May 2016

A Preliminary Examination of Gender Differences in Graduate and Undergraduate Reading Engagement: Using Books to Supplement Students' Learning

Suzanne Clinton
University of Central Oklahoma

Lee Tyner
University of Central Oklahoma

Robert Epstein
University of Central Oklahoma

Abbie Lambert
University of Texas at Tyler

Recommended Citation

A PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION OF GENDER DIFFERENCES IN GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE READING ENGAGEMENT: USING BOOKS TO SUPPLEMENT STUDENTS' LEARNING

Suzanne Clinton, University of Central Oklahoma
Lee Tyner, University of Central Oklahoma
Robert Epstein, University of Central Oklahoma
Abbie Lambert, University of Texas at Tyler

ABSTRACT

As America's universities advance the use of technologies, including learning management systems, videos, PowerPoint, "clickers," virtual classrooms, and everything else "i" and "e," students may become over sensitized and yearn for a missing component: The focused study of reading a book. This study analyzes differences in graduate and undergraduate students, and male and female attitudes and perceptions of reading engagement involving non-textbook reading in academic courses, especially among business students. This research is based on the experiences of four professors who have incorporated (auto)biographies and practitioner books to support the growth and development of students' study of human resource management topics, leadership, small business, and entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the primary, secondary and post-secondary academic experience, reading is the infrastructure by which students navigate the educational landscape. A student must learn to read, and then read to learn. Therefore, a student's ability to read and their subjective experience of reading are both critical in the effectiveness of reading in academic preparation. Furthermore, gender differences in the subjective or emotional reaction to reading can dictate a student's engagement towards academic reading (Epting, Rand, and D'Antuono, 2014). This paper explores the potential value of offering a wider variety of reading material to students, both graduate and undergraduate, as well as the gender-based differences in reaction to such options.

The authors of this manuscript have had strong and positive feedback from students as a result of using assigned, non-textbooks. The purpose of this paper is to analyze differences in graduate and undergraduate business students, and differences in male and female attitudes, and perceptions of reading engagement involving non-textbook reading in academic courses.

OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Reading can provide students with additional context to develop deeper cultural, political, managerial, and socio-economic insights. These insights work as the catalyst for more abstract thinking and richer discussion in the classroom. However, professors are often inundated with the need to utilize technology in the classroom. Universities send announcements regularly for improving teaching sessions. Typical topics include the following: "Developing e-Portfolios," "Using Wikis," "Creating your own Podcasts," "Incorporating iPhone in Your Lectures," "Create-Your-Own Interactive eBooks for iPads," "Web 2.0," and more! The common denominator in these is everything "e" and "i," and fails to provide new ways to enhance learnings through utilization of books in the classroom. Using technology as the only complement to learning in the classroom can lead to overstimulated students who "tune out" and develop short attention spans (Tarantino, McDonough, and Hua, 2013).

Furthermore, universities are struggling to engage students in reading assigned course textbooks. Clump, Bauer, Bradley (2004) found students admit to reading on average only 27.46% of assigned reading prior to class and 69.98% prior to an exam. Epting et al. (2014) found that students find reading to be useful to somewhat useful, with male students perceiving it to be less useful than female students for academic success.   Redden (2011, as cited in Juban and Lopez, 2013, p.326) stated "70% of college students had not purchased a textbook at least once in their academic career" and when students do purchase textbooks they state that they often times do not read them."

Although reading may be perceived by students as a non-critical component to their learning (Berry, Cook, Hill, and Stevens, 2011) or perceived as an integral component, but not often conducted by students prior to class (Clump, Bauer, Bradley, 2004), research has shown that reading is a core component in academic achievement. Fazal, Hussain, Majoka, and Masood (2012, p. 42) found "a significant correlation for skills of reading, time-management, and note-taking with academic achievement." Furthermore, Fazal et al. (2012) found reading was the only academic skill examined in the study that had a large difference of effect size between high and low achievers.

Given the importance of reading and the current state of reading engagement for undergraduate and graduate courses, another option that teachers should consider is the use of non-textbooks such as (auto)biographies and practitioner business books. Raymondh (1981, p. 1) stated that "[(Auto)]biographies can be used in many ways to enrich education…[they make it] more interesting, meaningful, challenging, and enjoyable." Shamir, Dayan-Horesh, & Adler (2005) suggested the use of a life-story approach (biographies) in the study of leadership creates an environment in which students are able to learn more about leadership theories through personal and real-life accounts from famous leaders providing additional context to the leadership concept. Additionally, Hayes and Robinson (2012) stated that utilizing narrative books is an "innovative approach" in teaching entrepreneurship in business schools.

Larson and Brady (2000) posit that autobiographies are a powerful tool in higher education, which dates back at least as far as the St. Augustine's era, and numerous contemporary authors have praised the virtues of autobiography as a tool for learning and personal growth. Most students are "able to attain a deeper understanding of substantive material presented in class" with

autobiography work than they do through alternative methods of teaching the material (Larson & Brady, 2000, p. 14). Larson & Brady (2000, p. 13) also encouraged the students to tell their own stories rather than simply learning those of others. Similarly, Muir (2013) recommends that students not only read biographies, but also craft biographical sketches in business courses.

