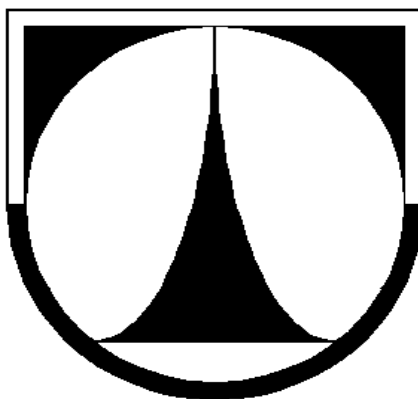# TECHNICKÁ UNIVERZITA V LIBERCI
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Bakalářská práce

2008   Michal Urbánek

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Investigation of students' attitudes towards purchasing textbooks online at the University of Huddersfield

Zkoumání přístupů studentů na univerzitě Huddersfield k nakupování učebnic přes internet

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*(za spolupráce osobního tutora na univerzitě
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3)   Chování spotřebitele při internetových transakcích
4)   Popis realizovaných metod stěžejních pro uskutečňovaný výzkum
5)   Realizace výzkumu a jeho následné vyhodnocení
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…………………..
    Podpis

Abstract

Textbooks are very important tool of study material. However, a lot of researches showed the purchases of textbooks in bookstores have been declining not only in the UK. With the evolution of World Wide Web textbooks are also available through the Internet. Nevertheless, no research in the UK has been carried out so far to find out if online retailers could be the reason of declining interest in purchasing textbooks by typical retailers. The aim of this paper was therefore to investigate how online retailers are attractive in term of purchasing textbooks. Research was aimed to students at the University of Huddersfield at Higher Education. Students were addressed by means of questionnaire which was sent to their university email. Results showed that online retailers are not too much popular as regards textbooks. As the most disadvantageous aspect of purchase of textbook in bookstore students most frequently stated exorbitant price. On the other hand, aspect the most frequently stated by online retailers was lack of experience with online purchases. It showed in the research that the problem with textbooks is global. This suggests carrying out a research which would survey students' behaviour, their needs and requirements in the field of purchasing textbooks whereby it might have been easier to cope with and to reverse this negative trend.

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Introduction

The British book market is ranked among the biggest market in Europe with more rapid growth than Germany's and France's ones. In spite of the situation that this market records permanent growth just a few bookstores made a good profit. This has been caused mainly due to keeping the prices down and that even by the books where the interest is huge (Mindbranch, 2007).

According to the Bookselling market report 2007, the online bookselling has recorded rapid growth and the bookshops were very astonished by this finding. Bookshops have never thought of the situation they could be exposed to the competitors fight in form of the online booksellers. Hence, they did not count on it and were not sufficiently prepared on it either. The report confirms there are obvious doubts of bookshops about their positions. They worries they will not be able to face this new challenge.

Although considerable research has been devoted to British book market, rather less attention has been paid to market with textbooks where the situation could be different.

There was made a research among British students on Higher Education regarding their attitudes towards purchasing textbooks. This research was carried out by HI Europe in Publishers Association behalf. A group of publishers and booksellers was examined and there has been found out the interest of students in purchasing textbooks is gradually being declined as well as the sales of them in bookstores are insufficient and disappointing. On the one hand, students find the textbooks very useful for their studying but on the other hand they [textbooks] are no longer taken like the main part of university learning material. Nowadays, they are just a part of a vast scale of these materials. To this vast scale of learning materials belong, including books, on-line journals, VLEs (Virtual Learning Environment) and custom-published materials (Philip Carpenter et al, 2006).

One of the possible reasons why it is happening could be, according to publishers, their [publishers'] very little knowledge of students' feelings and opinions as well as the using textbooks in their studies. John Thompson, professor at the University of Cambridge and Director of the publisher Polity agrees with them adding, they are not the only ones who share this ignorance. The only fact that publishers know is that the overall amount of sold textbooks is being declined successively.

The sake of reluctance to buy textbooks could be fixed in high prices as well. As the research showed lecturers assume that students do not have any zest to buy expensive textbooks particularly if they would have to buy a textbook for every particular module. Large number of students is the same opinion but, on the other hand, there also exist those students who would not hesitate to buy them because they [textbooks] could be a quite favourable investment.

The situation with textbooks like this can be seen in the US as well. The prices of college textbooks started to rise rapidly as the U.S. Government Accounting Office (GAO) stated. According to Nicholas Wilbur, Campus editor (19.9.2005), the high prices of textbooks were initially attributed to inflation, however, later on, it has been confirmed the inflation is not the right reason of these increasing prices. The publishers are the opinion, as the GAO report affirms that they have invested plenty of money in evolving supplements - i.e. CD-ROMs attached to textbooks - as lecturers required. Thus, the prices had to logically accrue.

The survey, carried out by 2 Student Public Interest Research Groups (California and Oregon) in 2003, gives Mr. Wilbur the truth and adds the piece of knowledge that besides this the editors frequently initiate new textbooks editions without doing substantial changes in their contents. Moreover, the older textbooks - with the same content as the new one and much cheaper – are taken off the market.

According to the Jared Strong, Daily Staff Writer (10.9.2004), the research conducted by Survey.com has shown that just the price may be the main problem of why the interest in textbooks in bookstores is wretched. The Biblio.com, book search

and marketplace, gives Mr. Strong the truth adding, students started to prefer the online textbook purchasing to gain the textbooks for a lower price.

Foucalt (2000) opposes this judgment with explanation there is no statistical prove that the price when purchasing online would be more favourable than in brick-and-mortar stores. Many of surveys showed the convenience of the purchase is the most important indicator of buying textbooks online. Tom Bauer, general manager of Penn State Bookstore, does not share this opinion with students. In his opinion the bookstores are those where the convenience is evident. As Mr. Bauer mentioned students "just go into the store and pick it up" – it is the convenience.

The USA and the United Kingdom have one thing in common. Both the USA and the UK have recorded the interest in purchasing textbooks in bookstores is gradually being decreased.

Nevertheless, plenty of surveys have been carried out in the US which found out these uninterested customers (students) switched to the online textbooks purchasing. Some reasons for this decision have also been collected. On the other hand, no kind of research has been made in the United Kingdom similar to this carried out in the US. Therefore, the sphere of online textbook purchasing via the Internet remains unexplored at Higher Education in the UK.

The purpose of this dissertation is to fill in the gap in the literature concerning the purchasing textbooks online in the UK by students from Huddersfield at Higher Education. This incentive is based on the fact that there has been made a research among students on Higher Education focused just on the bookstores, however, there has not been made so far any research focusing on the online purchasing. First of all, there will be searched for whether students are inclined to using the Internet for the purchase of their textbooks when they [students] are not interested in buying them in bookstores. Consequently, the factors which they are influenced by to purchase them online and, on the other hand, to not to do so are going to be discussed and analysed in the next part of this piece of work. On the basis of this research there has been found out the interest in

buying textbooks in bookstores has been declining. No research has been carried out so far to make out that students prefer online textbooks shopping to buying them in brick-and-mortar stores. Thus, this study could fill out the gap in the research about purchase of textbooks online.

Chapter 1: Literature review

The customers – students in this case – are influenced by a lot of factors in their decision-making. Hence, the online consumer behaviour is going to be discussed in this study and is also taken like a suitable theory.

Role of textbooks

According to Keith Crawford the school textbooks are very important tool during student's studies. They are useful for creating some ideas about some problem they help to create beliefs as well.

Textbooks are part of every studying course and, how Dory Reeves, Professor at University of Strathclyde points out, they could be a source which every student can rely on and which every student can refer to within his or her studies. Like she adds, the content of textbook "should be inspiring, informative and thought provoking". On the other hand, students use different forms of materials helping them in their studies as well. Then, the limited financial sources force students to the situation when they will turn to textbook only if it is must, as Dory Reeves states.

1.1. Consumer behaviour

Every customer's intention of purchase is influenced by a scale of different motives and behaviours. It is up to marketers to reveal these motives and behaviours. Without any motives and behaviours, there are no purchase intentions. Purchasing textbooks makes no exception. There are also some motives which propel customers to buy textbooks and they have [customers] different ways of behaviour to acquire them. Somebody wants to acquire them the most cheaply the other the most conveniently. That is the reason why the theory about consumer behaviour has been chosen. To ascertain the main motives and behaviour connected with purchasing textbooks (Solomon et al., 2002).

These motives and behaviours are also connected with the decision-making process. It is an abstract process every customer goes through when the purchase is realizing. It must be therefore necessarily linked with the consumer behaviour.

Consumer behaviour does not just mean purchasing things. This expression has much wider meaning from what indicators lead people to buy these things by how these things (products, services) are consumed (Solomon et al, 2002).

This situation could evolve the definition of the consumer behaviour as stated by Solomon et al. (2002):

"It is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires".

