe your ethnic background?
  - a) White
  - b) Black

- c) Hispanic
  - d) Asian
  - e) Bi-racial
5. Please describe your previous experiences with printed text and why?
- a) Disastrous
  - b) Poor
  - c) Good
  - d) Exceptional
6. If all college assignments were from the e-book how you would feel?
- a) I would view this favorably
  - b) I believe for some classes this might be good, but not for all
  - c) I would dislike this
  - d) If I knew more about using e-books it may be okay
7. What do you do when you complete assigned course work from a printed copy?
- a) Underline/highlight main points
  - b) Take note on a separate sheet of paper
  - c) Compare the reading with class notes
  - d) Write notes and questions in the text
  - e) Outline the reading
  - f) None of the above
8. What do you do when you complete assignments from an electronic copy?
- a) Use the highlighting feature within the program to note key phrases or passages
  - b) Print the electronic copy then read
  - c) Use comment boxes to write notes and question in the text
  - d) None of the above
9. Given the preference of using either a printed text versus an e-book which do you prefer?
- a) I prefer to use a printed text
  - b) I prefer to use an e-book
  - c) It does not make a difference if it is a printed or e-book
  - d) It does matter if it is a printed text or e-book
  - e) I prefer not to use either
10. How much time do you spend on one e-book assignment?
- a) One hour or less

- b) Between one to two hours
- c) Between two and three hours
- d) Four plus hours

11. Did you purchase a printed text for this course?

- a) Yes,
- b) No, if you answer no which of the statements prefer to you

- a) The texts were available free of charge from an online site
- b) The instructor for this course, does not use a printed text
- c) I could not afford to purchase the text
- d) I did not want to purchase a text for this course
- e) I borrowed a copy from the library
- f) I rented the text
- g) The text were not available for purchase

12. Please describe your previous experiences with e-books and why?

- a) Disastrous
- b) Poor
- c) Good
- d) Exceptional

13. Please describe your previous expectation for the usefulness of your eBook for this class and why?

- a) Disastrous
- b) Poor
- c) Good
- d) Exceptional

14. Describe how often you use printed text for this class.

- a) Printed text only
- b) mostly printed text
- c) none at all

15. How often have you purchased textbooks?

- a) Once a semester
- b) I, purchase
- c) Twice a semester

- d) I, purchase
- e) Other

16. How often are you allowed to get money back?

- a) Purchased text
- b) Rental text
- c) Other

17. How often have you purchased e-text? Please explain

18. What other alternatives have you used for textbook delivery?

- a) Rented text
- b) purchase text
- c) e-book rental
- d) e-book purchase
- e) other, please explain

19. How would you describe your expectations for the usefulness of printed text for this class?

- a) Very Low
- b) Low
- c) Neutral
- d) High
- e) Very High

Why did you select this answer?

20. Describe your expected learning potential for this class because of the use of e-book?

- a) Very Low
- b) Low
- c) Neutral
- d) High
- e) Very High

Why did you select this answer?

21. Which do you prefer using in class e-book or textbooks, and why?

22. How important is e-books versus textbook for you to use when it comes to improving your grade in this class?
23. How important is printed text versus e-books to you when it comes to improving your grade in your classes?
24. How do you rate your previous experience with e-book and why?
- a) Disastrous
  - b) Poor
  - c) Good
  - d) Exceptional
25. Which do you prefer for your classes, printed text or e-books, and why?
26. How would you rank the following e-book features in order 1 being the highest and 5 being the least useful?
- a) Screen reading (Audio) \_\_\_\_
  - b) Navigation \_\_\_\_
  - c) Highlighting \_\_\_\_
  - d) Bookmarking \_\_\_\_
  - e) Searching \_\_\_\_
27. How do you think using e-books has helped change the way that you study? and, why
28. Do you prefer to use e-books or textbooks, and why?
29. Do you think that e-books are cheaper than printed texts for your class? If so, why?
30. How important is e-books versus textbooks when it comes to lower price?
31. Which one is true, I am willing to pay a higher price for a printed textbook, or I opt to pay a lower price for e-book, if so why?
32. Do you think E-books are more environmentally friendly than printed book, if so, why?
33. Do you think printed texts are more environmentally friendly than printed book, if so, why?