The authors noted specifically that (auto)biographies provide a "powerful and transformative learning" experience, especially among graduate students (Larson & Brady, 2000, p. 13). To them, if students "search the roots of their own unique characteristics as learners," they will "achieve a richer understanding and appreciation of adult learners in general" (Larson and Brady, 2000, p. 13). By using (auto)biographies with adult learners, Larson & Brady (2000) posit that students engage in a "fascinating" and "imaginative" process (p. 15). Similarly, King (1987, p. 412), noted that (auto)biographies foster the active student role by compelling the students to think outside the box. As an additional effect, they also provide "comic relief" to ease tension and alleviate boredom while pulling back fading attention spans inside the classroom.

In addition to (auto)biographies, another option that provides interesting and relevant reading for students is the use of popular practitioner books and novels. Although these books are not often mentioned in academic literature, in the authors' experiences, these types of books can by extremely beneficial to student learning and can work as a complement with other assignments. Author experience shows that popular practitioner books often engage students, are easy-to-read, and provide readily-usable anecdotes for classroom use on a variety of topics and can be utilized to provide more real-world context to business theory.

In short, the utilization of (auto)biographies and practitioner books inside the classrooms fosters critical thinking. (Auto)biographies help reveal a great deal of information about the students; not only to the teachers and to other students, but also to themselves. The use of practitioner books provided students with a common language and understanding that businesses use today to develop their leaders internally. The use of practitioner books also provided a nice complement to the course textbook and allowed for deeper discussion on relevant business topics.

Defining Print Media

Various definitions and interpretations exist for books, textbooks, and monographs, including authorship. This is particularly true for popular press books that may not follow academic formatting such as APA, MLA, or The Chicago Style. Thus, the following definitions are offered to provide clarity for this investigation.

Biography: This includes both biographies and autobiographies whether co-authored and/or written with a ghost author. These tend to be narrative books that provide a person's experiences, viewpoints, and contributions.

Textbook: This includes traditional business textbooks used by college students that are normally written by professors and distributed to college bookstores by publishers. These books are routinely updated and normally focus on a defined area of business acumen.

Practitioner books: This includes popular press books commonly read by industry professionals. These books are sometimes best-sellers and normally mass marketed. They often provide business acumen, instructive guidance, or a review of key concepts. In contrast to biographies, they are much less likely to be narrative or tell a life story.

Non-textbook: This term is intended to represent either a biographical or practitioner book. Moreover, it does not represent a traditional college textbook normally used in business courses. It is also intended to represent books that are a hybrid of biography and practice.

Gender Differences in Reading

In addition to the current struggles related to student reading and academic achievement in universities, the literature shows distinct social and academic patterns related to student reading. These patterns punctuate the importance of reading in academic achievement and the current deficit that exists as students enter college. Furthermore, existing literature reveals glaring differences between the approaches males and females take toward collegiate preparation and reading. Combs, Slate, Moore, Bustamante, Onwuegbuzie and Edmonson (2009, p. 448) found only "51% of female seniors were college-ready graduates in reading [while]…38.76% of boys were deemed to be college-ready graduates in reading."

Although a large percentage of both genders struggle with reading levels of graduates, the large difference between male and female student readiness in reading could be linked to their perception of and engagement in reading. McKenna, et, al, 1995, as cited in Epting, Rand and D'Antuono (2014, p.539) found that "[a]s a whole, girls are more likely to have positive attitudes than boys toward reading at all levels of schooling, a difference that increases with age for recreational reading, but remains relatively constant toward academic reading." Furthermore, Brozo et al, 2014 report that females had significantly higher scores than males on reading engagement. They defined reading engagement in three parts: enjoyment of reading, time spent reading for enjoyment, and diversity of texts read. They posit that "gender difference in reading performance seems to be in significant part attributable to an engagement gap. If boys had the same value as girls on the index of enjoyment of reading, the gender difference…would be reduced to less than half of the observed difference" (Brozo et al, 2014).

Futhermore, Fazal et al. (2012) found significant differences between males and females, where female students were superior to males in academic achievement and study skills, including reading. Rauch and Hartig (2010) found females significantly outperformed males when responding to open-ended questions, as these by nature, require higher-level reading processes.

Similar significant differences were found between genders in all 65 countries tested in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2009 (OCED, 2010).

Gender based differences in many aspects of student development are fairly easy to identify but more elusive to address. From a student's first exposure to curriculum and continuing throughout career path development, gender differences can color the academic experience. Understanding how a student approaches, perceives and ultimately responds to an academic approach is critical for instructors in order to provide the most effective instructional experience. Furthermore, research has shown that students, both male and female, are starting college at a deficit in their reading ability which can negatively impact academic achievement. Given these nuances, understanding the role reading plays in learning for both male and female students is imperative for university professors as continue to capitalize on areas of student development.

Background: Authors' Course-Specific Use of Non-Textbooks

Human Resource Management:

The books used in this investigation were utilized across several HR Management courses, including: HR Compliance, Introduction to HR, Human Capital Management, Compensation, and Directed Readings in HR. The titles were moderately to closely related to the content of each course and helped build a thorough understanding. For example, in the HR related courses, students learned about the Equal Pay Act from class lectures and the textbooks. However, it was Lily Ledbetter's autobiography that brought meaning and insight to the profound history of the events, congressional acts, and presidential signature.

Depending on the course, students were either required to select one or two books from a list or perhaps assigned a book. In one course, a specific title was offered as an alternative assignment for students with logistical challenges to an off-campus assignment. The students provided favorable comments, ranging from mild enjoyment to "the best book I've ever read in college."

