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Executive Summary

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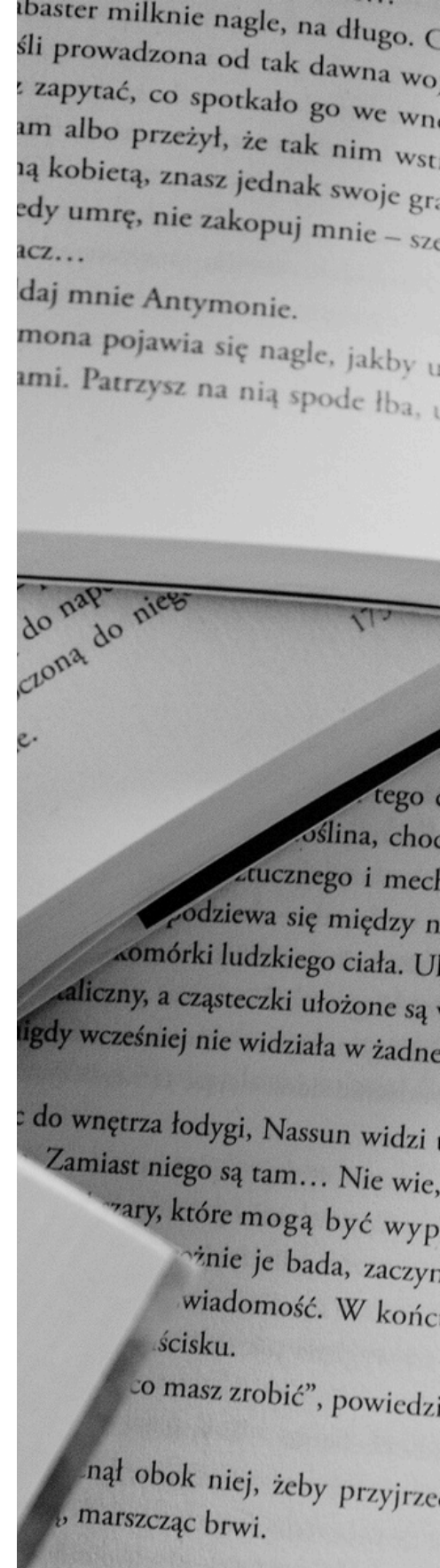


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Background & Situation

AMAZON PRIME

To begin our research, we needed to understand more about Amazon and the reading services they offer. Our main objective is to learn more about how students utilize Amazon's reading services. Our team wants to know how students react to the emergence of e-books and audiobooks compared to paper copies. Through various sections of [Amazon's website](#), we found that Amazon has e-books through Kindle Unlimited, audiobooks through Audible, and hard copies. The issue with Kindle Unlimited is that it is an additional subscription from Amazon Prime. If a customer were to use Prime Reading, it would be included in their Prime subscription. Amazon also can ship hand-held paperback or hardcover books. They provide [32 genres](#) for e-books, audiobooks, and hand-held books. [Audiobooks](#) have increased in popularity, especially for university students, from 2011 to 2022, while reading print books has declined. Each form of reading has pros and cons, and this research can actively prepare Amazon and students for the next publishing trend.

kindleunlimited

- E-books
- Additional \$9.99 a month subscription
- Unlimited access to select books
- Allows you to borrow 20 titles at a time

prime reading

- E-books
- Included in the cost of an Amazon Prime subscription
- Unlimited access to select books
- Allows you to borrow 10 titles at a time

audible

- Audiobooks
- Additional \$7.95 a month subscription
- Unlimited access to select audiobooks and podcasts
- Audible Premium Plus plans allow for access to exclusive audiobooks

FORMS OF READING

According to [Campus Technology](#), 58% of students have bought at least one textbook through Amazon, compared to 51 percent who shopped in person at their school bookstore. Thirty percent shopped online through another website and 17% on a publisher's website. In 2021, 75% of [American](#) adults said they have read a book in any format and that print books are more popular than e-books or audiobooks. Since the percentage of readers is lower than we expected, we considered this when analyzing our results. Another survey we took into account was conducted by [UCLA](#), which found that nearly 90% of the undergraduates (350 participants) use laptops to read their electronic course readings. Our group agreed with these statistics as we each relate to this with our academic reading.

Background & Situation

DEMOGRAPHIC

A significant part of our background research would have been on genre according to race; however, there needed to be more research on which genres are more popular with each race. What we could find was about the Romance genre. According to [Romance Writers of America](#), Romance readers are 73% White/Caucasian, 12% Black/African American, 7% Latino/Hispanic, and 4% Asian/Asian American. However, other genres were less looked into than we had hoped. The statistic above was the only statistic we could find on genre's relations with race, especially with reading for pleasure. Another demographic we explored was college students. [Best Degree Programs](#) identified that Communications, English, Journalism, and Literature majors require more academic reading, whereas majors surrounding studio art have less assigned reading. However, when it comes to [reading for pleasure](#), college students read less than any other age group.