1.1.1. Consumers' decision-making process

When man wants to make some purchase he or she has to be influenced by some situation. After the evaluation of this situation he or she has to go through the procedure called *decision-making process*. Constantinides (2004) explains this process as "a learning, information-processing and decision-making activity". Moreover, this process consists of 5 consequent and interconnected parts as Solomon et al (2002) shows:

• problem recognition
• information search
• evaluation of alternatives
• product choice
• outcomes

The figure 1 below shows graphic illustration of this decision-making process:

Figure 1: Five stage consumer buying process
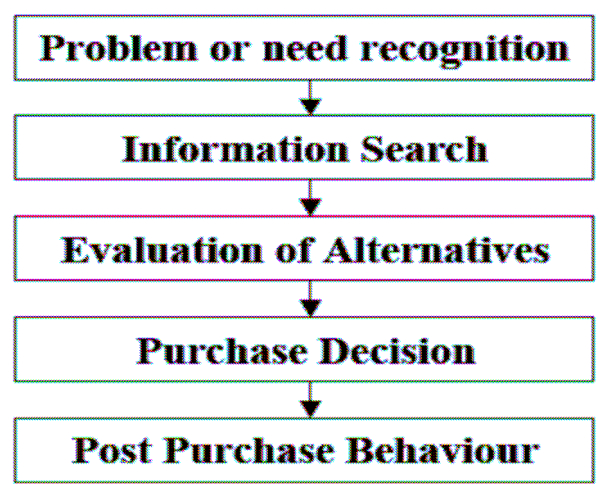
Source: cranfield.ac.uk

Blackwell et al (2001) gives the same scale but extended about 2 more stages such as *post-consumption evaluation* and *divestment*

1.1.1.1. *Problem recognition*

Before man decides to buy some thing he or she has to lack some. By this realizing something is missing some "problem" is being occurred. On the other hand, the motive to buy something can be also unintended and sudden. The example of psychological needs is a good illustration - somebody depressed purchases some product to jollify (Brassington & Pettitt, 2007).

Furthermore, Brassington & Pettitt (2007) explain the incentive to purchase some product comes every time from the consumer. Thus, the consumer is aware of the emerged problem and tries to resolve it. However, there could be a situation when customer need cannot be fulfilled because he or she is not able to reach it at all – not just willingness but the financial ability plays an important role in this problem-solving situation.

According to last assertion given by Brassington et al, (2007) the willingness and the ability to fulfillment is required when talking about problem recognition.

Applied to the condition of the dissertation topic problem recognition means, students lack their textbooks due to which they have a possibility to study for.

1.1.1.2. *Information search*

After the problem is defined, the possible solutions should have been implicated. However, before making a solution some questions have to be put first.

As Brassington & Pettitt (2007) enumerate the first question is in what way the purchase should be done to acquire desired product. When this method is selected the question follows where and how it is possible to gain it. Then, it could be considered what information are needed for our decision followed by the last one, namely where these information can be obtained.

Problem is recognized and information about desired textbooks has to be obtained now. The crucial is where the information about these textbooks could be gathered and where they could be bought.

1.1.1.3. *Evaluation of alternatives*

After the answering all of these questions customers should evaluate acquired information. The point of this stage of decision-making process consists in narrowing down, according to some evaluative or choice criteria, the potential scale of products possible to buy to a "shortlist". Within these evaluative process customers might concentrate on brand, store choice, price, promotion or packaging (Brassington & Pettitt, 2007).

The information has been picked (list of bookstores, online retailers who have these textbooks available) and now the narrowing of the list in accordance with purchaser specifications follows (e .g. distance, price).

1.1.1.4. *Product choice (decision)*

This stage of the process is explained by Brassington & Pettitt (2007) like the situation when the decision which concrete product is going to be purchased could be made clearly by the evaluation process. It means that the product which made the biggest impression in this process is most likely to be purchased. However, if customer is not sufficiently decided he or she has to arrange the criteria in order of priority and thus to buy the best one. As Brassington & Pettitt (2007) give an example, the price or convenience might have been one of these most prioritised factors.

*When specifications are assorted purchaser is fully convinced which way is the easiest and at the same time the most favourable one to gain them and makes the purchas*e*.*

1.1.1.5. *Post-purchase evaluation (outcomes)*

This step of decision-making process deals with post-purchase assessment of bought product. Since this piece of work is targeted the purchasing textbooks online there is no point in in-depth explanation of this stage.

1.1.1.6. *post-consumption evaluation and divestment*

Post-purchase assessment is followed by this stage where the situation how is the product consumed is observed followed by the last one concerning disposing of it (Blackwell et al, 2001). However, these stages are not relevant to this paper and therefore there is not made more thorough explanation of these ones as well as in the case of previous stage. O'Cass & Fenech (2003) cited by Constantinides (2004) came up with two factors whose cohesion characterizes the virtual decision-making process as well. These factors are controllable and uncontrollable. They are supposed to be clarified later in this work.

According to Solomon, M (2002), consumer behaviour varies in relation men x women (gender) and in relation of age groups as well. He makes clear that each age

group has distinct needs and feelings. Similarly men have different taste and priorities than women have. It is therefore clear that as particular age groups so men and women as well come through different decision-making process.

Here an interesting point evolves namely to find out if these (age and gender) could be also applied to online consumer behaviour with purchasing textbooks. These hypotheses will be constructed later on in this thesis.

1.1.2. Consumers' attitudes

The expression attitude in the realm of consumer behavior is marked by Solomon M. (2002) as a "lasting general evaluation of people (including oneself), objects, advertisements, or issues". The mark "lasting" indicates that the attitude is constant over time. The attitude is "general" as well because it persists longer time not just during momentary events (Solomon, 2002).

It could be better explained at the example of online environment. If the customer is once afflicted by any kind of fraud in the online environment he will probably have a negative attitude to the online environment continually.

1.1.2.1.   Attitudes and their functions

Given example indicates that some action contributes to formation of an attitude. That means attitude's existence is given by customer's motives (Solomon, 2002). He suggests that more persons can have the same attitude to the same thing but each of them may have different reason for this attitude.

A psychologist Daniel Katz cited by Solomon (2002) distinguishes 4 distinctive functions of attitudes:

1. *Utilitarian function* → this function is based on the feelings whether customer likes or dislikes some product

2. *Value-expressive function* → this function relates to the situation not concerning the customer's intentions but how the product characterizes customer himself (e.g. what sort of student mainly buy their textbooks online).

3. *Ego-defensive function* → is connected with inner feelings or external threats affecting customer's attitude (e.g. if classmates refuse to buy educational textbooks another student thin king of purchasing of it may be influenced by classmates' decision and may to withdraw). The factors influencing utilitarian and hedonic

4. *Knowledge function* → occurs in the case of situation's ambiguity or in the case of the existence of some product.

Consumers' attitude may combine several types of functions but mostly, existence of just one function is evident (Solomon, 2002).

2. Online consumer behaviour

As this dissertation is focused on purchasing textbooks online the consumer behaviour in online environment must also be mentioned. The previous consumer behaviour dealt with decision-making process which is a part of every purchasing process. The model of online consumer behaviour will concentrate on stages which are connected with purchasing process in the online environment.

To proper understanding of on-line consumer behaviour, Clark (2005) mentions 8 basic characteristics of this kind of consumer behaviour:

• on-line consumer behaviour is an extension of terrestrial consumer behaviour
• on-line shopping is a subset of overall Internet adoption
• due to on-line shopping consumer behaviour is simplified
• on-line shopping entails changes in the nature of the market and this affects online consumer behaviour

• on-line shopping behaviour is different when purchasing products and different when purchasing services

• on-line shopping affects customer loyalty as well as his trust

• on-line consumers are not interested in entertainment and empowerment but are able to be persuaded while shopping online

    • on-line consumer behaviour may be or may not be influenced by principles of retail site design or principles of usability

According to research made by Shun & Yunije (2006) cited by Petrovic (no date) in the online environment exists special group of products which are more likely to be purchased via the Internet. To this group belong software, electronics, music and just books. Reason given by Shun & Yunije (2006) is that these sorts of products do not require deeper personal exploration during purchasing. Foremost, provided products information and their images are sufficient in these cases of articles and there is therefore no need to explore them more precisely.

Cotte, Chowdhury, Ratenshwar & Ricci (2006) cited by Petrovic (no date) distinguish 4 different types of consumer groups on the Internet. These groups are characterized like ones with different "intensions and motivations" and are following:

- exploration
- entertainment
- shopping
- information

Following analyses are dependent one on the other and are especially important in the markets where customer can decide by which of the competitive outlets the purchase will be realized (Petrovic D., no date):

1) *information retrieval and search patterns* – dissert on consumer search behaviour and its impact on online promotions

    2) *perception of product information online* – how online product information is saw and understood by consumers.

Transferred into the conditions of online textbooks purchasing, in what way the consumer opts the outlet on the internet where textbooks are supposed to be purchased. Then, what information should be provided to be impressed by them [outlets].

Petrovic (no date) stresses his statement that if product information is well-designated but the ability to find it online is difficult there is quite big likely that the product which is easily found but customer who does not like it may mean, in consequence, less problem.

2.1. Online retailers vs. typical retailers

It is evident online retailers are big competitors of typical retailers. However, this point has been chosen to show whether online retailers take to their typical counterparts their [typical counterparts'] customers.

Rapidly expanding online retailing businesses may affect typical ones. Typical retail businesses are worried about their positions according to Solomon (2002). He adds their biggest threat they have to face is availability and bigger competitiveness. On the one hand, online retailer can address customers all over the world even if he is in the other part of the planet and on the other hand typical retailers do not compete just with the local retailers but plenty of online retailers engulfing the planet have to be taken into account as well.

Another possible problem mentioned by Solomon (2002) could be that selling product directly to customer does not require participation of a mediator – person who tries to sell typical retailers' products for retailer-based prices. The question put by Solomon (2002) and the answer given by survey made by NPD Online shows that good customer service makes the online retailers' businesses successful. It is namely crucial point for customers in online environment and this would influence them to do a purchase again. Furthermore, said by Solomon (2002) the experience of online retailers indicates "using technology to provide extra value for customers is attracting and

keeping customers". He claims the online retailing dissolves hindrances such as time and location. This action makes the online retailing more convenient.

2.1.1. Traditional retailer and customer's attitude

This section has been chosen to find out if customers, in case they purchase textbooks online, are influenced by retailer's name and make their purchases by well-known book retailers rather than booksellers with no so large reputation.