Entrepreneurship:

Entrepreneurship in the 21st Century is a junior level elective course that is taught in the classroom and uses online resources. The course involves reading a textbook and using it as a reference book. In class and outside the classroom, students experience the creation and development of an idea, and the creation and development of a business plan. Part of what was assigned in the syllabus was for the students to reflect on their real-world experiences using an online discussion board. Because students were having difficulty with this assignment, a fiction book called "All in Startup" by Diana Kander (2014), was assigned. This book tells the fictional story of an entrepreneur's search for a business model. The purpose of the using the book was to help students organize their thinking about the experiences they were going through as they developed a business model and business plan.

Leadership:

In the graduate leadership course, several leadership theories were covered from a basic leadership textbook. Very early in the semester, students were required to submit a list of five business leaders and respective business leader biographies in excess of 200 pages in length.

Faculty instructed students not to select extremely common business leaders (e.g., Oprah), nor political or religious leaders. Less common business leaders would more likely ensure the student would be assigned a leader of their choice, as only one student per semester was assigned a specific business leader. Political and religious leaders were excluded to avoid conflict and confrontation.

Once students submitted their lists on a first-come, first-served basis, faculty attempted to assign students one of their chosen business leaders and business leader biographies. Students were assigned a written paper and presentation in which they would provide a brief biography of their selected leader, describe the leader's leadership style while citing examples from their biography, and discuss the leader's most and least descriptive leadership styles.

Benefits to the assignment were multifold. Students had an opportunity to apply the leadership theories they studied to an actual business leader. They also learned appropriate and inappropriate times to use various leadership styles. Last, they were able to refer to the leader and the leadership theories all semester and were equipped with examples to use to assist their peers in understanding the same.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Given the extensive use of non-textbooks in the aforementioned courses, the authors chose to conduct a study to fill a gap in the literature. Although the literature offers numerous studies that examine the significant differences in male and female readers (Brozo, Sulkunen, Sheil, Garbe, Pandian, & Valtin, 2014), very few, if any, studies focus on business students, and virtually none were conducted in the last ten years. More current, complementary research evaluates the importance of reading engagement and the positive impact reading can have on academic achievement levels (Epting, et al., 2014; Fazal et al., 2012).

A current gap in the literature still exists in relation to analyzing differences in graduate and undergraduate students, male and female attitudes, and perceptions of reading engagement involving non-textbook reading in academic courses, especially among business students. The goal of this paper is to address these shortcomings with the results of a study conducted in a college of business at a state-supported institution. The purpose of this paper is to analyze differences in graduate and undergraduate business students, differences in male and female attitudes, and perceptions of reading engagement involving non-textbook reading in academic courses.

DESIGN

Survey Instrument

In this preliminary study, the authors conducted a one-page paper and pencil survey of undergraduate and graduate students in a college of business at a public institution in the southern United States. The survey investigated the following: how much students read; what they enjoyed reading; how many books the students think experts read; how many books the students think they should read; were students likely to read more or fewer books after their experience in the course;

how students think a film or movie compares (in content, emotion or factual nature) to a book of similar topic, and the students' view of books before and after the course. The full survey can be viewed in Appendix A.

Sample

One hundred seventy students in six classes were surveyed. The 170 respondents consisted of 68 males and 102 females. One hundred ten respondents were undergraduates, and of these undergraduates, 40 were male and 70 were female. Sixty respondents were graduate students with 28 men and 32 women.

Students were enrolled in one of the following graduate courses: Leading in a Globally Competitive Environment or Human Capital Management, or one of the following undergraduate courses: Introduction to Human Resources, Human Resource Compliance, or Directed Readings in HR. Students were asked to participate in the study and complete the surveys in class. No incentives were provided. Participation was voluntary per Institutional Review Board rules. All students in each class completed the survey. It was estimated that these surveys would take about 7-10 minutes each to complete. Surveys were anonymous and other than gender, no demographic questions were asked.

Data Analysis

SPSS (Ver. 21) was used to provide the statistical analysis to test the questions using Cronbach's alpha. According to Gliem and Gliem:

> When using Likert-type scales it is imperative to calculate and report Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency reliability for any scales or subscales one may be using. The analysis of the data then must use these summated scales or subscales and not individual items. If one does otherwise, the reliability of the items is at best probably low and at worst unknown. Cronbach's alpha does not provide reliability estimates for single items. (2003, p. 88)

Cronbach's alpha for the reading questions was .82. Scores above .8 are usually considered good. For the before and after questions, Cronbach's alpha was .77. This is usually considered acceptable.

RESULTS

First, we looked at the averages for the reading behavior measures. The median student read 3-5 books a year of which 1-2 were associated with class work. Students read 1-2 professional books per year in their field. The median student also indicated that they thought they would probably read 25-50 books in their lifetime. When their enjoyment of reading was analyzed, 70.5% "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they enjoyed reading while 19.4% "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed;" the rest were undecided. When asked about what types of reading they enjoyed, 72.8% "agreed" or "strongly agreed" they enjoyed fiction, 62.8% "agreed" or "strongly agreed" they enjoyed non-fiction, 60.6% "agreed" or "strongly agreed" they enjoyed short stories, 64.7% "agreed" or "strongly agreed" they enjoyed non-fiction short stories, 69.7% "agreed" or "strongly

agreed" they enjoyed Internet stories, and 40.6% "agreed" or "strongly agreed" they enjoyed blogs. When asked how many books they believed professionals in their field would read, the median was 6-25 books per years and felt they should read about that as well. Finally, in the initial set of questions, students were asked whether they were likely to read more or less after having read books in their courses, and 2.9% said they would read less, 58.7% said the same, while 38.4% said they would read more.