FINANCES

We were curious about how college students pay for their Prime accounts. It was shocking that 57% of [people ages 19–37](#) have an Amazon Prime subscription, while 52% of [college students](#) report having subscriptions. Additionally, 46% of [college students](#) list Amazon as one of their most visited sites, but 19% do not buy from Amazon frequently. This information will be valuable in analyzing how often students specifically utilize Prime Reading and Kindle services. It will be interesting to see how many students know about these services and if it will change how they use Prime in the future.



OF PEOPLE AGES 19–37
HAVE AN AMAZON PRIME
SUBSCRIPTION



OF COLLEGE STUDENTS
HAVE AN AMAZON PRIME
SUBSCRIPTION



OF COLLEGE STUDENTS
DO NOT BUY FROM
AMAZON FREQUENTLY

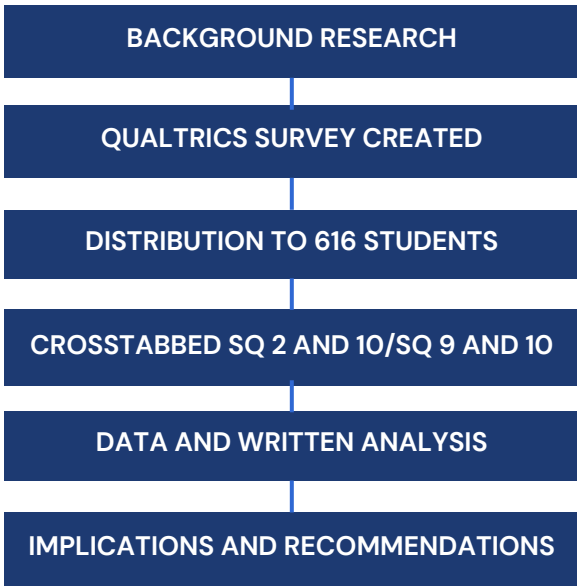
Research Methods

We conducted an online 11-question survey through Qualtrics, distributed to college students between March 6 and March 8, 2024. Participants were recruited through text and GroupMe messages to the men’s and women’s golf teams, Oaks residents, Honors Fellows, Global residents, Kappa Delta Sorority, Alpha Chi Omega Sorority, the Women’s Club Lacrosse team, tour guides, the Track Team, and Live Oak. Each team member targeted a different group of students on campus, hoping to minimize overlap and maximize diverse responses. Our surveying goal was 100 students, so we closed the survey on March 8 after reaching the targeted number of responses. We received 101 responses from our population of 616 students in the two days our survey was open, with a response rate of 16.4%. Our calculated margin of error with a 95% confidence interval was 6.6%.

Our survey had two demographic questions: SQ9 (What is your race/ethnicity? Check all that apply) and SQ10 (What academic school does your major belong to?).

- Results for SQ9 indicated the following demographic responses: **96 White, 7 Asian, 4 Hispanic and Latino American, and 2 Black or African American**. Percentages would not apply in the same way as they were able to select multiple options. Overall, we saw a majority of White students followed by Asian students.
- Results for SQ10 revealed the following spread of academic colleges: **42% College of Arts and Sciences, 26% School of Communications, 25% Martha & Spencer Love School of Business, 4% Dr. Jo Watts Williams School of Education, and 3% Nursing Program**. Within the College of Arts and Sciences, we had 32% Math and Natural Sciences majors, 36% Social and Behavioral Sciences majors, and 32% Arts and Humanities majors. We acknowledge that this does not match the distribution of Elon students.

RESEARCH METHODS MODEL



QUICK STATISTICS

- Population Size**
616 students
- Number of Responses**
101 responses
- Response Rate**
16.4%
- Margin of Error**
6.6%

Key Findings

STUDENTS READ MORE OFTEN FOR CLASS THAN THEY DO FOR PLEASURE

- 96% of students read for class compared to only 81% who read for pleasure.
- If Amazon wants to target college-aged students, it should promote its textbook options and offer more deals. However, because the statistics were so close, Amazon should still focus some of its marketing on pleasure reading.