Degeratu et al (2000) cited by Kim & Park (2005) makes clear that the retailer's reputation and name heighten the likelihood of online purchase. In addition, if retailer's brand is well-reputed it has a positive effect on retailer's websites evaluation and this may, at the same time, incite the intention to make a purchase online. Their words are supported by proof given by Kim & Park (2005) that well-known retailers have notched up an increase in consumers' reliance on the seller's virtual stores. Other mentioned points in conjunction with the customer's adherence to the retailer are previous experience with the retailer along with the frequency of service use. According to the sources taken by Kim & Park (2005) customer's having these experiences are supposed to be more satisfied with retailer in conditions of both online and offline outlets.

Correct recognition of customer's attitude towards a retailer probably enhances the communication between consumer and retailer.

2.2. Purchasing intention on the internet

Definition used by Pavlou (2003) and cited by Chen & Barnes (2007) says purchase intention occurs at the moment when consumer is willing as well as wanting to take part in an online transaction. These online transactions have 3 distinct characteristics:

- extensive technologies are being used
- their character is uncertain, temporary and impersonal

- processes during online transactions are opened, unpredictable and with technological infrastructures.

Online transactions themselves consist of three main steps (Ba & Pavlou, 2002; Pavlou, 2003 cited by Chen & Barnes, 2007).

→ information retrieval
→ information transfer } considered the intentions to use a web sites

→ product purchase – more suitable for the situation when the intention for making transactions is required.

Although there are not seen any substantial differences between traditional and online consumer behaviour from the point of researchers' view, Lee (2002) cited by Constantinides (2004) came up with some. These argued distinctions are building trust and confidence.

2.3. Factors influencing online consumer's behaviour

This model has been chosen to ascertain what factors influence customers to buy textbooks over the Internet eventually to not buy them by this way. Each customer has different priorities and factors why he or she buys particular product. Here, the desired products, which the focus will be on, are textbooks.

The study carried out by Cheung et al. (2003) and cited by Constantinides (2004) classifies two main factors of virtual consumer's behaviour – uncontrollable factors and controllable factors.

Uncontrollable factors comprise two groups such as consumer characteristics and environmental influences. On the other hand controllable factors exist as well. These ones comprise three main groups such as product or service characteristics, medium characteristics and merchant characteristics.

O'Cass & Fenech (2003) cited by Constantinides (2004) assure that cohesion of these two factors characterizes the virtual decision-making process.

On the figure below the scheme of factors influencing consumer's behaviour online is shown:

Figure 2.1.: Factors influencing virtual consumer's behaviour
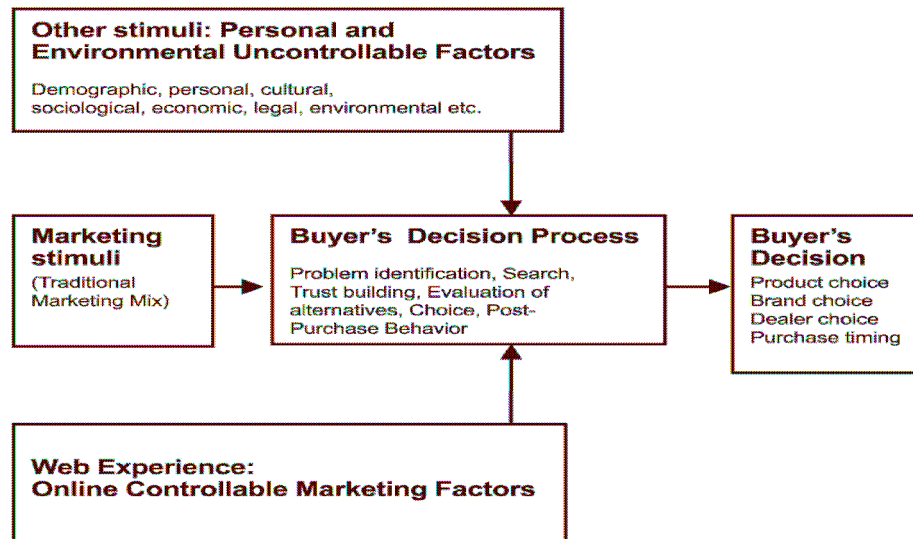
Source: Constantinides, E. (2004)

2.3.1. Principles of online retailing

When e-commerce reaches its point of maturity, the possibility of addressing vast amount of consumers, as well as "the lower market entry barriers of the internet distribution channel", poses an upbeat impulse to marketers. In consequence of rising number of Internet users and shoppers in online stores, there is a need to unfold a better way of understanding Internet shoppers' behaviour (Donthu and Garcia, 1999 cited by Barnes, S.J., 2007).

The existence of virtual retailing was the cause of simpler communication between online retailer and consumer and at the same time helped to overcome a geographical boundaries between them (Barnes, S. J., 2007). However, in this geographical spectrum, the international customers could be different from the national ones in many ways (e. g. psychological aspects). Wilson (1999) cited by Barnes, S. J., 2007 correctly proclaimed that if some retailer is once on the web, he immediately becomes a global retailer.

2.4. Limitations of online retailing

As purchasing online may not be so safe like buying typically in a brick-and-mortar stores, this section of work will help to sort the main hindrances which may lurk to customers in the online environment. These limitations are also to be ranked according to the priority whereby the main concerns of online retailing should be identified.

As each thing has its advantages and disadvantages so do the online retailing. The limitations of online retailing could be found on both the customer's part and marketer's part. The most serious disadvantage stressed by Solomon (2005) on the customer's part is level of security (theft of personal information). Taken from the marketer's perspective the hacking is main concern. The marketer is exposed to the threat of secret-information theft. From this reason huge amount of money must be poured into the maintaining of high security standards.

The anxiety of security is connected with the shortcoming of trust in online purchasing as, according to claim of Grabner-Kräuter & Kaluscha (2003), the online transactions pose not only uncertainty but also anonymity, lack of control and potential opportunism. These enumerated issues affect human trustworthiness the most. It is believed that level of uncertainty is higher in virtual environment as compared to traditional outlets. The main reasons of these problems may have occurred owing to the fact that online customers must share some sensitive personal information such as telephone numbers and financial information such as credit card numbers. Another substantial obstacle may be fixed in brief companies' transactions history. These companies can also be situated in different parts of country or even in different countries (Bhattacherjee, 2002 cited by Grabner-Kräuter & Kaluscha, 2003).

There is an assumption of Mayer et al. (1995) cited by Grabner-Kräuter & Kaluscha, (2003) that trust exists merely in uncertain and risky situations. There is no need of trust if there is not any uncertain or risky situation.

Solomon et al. (2002) adds a piece of knowledge that other limitations ensue from consumer's shopping experience via the Internet. While purchasing over the Internet may seems very satisfactory by items such as PCs and books, the other items such as clothes where the opportunity to try them on is not possible are preferred to be purchased in traditional shops.

The comparison of advantages and disadvantages on the part of both customers and marketers is shown in the Table 1 below:

Table 1: Advantages and disadvantages of online retailing

Benefits of e-commerce	Limitations of e-commerce
For the Consumer	**For the Consumer**
Shop 24 hours a day	Lack of security
Less traveling	Fraud
Can receive relevant information in	Can't touch items
seconds from any location	Exact colors may not reproduce
More choices of products	on computer monitor
More products available to less-	
developed countries	Expensive to order and then return
	Potential breakdown of human
Greater price information	relationships
Lower prices so that less affluent can	
Purchase	
Participate in virtual auctions	
Fast delivery	
Electronic communities	
For the Marketer	**For the Marketer**
The world is the marketplace	Lack of security
Decreases costs of doing business	Must maintain site to reap benefits
Very specialized businesses can be	Fierce price competition
Successful	Conflicts with conventional retailers
Real-time pricing	Legal issues not resolved

Source: Solomon M. (2002)

According to Peter P. J. & Olson, J. C. (2005) customer is rather aware of advantages ensuing from the Internet shopping than from typical shops. They make clear that virtual stores can, instead of typical ones, trot out greater amount of products, brands and dealers from which customer can easily choose. In addition to this, they provide more information than typical ones and can be read through at home or at office conveniently and without any pressure. In the table below the advantages and

disadvantages of virtual shopping from the customers' point of view are depicted and composed by Peter P. J. & Olson, J. C. (2005):

Table 2: Advantages and disadvantages of electronic exchanges from consumers' point of view

Product advantages	Product disadvantages
• Increased product and brand selection • Increased product and brand availability	• Uncertainty about quality of some products and brands • Inability to experience product before purchase
Promotion advantages	**Promotion disadvantages**
• Increased information about products and brands from manufacturers • Increased information about products and brands from independent agencies	• Information overload from too much readily available data or unwanted online ads • Time and effort costs to access information
Price advantages	**Price disadvantages**
• Increased opportunity to get lower prices for many products and brands • Increased cost and price information for many products and brands	• Shipping costs and costs of returning unacceptable merchandise may increase price • Credit card and other personal information perceived to be at risk
Channel advantages	**Channel disadvantages**
• Increased dealer selection • Convenience of shopping from home or office	• Time cost in waiting for delivery • Hassles' in returning unacceptable merchandise

Source: Peter P. J. & Olson, J. C. (2005):

Furthermore, they mention that a big amount of virtual shops have not succeeded in competition with brick-and-mortar stores. As the main reasons of this non-success they mention problems with electronic exchanges linked with a mistrust of quality of products. Moreover, critical failure leading to the end of several virtual stores is also inability of consumers to acquaint personally with desired products before their purchasing and receiving. Taken from the opposite perspective, typical stores selling products deemed well-known brands by customers may be surpassed from the moment when they [customers] fully believe in their "strong beliefs about the brand's quality and considerable brand knowledge" (Peter P. J. & Olson, J. C., 2005).