Second, since we recognized that demographic differences would play a role in these results, we conducted further statistical analysis. We compared students based on gender stemming from our review of literature. We also looked at whether the students were undergraduates or graduate students. Our intuition was that graduate students were more likely to be avid readers. The results are in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Differences in Gender and Levels

#NAME?	Mode	Mean	UG Male	UG Female	Grad Male	Grad Female	M≠F	U≠G	Post Hoc
Read during last year	2	1.91	1.73	2.04	1.93	1.84			
From classwork	1	1.34	1.3	1.43	1.43	1.09			GF≠UF,GM
Professional	0	0.87	0.88	0.96	0.93	0.63			
Adult life	2	2.83	2.13	2.81	3	3.65	F>M	G>U	UM≠UF,GM,GF GF≠UF
Enjoy reading	2	0.9	0.3	1.02	1	1.31	F>M	G>U	UM≠UF,GM,GF
Enjoy fiction	1	0.94	0.49	1.09	0.89	1.23	F>M		UM≠UF,GF
Enjoy non-fiction	1	0.61	0.53	0.68	0.59	0.59			
Enjoy short stories	1	0.55	0.28	0.73	0.5	0.55	F>M		
Enjoy NF mag articles	1	0.63	0.5	0.58	0.89	0.68			
Enjoy NF Internet articles	1	0.75	0.7	0.64	1.04	0.81			
Enjoy blogs	0	0.11	0.18	0.13	-0.11	0.19			

Experts read	2	2.66	2.28	2.74	2.93	2.72			UM≠UG,GM
You should read	2	2.24	1.88	2.23	2.68	2.34		G>U	UM≠UF,GM,GF
									UF=GM
Likely to read after course (More or less)	0	0.36	0.33	0.44	0.43	0.19			UF≠GF

In Table 1 above, we report the results of comparing males to females, undergraduates to graduate students, and the interactions of these. Differences in gender were tested by t-tests ($p<.05$). Females were significantly higher in their perception of what they would read in their adult lives than males. This may be because they were also significantly higher in their enjoyment of reading overall, and particularly in fiction and short stories.

Graduate students also were significantly higher (tested by t-tests ($p<.05$)) in their perception of what they would read in their adult lives than undergraduates. Graduate students also enjoyed reading more, and indicated that the number of books they should read was higher than undergraduates.

When looking at the individual groups, one-way analyses of variance were performed with post-hoc tests to compare specific means. Undergraduate males appear to be lower on their reading, enjoyment of reading, and what they read in their adult lives than any of the other groups. Graduate females are significantly higher that undergraduate females in what they read in their adult lives. Meanwhile, graduate females seem to read fewer books related to class work.

Looking at the data it might be generalized that undergraduate males are the least like to have read books while graduate females are the most likely to read, noting that these books were more likely fiction rather than professional. Additionally, undergraduate males indicated a likelihood of increased reading whereas graduate females had the lowest score of likelihood to read more.

Table 2: An Impression of Books

DESCRIPTOR	BEFORE	AFTER	DIFFERENCE
Informative	100	123	23
Memorable	67	83	16
Diverse	44	58	14

Inspirational	82	93	11
Too Long	30	34	4
Treasured	37	41	4
Not Up-to-date	3	4	1
Waste of time	9	8	-1
Slow	25	23	-2
Irrelevant	6	4	-2
Captivating	76	73	-3
Boring	28	21	-7
Comforting	52	44	-8
Addictive	49	37	-12
Burdensome	34	18	-16
Hard to Find	42	23	-19

For the above set of measures concerning books in Table 2, we asked respondents to mark a descriptor if it reflected their attitude about book reading. They were to recall how they felt prior to the course (before) and how they felt at the end of the course (after). The before and after refer to the treatment of the reading assignments they were given.

As can be seen in the overall subject pool, the top five descriptors that initially best described book reading were: informative, inspirational, captivating, memorable, and comforting. After their book reading assignments, the top four of these still remained but the descriptor "diverse" replaced "comforting" as the fifth. When looking at the differences between before and after, books became more informative, inspirational, memorable, diverse, addictive, and comforting.

Again, a major change appears to be the result of professional books replacing fiction.
To better understand what underlies the change in how the students rated the descriptors, further analysis was performed. Differences in gender and differences in undergraduate/graduate level were tested by t-tests ($p < .05$). When looking at the individual groups, one-way analyses of variance were performed with post-hoc tests to compare specific means.

