Students' Reading Preferences: An Exploratory Study

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Introduction

- **The e-book reader revolution is here already. Many are intrigued by the question: is it going to replace the printed book?**

Research Questions

- **What are the reading preferences of information science students at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century?**
- **How do different variables such as relative advantage, comprehension and learning strategies affect students' reading preferences?**

Reading Habits

- **Different researchers found that students prefer to read long academic texts and long-form reading in print (Ackerman & Goldsmith, 2011; Eshet-Alkalai and Geri, 2007 & 2010; Foasberg, 2014).**

Innovation Diffusion Theory (Rogers, 1995)

- **Rogers (1995) identifies five attributes that influence the innovation adoption:**
- **(1): relative advantage**
- **(2): compatibility**
- **(3): complexity,**
- **(4): trial ability**
- **(5): observability**

Learning Approaches

- **Learning approaches are defined as "the ways in which students go about their academic tasks, thereby affecting the nature of the learning outcome" (Biggs, 1994, p. 318).**
- **Deep learning approach**
- **Surface learning approach**

Research Hypotheses:

- **H(1) Students will prefer printed materials over electronic ones.**
- **H(2) The higher the advantage of e-reading seen by the students, the more they will prefer to use electronic devices.**
- **H(3) The higher students' comprehension of electronic materials is, the greater their preference for using electronic materials.**
- **H(4) Both deep and surface learners will acknowledge the relative advantage of electronic materials.**

Method

- **Participants:**
- **177 LIS students at the Department of Information Science at Bar-Ilan University participated in the survey**
- **52 (29.37%) were male and 125 (70.62%) were female**
- **Their average age was 31.41 years old**
- **85 (48.02%) were undergraduates, and 92 (51.98%) were MA students, and PhD students**

Measures

- Three questionnaires were used:
- Personal details
- Relative advantage
- Learning strategies
- Two further questions focusing on reading habits

Results

- **Relative advantage of reading from electronic devises was measured on a scale of 1 to 6. Its mean was $M = 3.16$ ($SD = 1.15$).**
- **In order to examine whether there are differences between students' reading habits (electronic vs. print) a MANOVA was performed.**

Means, standard deviations and MANOVA analysis on each measure separately of students' reading habits

Measures	Printed Materials		Electronic Materials			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*F(1,168)*	*Eta²*
Comprehension	5.15	1.91	3.64	1.77	52.96***	.24
Preference	5.18	1.89	4.19	1.95	13.87***	.08

*** $p < .001$

Comprehension and preference were on a scale of 1 to 7,

- **Pearson correlations were performed to examine the relationship between electronic relative advantage, electronic comprehension, printed comprehension, and printed and electronic preferences.**

Pearson correlations between electronic innovation, electronic comprehension, printed comprehension, and printed and electronic preferences (*n* = 177)

Measures	Electronic Relative Advantage	Printed Compr.	Electronic Compr.	Printed Pref.	Electronic Pref.
Electronic Relative Advantage					
Printed Comprehension	-.24***				
Electronic Comprehension	.41 ***	-.00			
Printed Preference	-.23**	.62 ***	-.25***		
Electronic Preference	.47 ***	-.42***	.50 ***	-.62***	

**p < .01, ***p < .001

- **Pearson correlations were also performed to examine the relationship between learning strategies, electronic relative advantage, printed and electronic comprehension, and printed and electronic preferences.**

Pearson correlations between learning strategies, and printed and electronic preferences (*n* = 177)

Measures	Electronic Relative Advantage	Printed Compr.	Electronic Compr.	Printed Pref.	Electronic Pref.
Deep Learning	.55***	.11	.14	.10	.07
Surface Learning	.43***	.12	.12	.06	.05

***p < .001

Discussion

- **H(1) was accepted indicating that students prefer printed materials over electronic ones and echoing previous studies (Ackerman & Goldsmith, 2011; Foasberg, 2014)**
- **H(2) was also accepted revealing that when students perceive the relative advantage of reading electronic materials, they will be quicker adopters (Roger's theory, 1995)**
- **H (3) was accepted too, revealing a correlation between students' comprehension of electronic materials and their preference for using electronic materials.**
- **H(4) was confirmed, revealing that both deep and surface learners acknowledge the relative advantage of electronic materials.**

Conclusion

- **The current study showed students' preferences of printed materials.**
- **In addition, it emphasizes the importance of personal variables that may affect students' will to read electronic materials: relative advantage and comprehension.**

- **Thanks for your attention!**