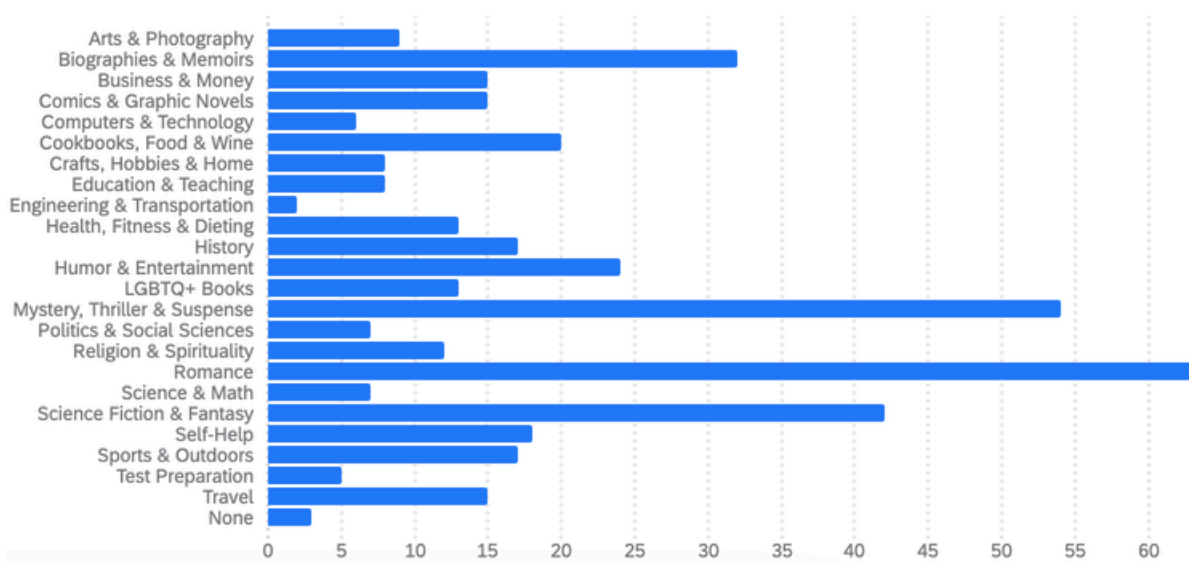
STUDENTS PREFER E-BOOKS TO PHYSICAL, AUDIO, OR OTHER FORMS OF BOOKS

- 8% of students never utilize e-books, compared to 36% and 77% who never use physical or audio books, respectively.
- Amazon should heavily promote its audiobook options. If they have audio options for textbooks, they can also use this data when promoting those.
- Within just the College of Arts and Sciences, 92.7% of students utilized e-books compared to 66.7% of students utilizing physical books at least 1-2 times per month.

STUDENTS PREFERENCES ON READING GENRES

- When reading for pleasure, students prefer to read romance (62%), mystery, thriller, and suspense (53%), and science fiction and fantasy (42%) novels and do not gravitate toward engineering and transportation (2%) or test preparation books (5%).
- Using this data, Amazon should promote its most-read genres to encourage students to utilize its programs. It can also promote its audiobook options and use current book trends when advertising these genres.

What genres are you likely to read for pleasure? Check all that apply. 101 ⓘ

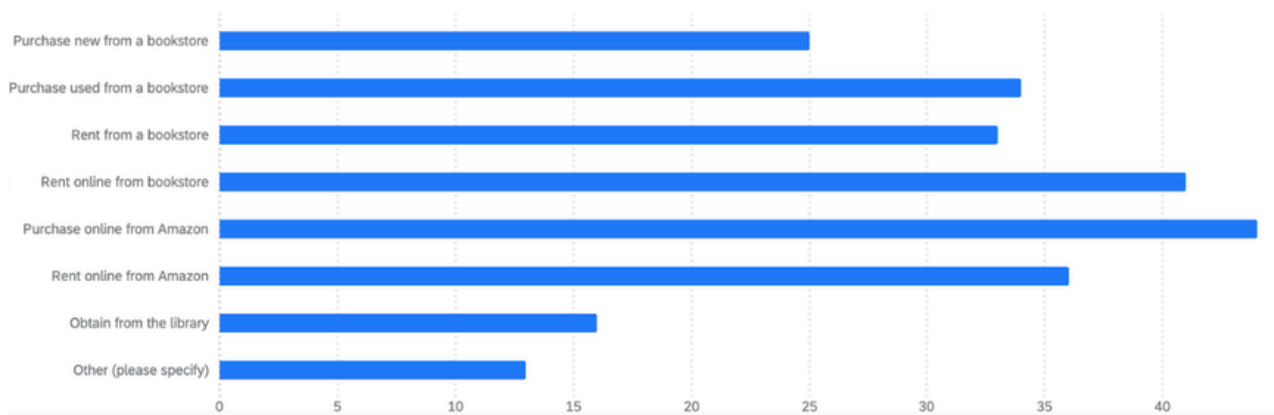


Key Findings

STUDENTS PREFER TO PURCHASE THEIR TEXTBOOK MATERIALS ONLINE FROM AMAZON

- When obtaining textbooks for class, students prefer to purchase their reading materials online from Amazon (44%). However, the distribution of responses was relatively even across all types of acquisition.
- In very specific data categories, when asked about obtaining textbooks, 3 respondents all responded in the other category by renting books from Chegg.
- By using this data in their promotions, Amazon can look into the options Chegg provides for their book options and how they market their services. Amazon should also look into the benefits that bookstores and other services provide to implement into their marketing.