Table 3: Differences before Assignment

Item	Mode	Mean	UG Male	UG Female	Grad Male	Grad Female	M≠F	U≠G	Post Hoc

									UM≠GF,GM
Bef Boring	0	0.16	0.3	0.21	0.04	0		U>G	UF≠GM,GM
Bef Too Long	0	0.17	0.38	0.09	0.21	0.06	M>F		UM≠UF,GM,GF
Bef Burdensome	0	0.12	0.25	0.06	0.18	0.03	M>F		UM≠UF,GF
Bef Slow	0	0.15	0.2	0.13	0.25	0.03	M>F		GF≠UM,GM
Bef Addictive	0	0.28	0.18	0.34	0.18	0.38	F>M		
Bef Treasured	0	0.21	0.18	0.26	0.11	0.25			UF≠GM
Bef Captivating	0	0.44	0.28	0.49	0.32	0.66	F>M		UM≠UF,GF GM≠GF
Bef Comforting	0	0.31	0.2	0.34	0.21	0.44	F>M		UM≠GF
Bef Waste of Time	0	0.05	0.13	0.04	0.04	0			UM≠GF
Bef Irrelevant	**0**	**0.04**	**0.08**	**0.04**	**0**	**0**		**U>G**	

Prior to the book reading assignments, Table 3 illustrates that males marked the following descriptors significantly more often than females:

- Too long, burdensome, and slow; females marked addictive, captivating, and comforting more often than males.
- Undergraduates marked boring and irrelevant significantly more often than graduate students.

Again, undergraduate males were very different from graduate females.

Table 4: Differences after Assignment

Item	Mode	Mean	UG Male	UG Female	Grad Male	Grad Female	M≠F	U≠G	Post Hoc

Item	Mode	Mean	UG Male	UG Female	Grad Male	Grad Female	M≠F	U≠G	PostHoc
Aft Boring	0	0.12	0.13	0.16	0	0.16			UF≠GM
Aft Too Long	0	0.19	0.25	0.23	0.11	0.13		U>G	
Aft Slow	0	0.14	0.13	0.23	0.07	0		U>G	UF≠GM,GF
Aft Memorable		0.48	0.48	0.6	0.39	0.31		U>G	UF≠FG
Aft Inspirational		0.54	0.5	0.66	0.39	0.47			UF≠GM
Aft Hard-to-find		0.14	0.13	0.1	0.29	0.09			GM≠UM,UF,GF
Aft Diverse		0.34	0.3	0.43	0.29	0.22			UF≠GF

After the book reading assignments, Table 4 delineates that males were not significantly different from females. Undergraduates' descriptors marked were no longer significantly different on boring and irrelevant, but were significantly more often than graduate students on the descriptors of too long, slow and memorable.

Table 5: Gender Differences

Item	Mode	Mean	UG Male	UG Female	Grad Male	Grad Female	M≠F	U≠G	PostHoc
Dif Boring		-0.04	-0.18	-0.06	-0.04	0.16		G>U	GF≠UM,UF (U-)
Dif Too Long		0.02	-0.13	0.14	-0.11	-0.03	F>M		UF≠UM,GM (M-)
Dif Slow		-0.01	-0.08	0.1	-0.18	-0.03	F>M	U>G	UF≠UM,GM (M-)(G-)
Dif Burdensome		-0.01	-0.1	0.04	-0.11	0.06	F>M		UM≠UF,GF (M-)
Dif Addictive		-0.07	0.03	-0.09	0	-0.22	M>F		GF≠UM,GM (F-)
Dif Diverse		0.08	0.15	0.14	0.04	-0.09		U>G	GF≠UM,UF (G-)
Dif Memorable		0.09	0.18	0.14	0	-0.03		U>G	(G-)
Dif Captivating		-0.02	0.18	-0.03	0	-0.25	M>F		GF≠UM,UF,GM UM≠UF (F-)

When we look at difference scores between the before and after markings, Table 5 reveals the following changes. Males in general improved on finding books too long, too slow, and burdensome, while females found them less addictive and captivating. The addictiveness of books decreased for females, whereas for males, it remained about the same. Books became less boring, less long, less slow, and less burdensome, and became more diverse, memorable, and captivating for undergraduate males. Undergraduate females found books more "too long." Graduate males found books less slow, less long, and less burdensome.

For graduate females, books became less addictive, diverse and captivating. Books also became more boring and burdensome.

Males marked the following descriptors significantly more often than females: Too long, burdensome, and slow. Females marked addictive, captivating, and comforting more often than males. Undergraduates marked boring and irrelevant significantly more often than graduate students.

DISCUSSION

Outcomes to Integrating Non-Textbooks into the Classroom

A review of the literature related to using books in the classroom suggests that there are several outcomes related to student learning. Delineated below is a list of outcomes based on integrating non-textbook into the classroom. In addition to presenting student learning outcomes supported by literature, each outcome presented will also include observations from the authors based on how these outcomes progressed the education of their students.

Student Values and Attitudes. According to King (1987), the use of autobiographies helps uncover students' values by revealing information about their attitudes toward many different real-life topics. In her own words, "autobiographies force the student to create a coherent picture…" since it is self-directed (King, 1987, p. 412). For example, most human resource textbooks include coverage for the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), immigrant labor, and other topics. With this in mind, students read Miracle Boy, an autobiographical story about a Ben Mattlin who was born in the 1960's as an able-bodied but began losing mobility at an early age. He was in a wheel chair by his teens, later becoming a quadriplegic. Students read about Ben witnessing the evolution of disability laws, his challenges with employment, and yet his surprising view toward mental disability.

Regarding immigrant labor, students read Enrique's Journey, a story about young boy who immigrated to the US in search of his mother, someone he had not seen since age five. Finding her when he was 17 years old, their reunion was nothing as hoped for. Enrique's story provides students with a firsthand account of the harsh choices people make for their families' welfare, as balanced on the complex issue of immigration. It includes an explanation of how immigrants enter the US, how they find work, and how many would rather be back home. Furthermore, many

students were surprised that Guatemalans are treated very harshly while traveling through Mexico and are routinely beaten, robbed, and sent home.

