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Evaluating E-Textbook Usage by College Students: Applying the Task-Technology Fit Model

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ABSTRACT

Amid rising costs for higher education, electronic textbooks (e-textbooks) have become an increasingly popular alternative to traditional printed textbooks. However, research on student attitude toward e-textbooks suggests that a significant portion of the student population prefer printed textbooks over e-textbooks. Interestingly, some studies revealed that even students who enjoy reading electronic books for non-educational purposes still prefer printed textbooks for university classes. In this study, we argue that the fit between e-textbooks and the tasks students perform with their textbooks may be the determining factor in college students’ acceptance of e-textbooks. This conjecture is consistent with the main premise of the Task-Technology Fit (TTF) model. As an interim result of this research-in-progress, several task-technology fit factors including interactivity, ubiquity, searchability, ease of use, reliability, reading comfort, and overall task-technology fit were identified to be germane to the context of e-textbooks for college students. The ongoing empirical verification of the research model and hypotheses is discussed.