2.4.1. Limitations due to non-skilled people in PCs

The virtual environment itself is a big problem as well, particularly access to the information over the Internet and time as well as effort devoting to it. There are, of course, people who are computer-skilled and the Internet does not pose any barrier for them but on the other hand, it poses a barrier to those ones whose computer skills are not so mature. The time and effort of these, say, "average consumers" to whom it takes some time to find and cope with processing of Internet information (collecting and comparing) and making purchases in conjunction with slow computer or a hard orientation in websites might be the crucial discouraging factor.

2.4.2. Gender and limitations connected with online purchasing

There exist a lot of differences between both genders. Solomon (2002) mentioned differences in attitudes and priorities. However, differences also exist in relation to the internet.

Firstly, women are not so concerned with the Internet like men are (Roper, 1998 cited by Garbarino, E & Strahilevitz, M., (2004). Similarly, purchases online are not so common as well by females. Secondly, women see online purchasing as more hazardous than men do which could be the reason of less Internet use.

Forsythe, S. & Chun, L. (no date) outlined a model with factors influencing frequency of online purchases. This model is shown below.

Figure 2.2.: Model of online purchasing behaviour and its factors
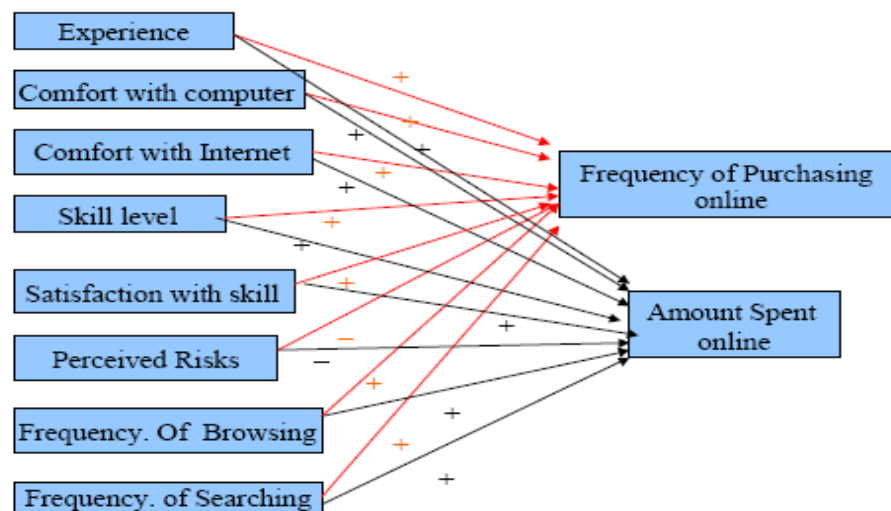
2.4.3. Age and its limitations in online purchasing

Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999) cited by Sorce et al. (2005) found out in their work that different age influences the frequency of online purchases. Other authors cited by Sorce et al. (2005) add that older people are supposed to buy more over the Internet than younger in spite of the fact that younger have better attitudes to online purchasing. On the other hand, research carried out by Joines et al. (2003) and cited by Sorce et al. (2005) ascertained the opposite trend.

2. 5. Consumer strategies in electronic and store exchanges

This section is focused on the finding of the strategy which is used by textbooks' buyers in electronic environment. There are namely several strategies how to do electronic exchanges.

If customer stands before decision whether purchase some product, he or she can use for it either traditional store or to opt the alternative of electronic exchange. Each of these categories involves four strategies which customers can use in the exchange processes. These strategies are as follows (Peter & Olson, 2005):

Firstly, consumers can both shop and purchase electronically, making a pure electronic exchange (typical mainly when products such as books, CDs and computers are purchased).

Secondly, consumer can rely on the store-aided electronic exchange (customer goes to a store itself first to acquaint with a desired products. When he or she is familiarized with the products he or she tends to buy these desired products online – example: customer chose desired product in the store but the quoted price might not be satisfactory and therefore prefers buying selected product online where the price should be lower). This strategy is suitable for such items for which the information is limited and consumer wants to examine products before making final decision.

Thirdly, consumer first picks up the information online and then goes to a traditional shop or dealer to realize the purchase – purchase of cars is a good example of this strategy. Consumer, for instance, searches one type of car by more dealers and compares dealers' cost and price data. Then, he or she just goes to a dealer who is seemingly the most favourable.

Fourthly, the customer carries out the purchase just within stores' premises and does not use the Internet at all. This strategy is most common method used to make purchases. In spite of gradual growth of electronic transactions it is maybe not likely that the electronic transactions could take a leading position in purchasing of articles. Below, the scheme of 4 mentioned strategies is shown:

Table 3: Customers' strategies in relation of traditional store to online purchase

Shopping

	Online	In-store
Online	Electronic Exchange	Store-aided Electronic Exchange
In-store	Web-aided Store Exchange	Traditional Exchange

Purchasing

Source: Peter, J.P. & Olson, J. C. (2005)

From above mentioned strategies is evident that the strategy corresponding to the purchasing textbooks online is the first strategy. Customer firstly searches for the textbook on the Internet and then he or she purchases it over the Internet as well.

2.6. Future of virtual retailing

There is a vision of continual growth in electronic retailing. Nevertheless, some limits in virtual retailing exist that may inhibit the online retailers in equalling or even overcoming their typical counterparts in the future. Peter, J.P. & Olson, J. C. (2005) distinguish 5 main points of these limits:

1) *Limited access to the Internet connection or insufficient education of PCs to make electronic purchase effectively*

2) *Despite the lower prices e-marketers raise less money and make lower profit and cannot reinvest the money in growing consumer markets.*

3) *To tempt people to buy online they have firstly change their long-term habits of buying* – consumers enjoy buying in typical stores and may have an averse to change their decision

4) *Some kinds of products cannot be sold in the online environment at all* – perishable products, low-cost convenience goods

5) *Consumers keep their loyalty to brick-and-mortar shops which they have long-term experience with instead of a virtual retailer who started running its business relatively recently* – consumers staying loyal and satisfied with assortments in particular stores and chains and do not have any need to change. Moreover, existing brick-and-mortar stores starting their business online have an advantage compared to online retailers starting their business totally.

This section was chosen to find out what perspective of purchasing textbooks online could be seen in the future. To find out if the online purchasing poses a big threat to typical stores in terms of competition. Eventually this model will try to find an answer to the question what is the main limitation

2.7. Literature review – conclusion

The first part of literature review deals with consumer behaviour in general. From this point the decision-making process has been selected because not just customers in traditional stores go through this process during their purchasing phase. This process seems to be applicable to customers doing their purchases online as well. From the view of this model the third point seems to be crucial for author's dissertation and that is evaluation of alternatives. Here comes customer's decision if to buy online or in brick-and-mortar stores.

Second section of this literature review concerns consumer behaviour in online environment as the dissertation is based on online purchasing. This piece of work is going to research what are the most important hindrances of online textbook purchasing, what factors propel customers to buy online and what factors, on the other hand eventually discourage them from doing so. From this reason, theory about limitations in online environment as well as about factors influencing customers to online purchases has been taken into consideration. It is true that online retailing is relatively young form of purchase but, on the other hand, the rapid growth of the Internet use can promote the online purchasing. Therefore, the future of textbooks purchases over the Internet has to be mentioned.

After the literature review was formed some objectives arose which the author would like to pursue. The objectives are as follows:

- To investigate if the online retailers with textbooks pose potential risk for typical retailers with textbooks.
- To investigate if retailer's brand name has an influence on purchasing online.
- To examine whether age has an influence on purchasing online

To examine if there is any dependence between gender and purchasing textbooks online

On the basis of these objectives some hypotheses have been deduced. These are to be outlined later in Chapter 3.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Chapter 2 was focused on the main ideas which will be pivotal for this topic. These ideas have been collected from literature which was at author's disposal in the University library as well as on the Internet. The main intention of this chapter is to describe the methods and proceedings which have been used for gathering primary data. Author feels a need to repeat what the aim of this paper really is so that the reader is given an opportunity to critically evaluate chosen procedures.

The genuine purpose of this piece of work is to find out if there is any interest of students at the University of Huddersfield to buy their textbooks online. The group of students included in this study was composed of students at Higher Education.

For the collection of primary information, retrieval of the answers on asked questions as well as subsequent formation of conclusions different types of approaches are carried out. Different types of methods and strategies must be premeditated properly than the research itself will begin. As when the researcher decides to begin with some type of approach and is not satisfied with his decision it is hard for him to flinch and make other decision. Therefore, big attention must be paid for correct selection of research method and strategy. Possible strategies which can be taken are following: surveys, case studies, experiments, action research and ethnography. What methods concern, researcher can ruminate on questionnaires, interviews, observations and documents (Denscombe, 1998).

2.1. Strategies

As has already been mentioned above possible strategies are surveys, case studies, experiments, action research and ethnography. Denscombe (1998) explains:

Survey as a way how to synoptically arrange empirical data. Moreover, survey is characterized by wide and inclusive coverage and is more suitable for generalization. It is used when quantitative data want to be amassed. It is also relatively cheap and less time-consuming. Reversely, data in survey do not provide thorough information and at

the same time the instrument for controlling the accuracy of provided data can also be lacking.

Case studies as an approach which can be used for more research methods and is characterized by the possibility of complex analysis. It is usually applied where a researcher has little control over events. Taken from the opposite perspective, the generalization in case of case studies is not so credible. It is not always pretty clear what sources of data could be implemented and which ones could be excluded.

Experiments as repeatable, convenient researches with the highest level of precision. Reversely, the doubtfulness about comparability with real situation can arise. Control group and experimental group have to constitute a 'matched pair' with the same features relevant to the experiment which may show as very problematic.