Student Judgment. Much of the literature suggests that the above materials help students develop their ability to judge. Ellenwood (2007, p. 38) highlighted how credible and notable characters and stories from literature and biographies allow students to understand the importance of "small daily judgments" that need to be "grounded in a moral pattern or context."

In the Leading in the Globally Competitive Environment course, the authors used non-textbooks to reinforce that leaders must be ethical, as they are attempting to influence others to action. Likewise, in Human Capital Management, the author provided insight to compounded issues that are neither clear cut, nor available for simple solutions. In fact, some of the biographical insights were the result of using unconventional managerial advice. For example, finding success as a manner using a method that is incongruent with advice offered in textbooks.

Character Traits. In 1943, Lemon asserted that reading biographies can benefit young learners by providing enjoyment, broadening their own experiences, and developing their own character. More current literature notes that biographies present desirable character traits to students in a thorough way because it sharpens our insights about characters and integrity by "highlighting the nuances of fundamental human virtues and by making each less abstract" (Ellenwood, 2007, p. 41). Hebert, Long, Neumeister, & Kristie, (2001, para. 49) make a similar point about biographies stating that they provide students role models and inspirational messages while introducing "a variety of philosophical views of life," and offering "practical strategies for developing resilience."

The purpose of the non-textbooks assignments in the leadership course were to have students identify character traits that helped leaders be successful. Students used Trait Theory, and identified which traits their leaders did or did not display, and how that affected their leadership style. In a similar fashion, many of the human resource students read Clarence Thomas' autobiography. His story discusses his tenure as head of the EEOC and his Supreme Court nomination which provided a spotlight on sexual harassment. While Justice Thomas remains a contentious leader, his books provides viewpoints to his raising and experiences that shaped him his various roles. Although some students cling to their opinions of him, they tend to have different perspectives on complex issues.

Diversity. Holm (1995) recommended the use for books to develop awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity. Likewise, Morgan (2009, pp. 220) stated that biographies help students "develop an understanding of the frames of reference that different groups of people hold."

Diversity was a consistent theme in using books in the classroom. For example, the leadership and human resource courses included books that focused on disability, racial, gender, national origin, and cultural differences.

Hayes & Robinson (2012, pp. 22) state that biographies enable instructors to "meet the needs of a diverse set of students…with different learning styles and learning needs" and help "enhance the learning experience." Similarly, Griffith (2010) points out that graphic novels can help young readers, especially those with language and learning disabilities, in vocabulary development, comprehension, and pleasure reading (Griffith, 2010, pp. 220).

The intent of all authors' use of biographies and biographies was to enhance students' learning experiences. Additional benefits of using books in classroom was so that students develop an understanding of how topics and theories learned in the classroom were applied in the real-world.

Giving Back. Biographies can guide us to a healthy civic life, or giving back. In Ellenwood's opinion (2007, p. 42), our healthiest civic life occurs when "the full range of each individual's personal relationships are founded on care and respect." Those relationships help us recognize and appreciate the contributions we can make to the communities that surround us. They help us "get outside of our own thinking and imagine new and better ways of learning from each other so we may live well together" (Ellenwood, 2007, p. 42).

The leadership course non-textbooks assignments required students to discuss stewardship, Level 5 leadership, and why it is important for companies to give back to their communities. The human resource courses offer students an opportunity to understand the value and challenges of workforce development, recruiting, and compliance items such as ADA, FMLA, FLSA, and EEO. The challenges are more often represented in the practitioner books whereas the value is more often represented in the biographies.

Personality Growth and Self-Creation. Frasier & McCannon (1981); Halsted (1994); and Lenkowsky (1987) all contend that biographies produce affective change and promote personality growth and development among students. In discussing the importance of retrospective autobiographies among students, Portalupi (1995, p. 275) stated that autobiographies are "a learning tool we use in the crafting of a new self." In her personal experience, the author mentioned that autobiographical writing and the consciousness it fosters did "more than make her deliberate about the work she does; it also invited her to imagine about her career and future in teaching" (Portalupi, 1995, p. 273).

Students used non-textbooks and Trait Theory in the Leadership course to evaluate personality traits of leaders. Students discussed which traits their leaders were able to use to benefit their leadership style. Students found it interesting that some of the same traits were beneficial to one leader, but were unemployable by another leader.

History and its Impact. The literature provided several examples of using biographies for teaching history or its impact on today. VanSledright & Brophy (1997) utilize books to help students understand the past by filling in historical contexts and chronologies. Similarly, Carroll & Seeman (2001, p. 1) noted that students developed a better understanding of a scientific discovery by studying biographies in "historical, developmental contexts."

The human resource courses lend themselves well to this concept. The biographies often include the twenty to thirty years that preceded a significant change, such as the ADA or Civil Rights updates to Title VII in 1991. There is also an opportunity to better understand current developments, such as the employment of recent undocumented workers, and the benefits and challenges of that segment of America's workforce.

CONCLUSION

This study reinforces the pursuit of having students read non-textbooks in addition to, or in place of textbooks. Furthermore, it should encourage professors to seek reading materials for their classes, no matter the topic. It is important however, to pay close attention to the title selections and the resulting impact. For example, the reading experiences indicate a positive outcome for male students whereas female students experienced a somewhat negative outcome. Gender differences were similar when comparing undergraduate to graduate students.