How do you typically obtain your required textbooks and reading materials for classes? Check all that apply. 101



FREE E-BOOK RENTALS ARE NOT THE MOST IMPORTANT TO STUDENTS

- 16% of respondents said the availability of free e-book rentals (Prime Reading) through Amazon's Prime Student program is very important compared to the majority of respondents (33%) who say it is not very important to them.
- Due to this, Amazon should focus more on promotions for other e-book options it provides.

Key Findings

SOME STUDENTS AREN'T READING FOR CLASS

- The data from students reading for class show that the College of Arts and Sciences has just 14.3% of students reading physical books three or more times a week for class, which is the highest of any academic school.
- Just under half of respondents reported never reading for class, with most non-readers of any format coming from the Love School of Business.

ACADEMIC SCHOOL RECOMMENDATIONS

- A lower rate indicates a lower likelihood of recommending Amazon Prime, while a higher rate indicates a high likelihood of recommending Amazon Prime.
- From calculated percentages, College of Arts and Sciences majors are more likely to recommend Amazon Prime's reading services than students in other schools of study.
 - While the School of Education technically has the highest percentage of rates between 8 and 10, there were only four total responses from the School of Education. A 50% higher likelihood of recommendation only represents two students' responses, compared to 19 students in the School of Communications, resulting in 45.5% reporting that they are likely to recommend their services.

Academic School v. Likelihood of Recommendation

Crosstab: SQ9 (On a scale of 1-10, how likely are you to recommend Amazon's Prime program to a fellow student for their reading needs (1 being not likely at all, 10 being extremely likely)?) & SQ10 (What academic school does your major belong to?)

	Percent rated between 1-3	Percent rated between 8-10
College of Arts and Sciences	6.0%	45.5%
School of Communications	30.7%	45.5%
Love School of Business	23.8%	23.1%
School of Education	25.0%	50.0%
Nursing Program	0.0%	33.3%

Implications and Recommendations

After reviewing the data from our survey, we have made several recommendations for Amazon to leverage its position among college students as a primary source of reading materials. Below, we have outlined the implications and recommendations that would aid Amazon in maintaining customer satisfaction while continuing growth.

PROMOTING PLEASURE READING CULTURE

Given the data showing students reading for class over pleasure, Amazon could initiate campaigns or partnerships to foster a culture of pleasure reading. This might involve collaborating with universities to promote reading events, discounting popular fiction titles, or creating digital book clubs through the Kindle platform.

OPTIMIZING TEXTBOOK OFFERINGS

As the preferred platform for purchasing textbooks, Amazon could leverage this position by expanding its textbook rental program or introducing new features to streamline the textbook acquisition process for students. Offering competitive prices, fast shipping options, and a wide selection of titles would further solidify Amazon's dominance in this market.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS

Although there was a lack of diversity among research participants within the Elon study, Amazon could prioritize diversity and inclusion initiatives within its student outreach programs. This might involve partnering with organizations that support underrepresented minority students, offering scholarships or mentorship opportunities, and actively recruiting diverse talent to represent Amazon on college campuses.

TAILORING INITIATIVES TO ACADEMIC MAJORS

Acknowledging the diverse academic interests across different schools within colleges, Amazon could tailor its marketing efforts and product offerings to align with the needs of students in each major. For example, they could highlight relevant reading materials for students studying communications, business, education, nursing, and other disciplines, showcasing how Amazon can support their academic and professional goals.

Implications and Recommendations

ENHANCING E-BOOK APPEAL

Recognizing the strong preference for E-books, especially within the College of Arts and Science, Amazon could invest in marketing efforts to highlight the benefits of E-books over other formats. Offering exclusive content or features for Kindle users, such as early access to new releases or interactive reading experiences, could further solidify Amazon's position as a leader in digital reading.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

Amazon should also consider that the data in this survey is more relevant to colleges with a similar demographic to Elon University. Due to the higher percentages of students at the institution from higher socioeconomic backgrounds, our results and recommendations are more skewed toward this group. Amazon should consider conducting research at colleges with a more diverse demographic regarding socioeconomic backgrounds and race to infer how this affects reading perceptions alongside perceptions of Amazon itself. This may specifically impact the priority of free textbook rentals as a feature of Amazon Prime.