Ethnography as a characteristic of people or cultures. This strategy is characteristic by direct contact with people and places as well as by direct observation. Data acquired by this strategy are, unlike survey, rich in depth and detailed. Reversely, its low level of reliability and low ability to generalize the data pose the biggest weakness. It can be the subject of ethical problems connected with interference with privacy.

The primary goal of this research is to ascertain attitudes of students at University of Huddersfield at Higher Education towards purchasing textbooks online. From strategies described briefly above the survey seemed to be most applicable to making this kind of research. Denscombe (1998) clarifies the option of the appropriate form of strategy is dependent on the nature of a research, on the sort of data which are supposed to be gathered and eventually on costs, time availability and access to the required data. As the research should help to generalize the results so the survey was selected as Denscombe (1998) stated the survey helps to this aim. He also points out some research strategies are subject to use of specific research methods such as surveys are associated with questionnaires and experiments are connected with observation. It is the reason why questionnaire was chosen in this survey.

As was stated at the beginning of this chapter Denscombe (1998) distinguishes 4 distinct forms of research methods. These already mentioned methods are going to be described in the next section.

2.2. Methods

2.2.1. Interviews

Interviews provide deeper and detailed data about .surveyed subject of the research. From the view of the method of data collection, interviews seem to be the most flexible. Personal contact during the interview enables monitoring of accuracy and relevance of acquired data. High response rate is also typical for interviews. Reversely, evaluation of data gathered by interview takes a lot of time. Data are not prepared for analysing and therefore they must be firstly prepared and then to be analysed. The data are aimed at respondents' statements rather than respondents' activities.

2.2.2. Observation

The principle of observation is to stay "invisible" and to not come in contact with participants in the environment. Observation enables collection of considerable amount of data in a relatively short time and results in objective outcomes. Reversely, it is relatively hard for a researcher to stay in anonymity. Observation has a tendency to oversimplify the situation as it neglects possible subtlety.

2.2.3. Documents

They keep vast amount of data and are cost-effective in terms of retrieving the data which are open to public scrutiny. On the other hand, documents are built on secondary data, which have been gained for other purposes and not for specific goals of the research.

2.2.4. Questionnaires

A lot of types of questionnaires exist and they may vary in several ways i.e. in terms of size, purpose or their appearance. As questionnaires are not so costly in terms of materials, money and time, they are supposed to be very economical. Respondents were asked the same questions which means that questionnaires therefore provide standardized answers. They are easier to be arranged unlike interviews. Reversely, pre-coded questions may pose an advantage for researches as well as possible disadvantage. Respondents may be fed up with pre-coded questions and they can be discouraged from their answering. However, on the other hand, they may find it convenient to just tick appropriate boxes.

From the perspective of this research questionnaire have been chosen for collecting data and primary information from the university students. From the view of the nature of this research, the information needed and the suitability of stated methods questionnaire has seemed to be the most suitable one. Through the medium of questionnaire it will be enabled the researcher to gain facts, students' attitudes and their priorities.

2.2.4.1. Creation of questionnaire

The elaboration of literature review and mentioned purpose of the research has enabled the researcher the production of particular questions for creating the questionnaire. Firstly, respondents were acquainted with the aim of the research. Subsequently, the questions were formed. The formation of the question is going to be discussed later. The questionnaire was composed of closed ended questions and these were composed of single and multiple choice questions. Yes/no questions as well as Likert scale were comprised in as well.

2.2.4.2. Pilot research

Experimental group for testing the questionnaire consisted of housemates of the researcher and of one other student. The goal was to find out clarity of given questions

their understandings and their felicitousness. Testing was made independently from each other and some slight requirements have been put forward. From this reason, some questions have been erased and some of them have been amended. The biggest troubles were recorded with insufficient amount of possible answers by some questions and with ambiguities by others. After necessary amendments the questionnaire was subsequently discussed with personal tutor at the University of Huddersfield and then sent out among students at the same university.

2.2.4.3. Types of questions

Questionnaire is composed of different types of questions. These are yes/no questions, multiple choice questions and scaled questions. It consists of two parts:

First part is to find out **information about respondents** (gender and age) concretely the first and the second question. These questions are made up by simple closed ended answers.

Second part is aimed to the students' **attitudes towards purchasing textbooks over the Internet compared to stores** whereas it is further structured into two other sections:

Section for those who purchase textbooks online - comprising for instance what factors influence them to purchase textbooks online or what the priority for them is. Questions in this section are made up by simple closed ended answers; multiple closed ended answers and scaled answers such as Likert scale.

Section for those who do not purchase textbooks online – comprising, on the other hand, what factors discourage them from purchasing online and weight of possible incentives discouraging them from purchasing by this way. In this section questions have been created in a similar way as in the previous section.

2.2.4.4. Qualitative and quantitative data

The questionnaire was designed by the help of qualitative and quantitative data.

Some questions such as level of satisfaction with purchasing textbooks online have been aimed to gain <u>quantitative data</u>. There exist several types of quantitative data (Denscombe, 1998) but for the purposes of this research just couple of them has been integrated:

Nominal data – means counting things and placing them into a category. This data is for instance typical for category of gender or the origin.

Ordinal data – is similar to nominal data with the exception that categories are put in ordered and ranked linkage. This enables the data to be compared mutually in particular categories. Typical ordinal data is for instance the level of satisfaction with particular product (strongly agree, …, strongly disagree).

Other questions have been aimed to gain <u>qualitative data.</u> These data deal with human views.

The way in which the questions are assigned has been selected on the ground of securing the utmost level of lucidity and eliminating possible mistakes. From this reason, couple of remarks has been stated by some questions to preclude the situation of wrong or non-entirely filled questionnaire.

2.3. Types of research approaches

Saunders et al (2003) distinguish two main types of research approaches.

<u>Inductive approach</u> consists in collecting data with subsequent formation of theory as a result of data analysis. This approach is useful to use in positivism philosophy.

<u>Deductive approach</u> is characterized by developing a theory and hypothesis or hypotheses with subsequent design of research strategy for their testing. In connection with this kind of research philosophies, this approach has closer to positivism. This type

of research is also sometimes called *scientific research* just because of the theory which is subject to thorough testing.

From the nature of this research and from the stated objectives seems to be clear that for the assessing of these objectives some hypotheses will be used to be able to accept or to reject particular objective. To achieve this purpose following hypotheses have been derived from the objectives of the research mentioned at the end of section 2.7:

- assumption: that customers prefer purchasing their textbooks over the Internet to the premises of typical retailer
  - H_0: decision to buy or not to buy textbooks online depends on gender
  - H_0: Age has also an influence on decisions about purchasing textbooks online
  - H_0: There is dependence between online retailer's name and purchasing online

After the assessment the previous hypotheses and after reading the introductory part of this section it is possible to say that this survey will appear from deductive approach. The characteristic which this approach was linked with is namely fully comprised in this research and is therefore reasonable to apply it.

2.4. Types of researches

Basically, two types of researches are usually used for collecting the data. These are primary research and secondary research.

2.4.1. Secondary research

This type of research is used for elaboration of data which already exists and has been gathered by somebody else. As materials used for secondary research could be considered for instance reports, press articles and market research projects which are then evaluated in order to faciliate the researcher to come up with some conclusion (Market Research Portal, 2006).

2.4.2. Primary research

This research is carried out when required data has not been gathered before. Therefore, data must be firstly acquired by a research and consequently assessed by some of research methods. However, in comparison with the secondary research this research may be more expensive because of its relatively long process. On the other hand, information gathered by this research is, due to its originality, more accurate (Market Research Portal, 2006). Furthermore, instruments for conducting of this research are questionnaires, interviews and observations (ec.hku.hk, no date).

As no direct materials, regarding students' attitudes towards purchasing textbooks online are available the data must have been collected by means of primary research. As the appropriate instrument for gathering these information has been chosen, as was already mentioned, questionnaire. That is the explanation of use of primary research in this study.

2.5. Sampling

As has been already mentioned the research is targeted the students at the University of Huddersfield. These same students have also been selected as a sample. This method of sampling is called <u>non-probability sampling</u>.

In addition to non-probability sampling Denscombe (1998) discerns one more group of sampling namely <u>probability sampling.</u>

2.5.1. Probability sampling

Probability sampling consists of other 6 sampling techniques such as:

❖   **Random sampling** where the selection of people or events is done coincidently

❖   **Systematic sampling** functions on the same basis like the previous one except that there is choose some method how people or events will be chosen. In principle, it is selection of each [th] member.

❖   **Stratified sampling** is characterized as a sampling where each member of the sample has the same chance to be selected.

❖   **Quota sampling** is similar to previous one when particular categories are created but the members are not selected randomly.

❖   **Cluster sampling** means examining specific cluster of population accidentally

  Multi-stage sampling consists in selecting samples from samples

2.5.2. Non-probability sampling

Purposive sampling – something is known about specific people or events and are therefore select purposely

Snowball sampling – based on referencing from one person to others

Theoretical sampling – based on information from theory supported by an evidence

  Convenience sampling – selections of the most convenient variants for the researcher

2.6. Distribution of questionnaire

As has been already hinted by the author in previous section, questionnaire was distributed among the students of the University of Huddersfield with help of the email. This email was sent out to students' university email addresses. To do this, students were not written out individually but a template was used for this purpose. As the target group of students was from the line of European Business course students, hence the template called European Business was used to for making this action. This questionnaire is possible to have a look at in Appendix

2.7. Structure of questionnaire

To better understand the content of the questionnaire its particular questions are going to be explained in this section. Different types of questions have been used in the questionnaire. As has been already mentioned it is divided into two parts.