Even so, when students were asked likelihood of reading books after the course, 2.9% said they would read less, 58.7% said the same, while 38.4% said they would read more. It is important to note that business students indicated that their most preferred type of literature is fiction. This somewhat supports the use of biographies. That is, although the biographies are non-fiction, they do tell a story which is something found in all fiction books.

Finally, it is important to reiterate a comment received from a student: "I had no idea that there were books out there worth reading." This sentiment was repeatedly supported by other students.

Suggestions for Further Investigations

One of the discoveries in this investigation revealed that while women read more, men are more likely to read business related material. This specific finding has potential to be studied in future investigations. For example, does it correlate with the gender gap found in wages? Secondly, is this preference shaped by other factors inside or outside the classroom? Additionally, to what degree does reading correlate with income regardless of gender?

One of the limits to this study involved students self-reporting their likelihood to read after the class had ended. This limitation serves as an opportunity to pursue a longitudinal study of educated men and women that begins in college and continues onward. This could be further studied in a non-business/classroom setting such as the impact on parenting and the attitude of their children toward reading.

Last, one area that this investigation did not pursue is the interaction between the joy of non-textbooks and GPA. There is a body of evidence that shows a positive correlation between the enjoyment of reading and academic success. However, can the success be compounded for all when non-traditional books are used in the classroom?

REFERENCES

Brophy, J., & VanSledright, B. (1997). Teaching and learning history in elementary schools. *New York: Teachers College Press.*

Brozo, W. G., Sulkunen, S., Shiel, G., Garbe, C., Pandian, A., and Valtin, R. (2014, April). Reading, gender, and engagement: Lessons from five PISA countries. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy,* 57 (7).

Carroll, F., & Seeman, J. (2001). *Placing Science into Its Human Context: Using Scientific Autobiography to Teach Chemistry*. Journal of Chemical Education. Retrieved from http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/ed078p1618

Combs, J.P., Slate, J.R., Moore, G.W., Bustamante, R.M.,Onwuegbuzie, A.J., and Edmonson, S.L. (2009). Gender differences in college preparedness: A statewide study. *Urban Rev* 42:441-457

Ellenwood, S., (2007). Revisting Character Education: From McGuffey to Narratives. *The Journal of Education,* 21-43. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/42744098.pdf

Epting, L.K., Rand, L.A., and D'Antuono,H.L. (2014). Literacy in the college classroom: Gendered perceptions of reading, writing, revision, and grammar. *North American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 537-556.

Frasier, M., & McCannon, C. (1981). Using Bibliotherapy with Gifted Children. *Gifted Child Quarterly,* 81-85. Retrieved from http://hutcheson612curriculum.wmwikis.net/file/view/7.1+Using+Bibliotherapy+with+Gifted+Children.pdf

Griffith, P. (2010). Graphic Novels in the Secondary Classroom and School Libraries. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 181-189. Retrieved from http://racomics.pbworks.com/f/GN%5C's+in+High+School.pdf

Hayes, R., Robinson, J. (2012). Using Biography to Teach Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurial Executive*. Retrieved from http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=42f53609-d618-4be5-abe2-f813735e476f%40sessionmgr115&vid=0&hid=105

Hebert, T., Long, L., & Neumeister, K. (2001). Using biography to counsel gifted young women. *The Journal of Secondary Gifted Education*. Retrieved from http://joa.sagepub.com/content/12/2/62.full.pdf

Holm, G. (1995). Cultural Awareness through Biographies. *College Teaching,* 72-75. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/27558711?seq=1

King, K., (1987). *Using Retrospective Autobiographies as a Teaching Tool*. Teaching Sociology, 410-410. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1317999.pdf

Larson, D., Brady, M., (2000). Learning stories of our own. *Adult Learning.* Retrieved from http://alx.sagepub.com/content/11/4/13.full.pdf

Lemon, B., (1943). Biography and Autobiography in the Ninth Grade. *The English Journal,* 81-85. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/805976

Lenkowsky, R. (1987). Bibliotherapy: A Review and Analysis of the Literature. *The Journal of Special Education,* 123-132. Retrieved March 30, 2015, from http://web.a.ebscohost.com/

McKenna, M.C., Kear, D.J., & Ellsworth, R.A. (1995). Children's attitudes toward reading: A national survey. *Reading Research Quaterly,*30, 934-956.

Morgan, H. (2009). Picture Book Biographies for Young Children: A Way to Teach Multiple Perspectives. *Early Childhood Education Journal,* 219-227. Retrieved from http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10643-009-0339-7/fulltext.html

Muir, C (2013). Crafting Biographical Sketches In Business Classes. *Texas Business and Technology Educators Association*, pp.74-83. Retrieved from 0. http://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/businesscom_facultypubs/40.

OEA Report 14-01: UW Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Study 2014.

OCED (2010). PISA 2009 Results: Learning to learn—Student engagement, strategies and practices (Vol. 3). Retrieved from dx.doi.org/10.1787/97899264083943-en.

Portalupi, J., (1995). Autobiographical Understanding: Writing the Past into the Future. *Language Arts,* 272-275. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/41482196.pdf

Rauch, D. P. & Hartig, J. (2010). Multiple-choice versus open-ended response formats of reading test items: A two-dimensional IRT analysis. *Psychological Test and Assessment Modeling*, 52(4), 354-479.