34. E-books offer which of the following advantages for you?
- a) Downloading E-books is quick
  - b) Multiple e-books can be stored on a single electronic device.
  - c) E-books are better in terms of resources used.
35. Select which preference you prefer to use:
- a) Printed text
  - b) E-book
  - c) No Preference
36. Select which preference you prefer to use when conducting class research project:
- a) Printed text
  - b) E-book
  - c) No Preference
37. Select which preference you prefer to use for leisure reading:
- a) Printed text
  - b) E-book
  - c) No Preference
38. If price was not an option which mode delivery would you consider and why?
- a) Printed text
  - b) E-book
  - c) Neither

## Appendix C: Interviewing Questions for Directors Ordering Textbooks and e-Books

**A Case Study on Students' Perception of Mode Selection of Textbook Delivery Across Course Subjects**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher: Gail Spencer-Scott

Participate No. \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Which answer describes your order process for printed texts, eBook and other type of delivery mode?

1. How long have you been ordering for the university?
2. Who determines the type of delivery mode for order?
3. What determines how many textbooks or e-books you order? Please explain
4. How often do you have to order e-books?
5. Which of the following do you have to order more often? (a) rental textbooks, (b) Rental e-books, (c) Rental used books (d) purchase text book or e) other.
6. Do you find the ordering mode for the university an easy one?
7. If there is anything you would like to change about the present delivery mode for ordering what would it be?
8. What is the average annual amount that a student spends for college text books?
9. When ordering, which delivery mode of ordering students prefer to use.
10. What preference do graduate students prefer when placing an order?
11. What perception does students look at as advantages of printed text when purchasing?

**Protocol C:** Interviewing questions for Directors Ordering textbook and e-books:

**A Case Study on Students' Perception of Mode Selection of Textbook Delivery Across Course Subjects**

12. What perception does student perceive as advantage of using e-books when ordering?"
13. What determines how much students receive when they sell their books back to the University Book Store?
14. What and who determines whether books are not sold back to the university?"
15. When is the best time for students to sell textbooks back to the university?"
16. How much money does a student save by purchasing a used textbook instead of a new book, if any."
17. What happens if a student's class is not listed when filling orders for textbooks?
18. When is the best time to order used books?
19. When making ordering decisions, what is the difference between in stock and available to order?
20. When ordering how a student must select a textbook substitution preference?
21. If a student needs a book for a class, what happens if the textbook is on backordered?
22. What happens if a student orders a book and the class changes the book after the order?"

Appendix D:

Date: February 14, 2014

Principal Investigator/Student: Gail Spencer-Scott (Walden University)

Marygrove College

IRB APPROVAL

Dear: Gail

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed your proposal on 2-14-13. Based on the Full Board review, your proposal was APPROVED.

This approval is for three years and will end on 2-14-17. If you have not completed your project at this time, you must submit a Renewal form.

If at any time you make modifications in your project, you must submit a Research Project Modification form.

If you have further questions, please contact Chuck Pearson, IRB Chair.

Sincerely,

Chuck Pearson

Charles S. Pearson, Ph.D, Chair

Institutional Review Board

Date: February 14, 2014

Principal Investigator/Student: Gail Spencer-Scott (Walden University)

Marygrove College

## IRB APPROVAL

Dear: Gail

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed your proposal on 2-14-13. Based on the Full Board review, your proposal was APPROVED.

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If at any time you make modifications in your project, you must submit a Research Project Modification form.

If you have further questions, please contact Chuck Pearson, IRB Chair.