First part of the questionnaire pursues basic information about respondents. It is gender and age category:

Gender – behaviour of both genders (men and women) are different. According to Solomon (2002) each of these sexes has distinct expectations and requirements. What men really like women may dislike and vice versa. From this point of view it seems to be beneficial to divide respondents into two categories - male and female to minimize inaccuracies.

Age category – Solomon's (2002) conclusion for age category is that different age groups often have different needs and longings. Therefore, the age was divided into 4 categories. Each of these categories has been divided to categories by five starting with the category 18 – 22.

Second part of the questionnaire deals with respondents and their textbook purchasing behaviour.

Purchase of textbooks – simple question to find out and to differ if students buy textbooks or not. If the answer is "not" the question number 4 and 5 is linked with this question and ask students what materials they use instead of textbooks and why they do not purchase them. On the answering "yes" question below is answered.

Preferring online textbook purchasing – two possible answers are here as well.

→ If they prefer, they answer following questions:

Aspects of online textbook purchasing – here 5 main aspects encouraging respondents to purchase textbook online were hinted. Respondent could choose just 1 or maximally 3 encouraging aspects.

Influential factors of online textbook purchasing – this question is based on the ranking operation of 5 main influential factors. A scale from 1 till 5 has been used to fulfill this task whereas 1 had biggest importance and 5 the least importance. Each of

these numbers had to be used just once. As Solomon (2002) only enumerates encouraging factors of online purchasing, as stated in literature review, this question is to rank these factors.

<u>Frequency of purchasing textbooks online</u> – is just to find out how often online retailers are used by respondents for buying textbooks. 4 possibilities are available for respondents: new user / regularly / from time to time and seldom.

<u>Online retailer</u> – two questions actually concern the online retailer. First one is to ascertain whether respondents purchase by just one concrete retailer and the second one is to state which online retailer is most desirable whereas just one answer is possible.

<u>Form of textbooks</u> – question focused on respondents' orientation. It means, if they prioritize used textbooks or new textbooks when they purchase them online.

<u>Level of satisfaction</u> – Likert scale has been used in this part to find out satisfaction with online purchasing, where "very satisfied" stress best feeling and "very disappointed" the worst one. Respondent should use the option which suits him or her the most.

→ If they do not prefer, they answer remaining questions no. 14 and 15:

<u>Aspects of non-purchasing textbooks online</u> – this question has the same character as in the case of "aspects of online textbook purchasing" but here the aspects concern non-purchasing online. Respondents could also choose just 1 or maximally 3 encouraging aspects from 5 stated.

<u>Influential factors of not buying textbooks online</u> – analogous to the "influential factors of online textbook purchasing" this question is based on the ranking operation of 5 main influential factors using 1 to stress the highest discouragement and 5 to stress the lowest one. Similarly to first case, each number should be mentioned just once.

2.8. Research and its limitations

Firstly and foremost, it must be mentioned that considered results cannot be generalized because some limitations must be taken into consideration as well.

As research focuses on the specific group of students at the university and not on the university students as a whole, it is obvious that the results retrieved from this research may vary in comparison with the results which would be retrieved within the whole university.

Similarly, the research cannot be applied to the whole UK as the research has been accomplished just in a part of it. To be able to generalize the results the survey on the basis of nationwide research should have been done.

Chapter 3: Results of the research

First chapter's main task was to hint what the aim of the dissertation was going to be about. Chapter number two was about to study a literature review related to the aim of the dissertation. Subsequently, the content of this literature review was linked up with the methodology captured in chapter 3. This part of thesis is to evaluate the data of research.

Questionnaire comprises 15 questions whereas each of them is going to be evaluated in this section. The assessing of the results was undertaken in statistic program SPSS and MS Excel XP.

Question 1: **What is your gender?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	43	55,1	55,1	55,1
	female	35	44,9	44,9	100,0
	Total	78	100,0	100,0	

Table 4.1: Gender

Question 2: **What age category do you fall into?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-22	33	42,3	42,3	42,3
	23-27	36	46,2	46,2	88,5
	28-32	9	11,5	11,5	100,0
	Total	78	100,0	100,0	

Table 4.2: division of respondents into particular ranges

From overall count of 78 respondents 33 from them were from the youngest category (18-22) other 36 respondents fell into second category (23-27) and last 9 respondents were classified in third category (28-32). In addition to this it is essential to point out no respondents were subsumed in the last, fourth category (33 and more). This can be clearly seen in chart 4.1 below.

Proportion of age categories
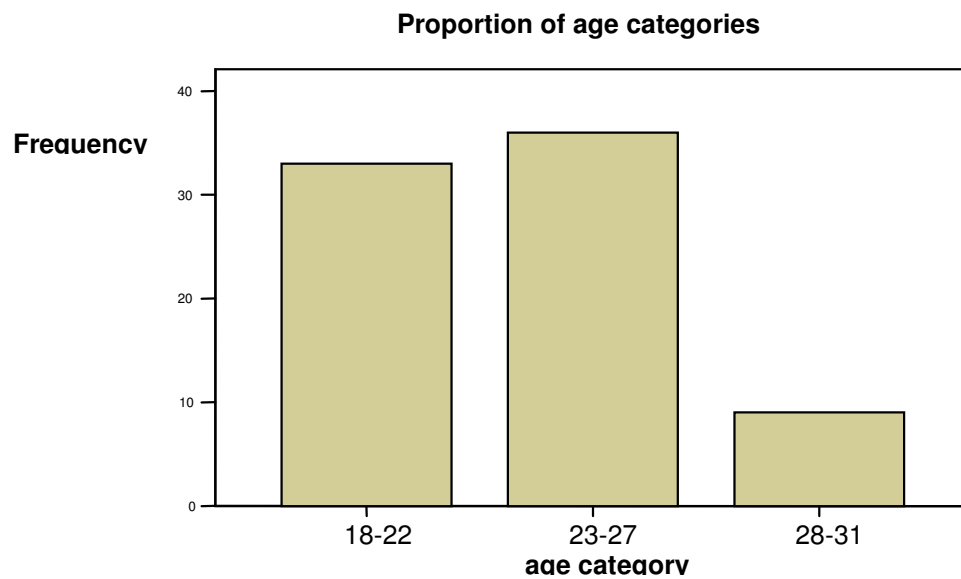
Chart 4.1: proportion of respondents

Question 3: **Do you buy course textbooks?**

This question confirmed the research carried out by HI Europe about gradual downturn of interest in textbooks (mention about this survey was in Chapter 1 - Introduction). The same trend was recorded also among the students of the University of Huddersfield although the differences were not very fast. 44% from overall number 78 buy textbooks and remaining 56% do not so. It is clearly evident from the chart 4.2 below:

do students buy textbooks?
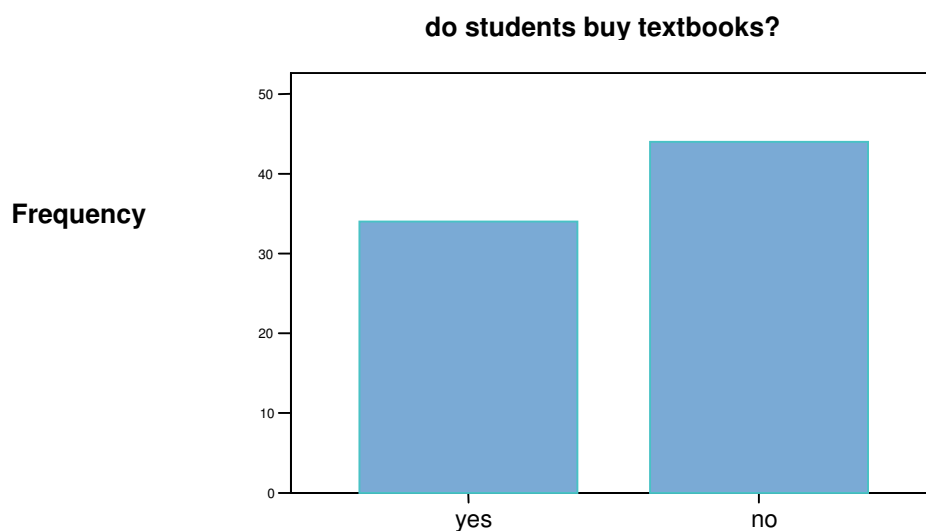
Chart 4.2: students' interest in textbooks

Respondents answering the question 3 "no" were asked for filling questions number 4 and number 5.

Question 4: **What materials do you use to study when you do not buy textbooks?**

This question tried to find out if there were some differences among sexes in respect of use of study materials. The respondents were allowed to select more than just 1 option which means that possible answers could be lecture notes, e-books, borrowed materials or other at the same time

both gender	
lecture notes	44
e-books	8
borrowed materials	29
Other	21

Table 4.3.:
proportion of study
materials – both sexes

males	
lecture notes	25
e-books	3
borrowed materials	15
Other	11

Table 4.4.:
proportion of study
materials – males

females	
lecture notes	19
e-books	5
borrowed materials	14
other	10

Table 4.5.:
proportion of study
materials -females

From the tables indicated above is clear that the most utilized material replacing textbooks as a study material are lecture notes. All respondents not buying textbooks stressed they prioritize the notes from their lectures. On the other hand, just a fragment of students use e-books as a source of study material.