Raymondh, M (1981). *Using biography to enrich social studies teaching in senior high schools.*Theory Into Practice, 1981, Vol.20(3), p.164-168. Retrieved from http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=454d5c10-8cfb-4591-a534-26b47536d525%40sessionmgr113&vid=1&hid=115

Shamir, B., Dayan-Horesh, H., & Adler, D. (205). Leading By Biography: Towards a Life-story Approach to the Study of Leadership. *Leadership,* 13-29. Retrieved from http://lea.sagepub.com/content/1/1/13.full.pdf+html

Tarantino, K., McDonough, J., and Hua, M., (2013). Effects of Student Engagement with Social Media on Student Learning: A Review of Literature. The Journal of Technology in Student Affairs, Summer 2013. Retrieved from http://studentaffairs.com/ejournal/Summer_2013/EffectsOfStudentEngagementWithSocialMedia.html.

Author Biographies, In Order

M. Suzanne Clinton, DBA, SPHR

Dr. Clinton has twenty-two years' experience as a faculty member, sixteen years in higher education administration, and fourteen semesters pursuing this project in a graduate level leadership course. Dr. Clinton serves as the Assistant Dean, Recruitment & Retention for the University of Central Oklahoma College of Business. She is also certified as a Senior Professional in Human Resources and Certified Personnel Consultant.

Lee Tyner, Ed.D., SPHR

Ten years as a faculty member, has developed numerous test banks for some of the books as described above, has co-authored with students stemming from practitioner books reviews, utilizes the mentioned technique in both undergraduate and graduate level courses. Dr. Tyner also has thirteen years of industry experience and also holds title as a Certified Personnel Consultant.

Robert Epstein, Ph.D.

Twenty five years as a faculty member, fourteen semesters pursuing this project in a graduate level leadership course, and teaching undergraduates about entrepreneurship and innovation using biographies as guides, Dr. Epstein also has over twenty years in industry.

Abbie Lambert, Doctoral Student, PHR

Ten years employment experience in human resources including employee development, training, organizational behavior, and human resource information systems. Additionally, Ms. Lambert is a second year doctoral student and is in her second year serving as an adjunct professor. While Ms. Lambert is somewhat new to using (non-text) books, she has a fresh perspective regarding the challenges and benefits of implementing this process.

APPENDIX

This survey focuses on books that you have read and **excludes textbooks**. Your completion of this survey is entirely voluntary. Any information provided on the survey will not be identifiable to you.

While you should not consider traditional textbooks as you answer these questions, do include non-textbooks you have read in your classes that may have been assigned or you chose to read because of an assignment or interest. In other words, focus on books such as biographies, practitioner books, or fiction / non-fiction as applicable.

Course: _____   Gender: [ ] Male   [ ] Female

Overall, about how many non-textbooks have you read during the last year?
        [ ] None   [ ] 1-2   [ ] 3-5   [ ] 6-10   [ ] more than 10 books

About how many non-textbooks have you read during the last year that were assigned or arose from classwork?
        [ ] None   [ ] 1-2   [ ] 3-5   [ ] 6-10   [ ] more than 10 books

About how many other non-textbooks have you read that were related to your profession during the last year?
        [ ] None   [ ] 1-2   [ ] 3-5   [ ] 6-10   [ ] more than 10 books

About how many non-textbooks have you voluntarily read in your adult life?
        [ ] None   [ ] 1-5   [ ] 6-25   [ ] 25-50   [ ] 51-100   [ ] more than 100 books

Please indicate your agreement with each of the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I enjoy reading…	O	O	O	O	O
Fiction books	O	O	O	O	O
Non-fiction books	O	O	O	O	O
Short stories	O	O	O	O	O
Non-fiction magazine articles	O	O	O	O	O
Non-fiction Internet articles	O	O	O	O	O

Blogs   O   O   O   O
O

Approximately how many books do you think leaders/experts read per year?

[ ] None   [ ] 1-5   [ ] 6-25   [ ] 25-50   [ ] 51-100   [ ] more than 100 books

Approximately how many books do you think you should read per year?

[ ] None   [ ] 1-5   [ ] 6-25   [ ] 25-50   [ ] 51-100   [ ] more than 100 books

Are you likely to read more or fewer books after your experience in this course?

[ ] More   [ ] Same   [ ] Fewer

How do you think a film or movie compares to a book (of similar topic)?

a) Covers more content: [ ] Book   [ ] Film   [ ] About the same
b) Provides deeper emotional insight: [ ] Book   [ ] Film   [ ] About the same
c) More factual: [ ] Book   [ ] Film   [ ] About the same
d) Other

_____

What best describes your view regarding books BEFORE this course? (Check all that apply.)

[ ] Boring   [ ] Memorable [ ] Too long   [ ] Slow   [ ] Treasured [ ] Inspirational

[ ] Difficult to find good books   [ ] Not up-to-date   [ ] Captivating   [ ] Waste of time

[ ] Irrelevant [ ] Addictive [ ] Comforting   [ ] Diverse   [ ] Informative   [ ] Burdensome

What best describes your view regarding books AFTER reading the books in this course? (Check all that apply.)

[ ] Boring   [ ] Memorable [ ] Too long   [ ] Slow   [ ] Treasured [ ] Inspirational

[ ] Difficult to find good books   [ ] Not up-to-date   [ ] Captivating   [ ] Waste of time

[ ] Irrelevant [ ] Addictive [ ] Comforting   [ ] Diverse   [ ] Informative   [ ] Burdensome

Thank you for completing the survey!