Sincerely,

Chuck Pearson

Charles S. Pearson, Ph.D, Chair

Institutional Review Board

## Curriculum Vitae

Gail Spencer-Scott

gailscott476@yahoo.com

### **SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- 25 years' experience in education: teaching, research, and computer application.
- Leadership experience
- Written and spoken communication skills
- Graduate degrees in administration and education

### **PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE**

#### **Career Development Teacher/Coordinator**

- Supervised/Instructed, Teacher for America (TFA) Corp members program, University of Michigan, School of Education.
- Created and taught "Life and Career Skills" course for High School students, preparing them for workforce placement. Detroit Public Schools
- Facilitated Professional Development On-line Workshops for teaching staff and United States Army, Tank Automotive Command (U.S. TACOM).
- Created and taught "Computer Applications" courses to after school program students for Second Chance.
- Oversaw 2 active computer labs in multiple facilities.
- Coordinated Office Co-op Training Program & Work Experience I-IV, for High School students on- the -job training.
- Taught business classes in the area of Business English, Co-Office Training/Work Experience I-IV, Management Support 1&2, Entrepreneurship, and preparation training for Business Professional of America Work Skill Events.

#### **Computer Literacy**

- Experienced in the use of Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, Publisher and PowerPoint.
- Trained and supervised new teaching staff on computer literacy.
- Facilitated and set-up audio and computer equipment for professional development workshops for guest speakers.
- Supervised and taught 911 procedures on computers to adult students
- Taught business and G.E.D. class for Adult Education on computers.

### **Leadership/Facilitator/Curriculum Experiences**

- Sponsor/Coordinated State-Wide National Honor Society (Students)
- Sponsored and Coordinated DPS Board meeting events
- Develop Business Education Career Development Curriculum Workshops
- Implemented professional Development workshops, for on-line MEAP Testing
- Implemented staff development workshop, for Wayne State University
- Designed membership directory for Detroit Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) members
- Facilitated Business Education/Career Development Curriculum Workshop
- Facilitated Business Professionals of America prepared speech, interviewing, and small business management expos.

### **COMMUNITY RELATIONS EXPERIENCE**

- Southeastern High School, American Red Cross, Sponsor, 2012
- Member, Southeastern High School, Professional Development Team 7 Committee, 2011 - 2012.
- Southeastern High School, Ninth Grade Coordinator for Graduation Program, 2010-11
- Northwestern High School, Coordinator, chairperson for Students' Award Ceremony, 2007-08
- American Cancer Society, Volunteer Student Coordinator 2006-2008
- Judge Mathis Community Center Resource - Events Volunteer 2006
- American Red Cross of Southeastern Michigan, Volunteer Student Coordinator 2002-2011
- Detroit Urban League Volunteer Student Coordinator 2002 to 2014
- Black United Fund, Inc. Volunteer Student Coordinator 2001 to 2011

### **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

- Member, Kappa Delta Pi, International Honor Society in Education
- Member, Golden Key National Honor Society, Walden University
- President/Secretary, PHI DELTA KAPPA, U of D – Mercy Chapter
- Member, Michigan Business Education Association (MBEA)
- Member, Business Professionals of America (BPA)
- Member, American Red Cross, Special Nomination Committee

### **EDUCATION**

- Doctoral Candidate, December, 2014, Walden University
- Education Specialist, Wayne State University
- M.A. of Education, Wayne State University
- B.S. Business Education, Western Michigan University

- Vocational Certification
- Competency Base Education (CBE)
- School Administrator Certification

**SPECIAL AWARDS**

- Teacher of the Year Award 2005-2006 recipient, The American Red Cross/ Detroit Pistons'
- Black United Fund of Michigan, Community Service Award 2004-2005
- Best Chapter of the Year Award for the State of Michigan, Detroit Northwestern H.S. Business Professionals of America 2005-2006 & 2007-2008
- National Chapter of Excellence Award 2005-2006, Business Professionals of America
- National Chapter of Excellence Award 2004-2005, Business Professionals of America
- Detroit Urban League, Outstanding Teacher Nominee, 2010