Question 5: **Why do not you buy textbooks?**

This question has the same character as the previous one. Students were also allowed to choose more possible answers.
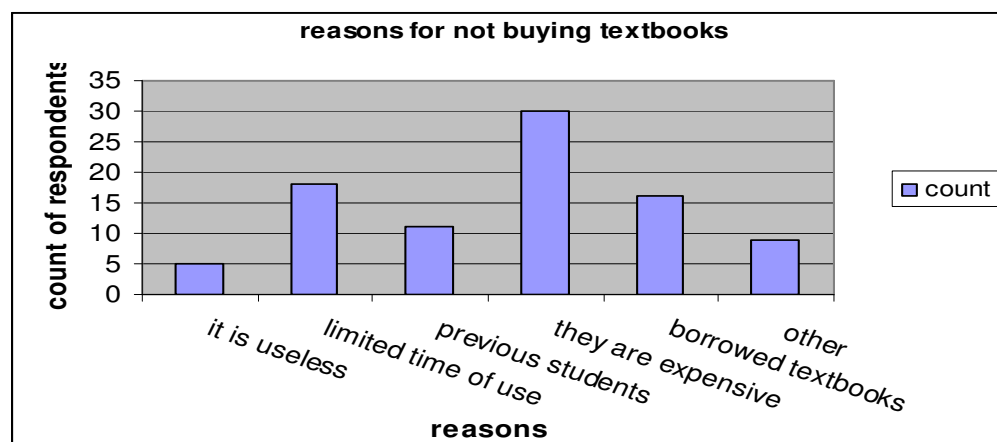
Chart 4.3: why students do not buy textbooks

According to the chart 4.3., majority of respondents (students) stated the genuine reason why they do not buy textbooks is really overvalued price of these textbooks. On the other hand, only insignificant number of them regards uselessness of textbooks as the main factor discouraging them from purchasing them [textbooks].

Other questions were composed for those ones, whose interest has been stressed in some way. For those who purchase textbooks rather online and those ones who rather prioritize traditional stores.

<u>Question 6</u>: **Do you prefer purchasing textbooks online rather than in traditional store?**

do students purchasing textbooks prefer online retailers?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	14	41,2	41,2	41,2
	No	20	58,8	58,8	100,0
	Total	34	100,0	100,0	

Table 4.6.: division of students purchasing textbooks

This question has brought very interesting figures. Although it may seem that students, who purchase their textbooks, do that rather by means of online retailers, the research shown that the fact was surprisingly opposite. It means that it could be right to disprove Solomon's affirmation (2002) that typical retailers must be worried about its position. See diagram below for better lucidity (figure 4.4.):

do students purchasing textbooks prefer online retailers?
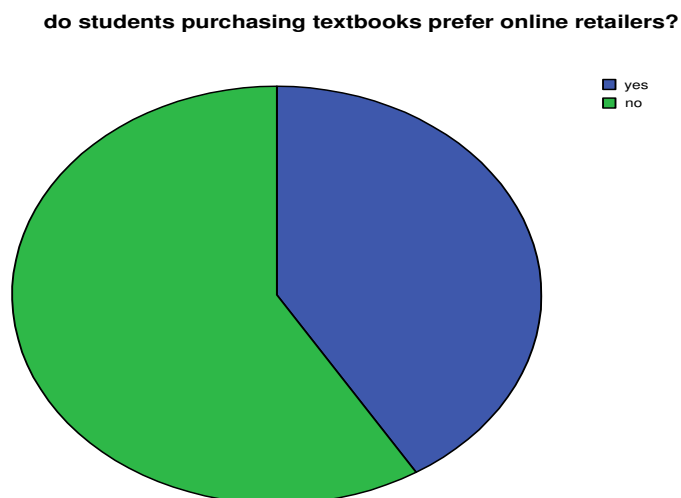
Figure 4.1: proportion of students buying textbooks online and in typical stores

Question 7: **What aspects encourage you to buy textbooks online?**

Here, 5 aspects encouraging online purchasing were outlined. Respondent could indicate those aspects which coincided with his or her inner feelings relating to online purchasing.
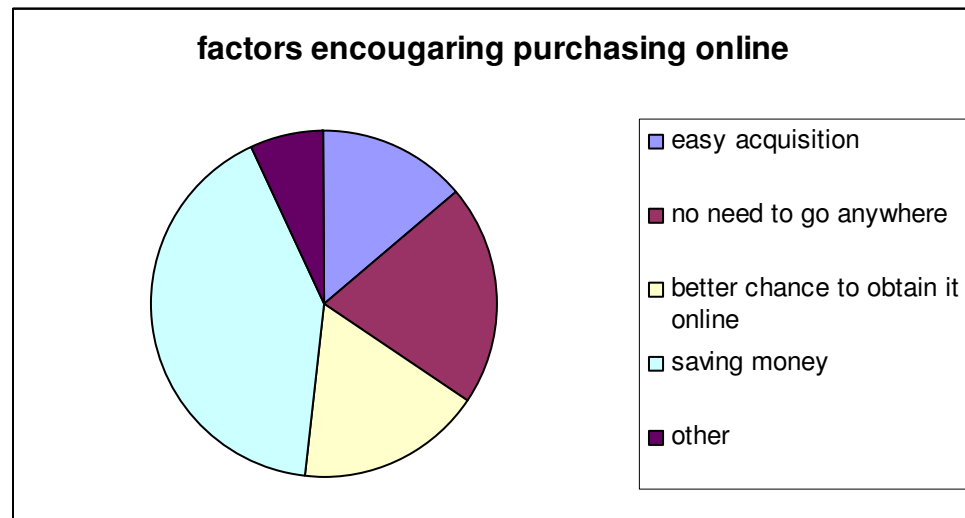
Chart 4.4.: Factors encouraging purchasing online

While the literature review dealt merely with the factors that encourage people to purchase online in general, the aim of this question was to find out what factors influence respondents to be encouraged to buy textbooks over the Internet. The research showed that respondents are mainly influenced by price factor. It is mainly caused by lower price and they have therefore an opportunity to save more money in contact with online textbook retailer.

.Question 8: **rank following attributes of online vendors according to the importance**

This question has a character of so called Likert scale, where respondents were required to add values 1 – 6 to particular attributes and express their level of importance with these attributes. Value 1 means the biggest importance. On the other hand value 6 stresses the least importance.
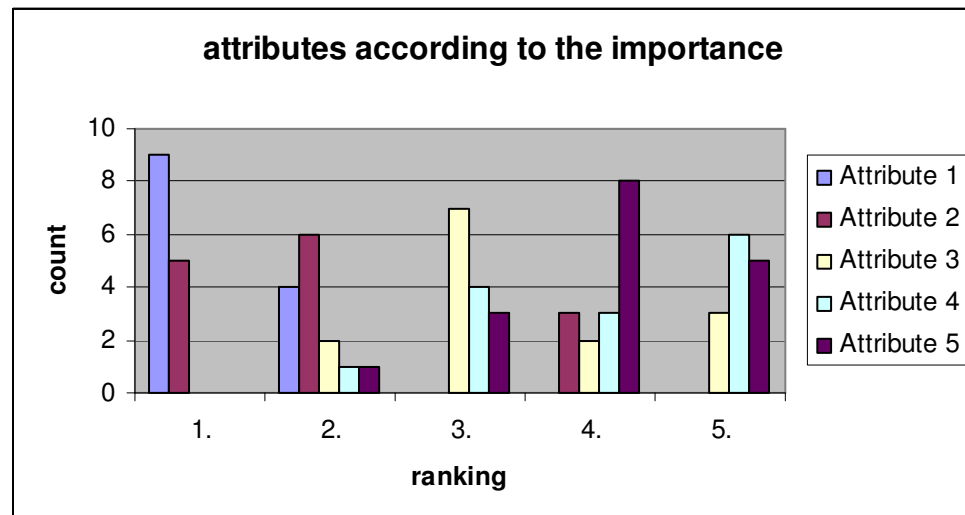
Figure 4.2.: attributes according to the importance

The research shown that price is not only factor that encourage respondents to purchase textbooks online but is also deemed the paramount one. On the other hand, the least important factor for respondents is the fact that they can obtain immediate information about textbook availability. To conclude this question, here is the overall ranking (1 – the most important, 5 – the least important):

    1 – lower price of desired textbook (1)
    2 – reputation of particular retailer (2)
    3 – no need to go anywhere to buy a textbook (3)
    4 – no depence just on local booksellers (5)
    5 – immediate information about textbook availability (4)

REMARK: Values in the brackets stress particular attributes stated in the diagram 4.2.

The research confirmed that price, regarding by Peter P. J. & Olson, J. C. (2005) as the most important factor in the online environment can be related to the online environment with textbooks as well.

Question 9: **How often do you purchase textbooks online?**

Question focused on respondents' frequency of purchasing textbooks over the Internet. 4 possible answers were available: new user, regularly, from time to time and seldom. The acquired data from the survey are captured in the figure below.

Chart 4.5.: Frequency of purchasing online

frequency of buying online
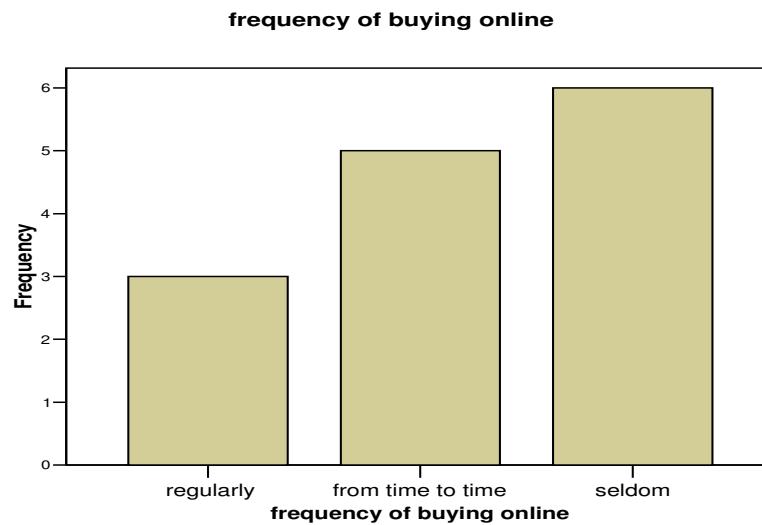
Respondents indeed purchase textbooks online however most of them purchase them by this way only occasionally - 5 of them from time to time and 6 of them rarely. Least amount of respondents, only 3 buy textbooks regularly.

Question 10: **Do you purchase textbooks just from one specific online retailer?**

purchasing by one online retailer

Figure 4.3.: loyalty to online retailer

This question helped to recognize that students buy textbooks solely by one online retailer. This question was set up to enable the researcher to state which online retailer is the most prioritized. To find this the question number 11 had to be created.

Question 11: **Which online textbook retailer do you give a priority to?**

Table 4.7.: preferred online retailer

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Amazon	**9**	64,3	64,3	64,3
eBay	**4**	28,6	28,6	92,9
AbeBooks	**1**	7,1	7,1	100,0
Total	14	100,0	100,0	

Table demonstrates the leading online retailer among students is undoubtedly Amazon. It was ascertained students buy their textbooks only by 3 specific online retailers – except Amazon it is eBay and AbeBooks. No more retailers have been chosen. On the graph below the proportion of prioritized retailers is yet done visually.

Chart 4.6.: Preferred online retailer

Question 12: **What form of textbooks do you prefer when purchasing online?**

This is just supplementary question to find out respondent's priorities in textbooks. Two possible answers are at disposal - new 52textbooks and used textbooks. And as it is clearly seen from the table 4.8 new textbooks prevail.

Table 4.8.: Form of purchased textbooks online

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
new textbooks	**10**	71,4	71,4	71,4
used textbooks	**4**	28,6	28,6	100,0
Total	14	100,0	100,0	

Question 13: **Express level of your satisfaction with purchasing textbooks online**
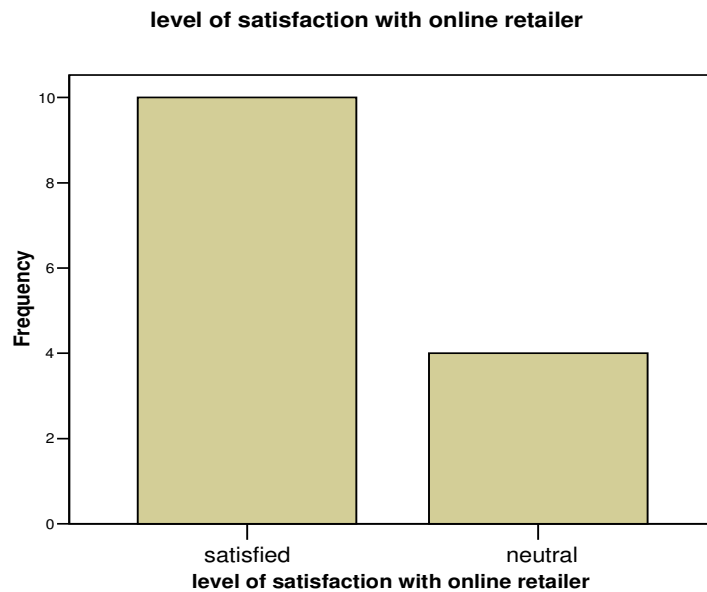
Chart 4.7.: satisfaction with online retailing

The overall satisfaction with online retailer dominates among students. It may be caused by already mentioned lower prices. This question was also based on the Likert scale. But in this case the strength of satisfaction or disappointment was surveyed.

Question 14: **What are the main factors which discourage you from purchasing textbooks online?**
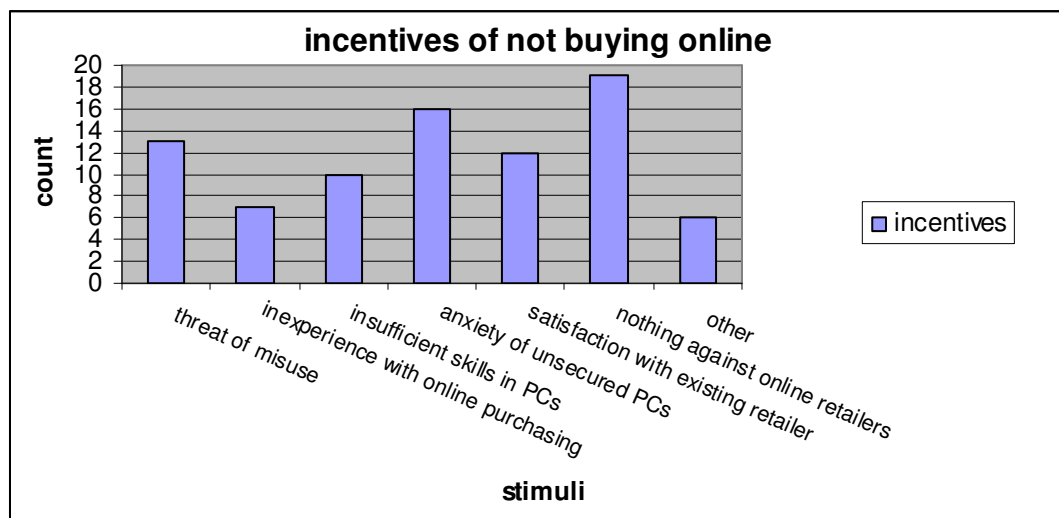
Figure 4.4.: Incentives of not buying textbook over the Internet

The research among respondents – students – who do not buy textbooks online showed the notion of Bhattacherjee (2002) cited by Grabner-Kräuter & Kaluscha (2003) that the main misgiving from online purchasing is threat of misuse has not proven competent. The survey brought surprising outcomes namely that most students not purchasing online do not have any reasonable reason why distrust online retailers. Even the apprehension of insufficiently secured computer systems has leapt already mentioned threat of misuse.

<u>Question 15</u>: **rank following incentive of not buying textbooks online**
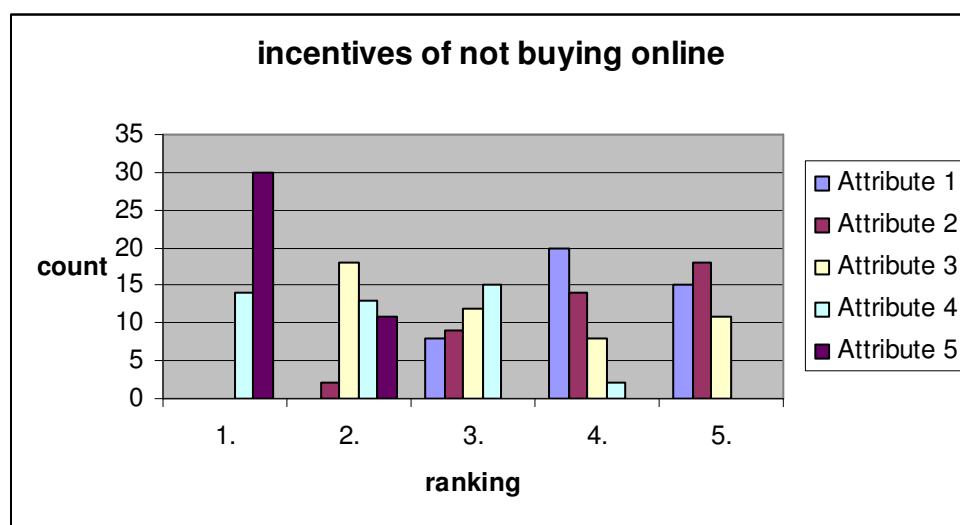
Figure 4.5.: incentives of not buying online

On the question what factors students consider or would consider (when they mentioned point 6, in previous question) the crucial ones, attribute 2 – little experience with purchasing textbooks online - appears as the most important. However, the fear of information misuse considered the most important by Bhattacherjee (2002) cited by Grabner-Kräuter & Kaluscha (2003) and rejected in previous question has gained second biggest count of votes. Nevertheless, the difference between first and second position is merely slight. On the other hand, students feel the least disquietness over possible missing contact with a textbook.

To sum up the incentives the full ranking of particular stimuli are going to be outlined below (5 – the most important, 1 – the least important)

5. little experience with purchasing online (2)

    4.   Anxiety of information misuse (1)

    3.   Missing contact with a marketer (4)

    2.   Satisfaction with a retailer in bookshop (3)

    1.   missing contact with a textbook (5)

REMARK: Values in the brackets stress particular attributes stated in the diagram 4.6.

3.1. Evaluation of hypotheses

In previous section particular questions of questionnaire have been appraised. In this section hypotheses stated in Chapter 3, section 3.3 are going to be evaluated. The task of this section is to confirm or reject following hypotheses and one assumption:

<u>Assumption:</u> customers prefer purchasing their textbooks over the Internet to the premises of typical retailer

<u>H1</u>: Gender influences consumer behaviour while purchasing textbooks

<u>H2</u>: Age has also an influence on decisions about purchasing textbooks online

<u>H3:</u> There is dependence between online retailer's name and purchasing online

3.1.1. Assumption

This presumption was constructed on the basis of the section 2.1. in literature review. In this part, Solomon (2002) mentioned that flourishing online retailers endanger positions of typical retailers. However, this theory was based on the online retailers as a whole. Therefore, this part is to find out if the same risk menaces positions of typical retailers of textbooks on the part of online textbook retailers. To achieve this goal and to find out the situation there is a need to confirm or disprove following assumption:

→ *Customers prefer purchasing their textbooks over the Internet to the premises of typical retailer*

During the evaluating of this assumption it is good to stem from the findings in question 6 mentioned earlier in this paper. From the results taken from this question is obvious that purchasing textbooks online is not so "in" as, if students buy

textbooks, they prefer typical retailers. From this case Solomon's statement (2002) about descending role of typical retailer on the market cannot be related to the online environment with textbooks. For better lucidity one more chart is added below:
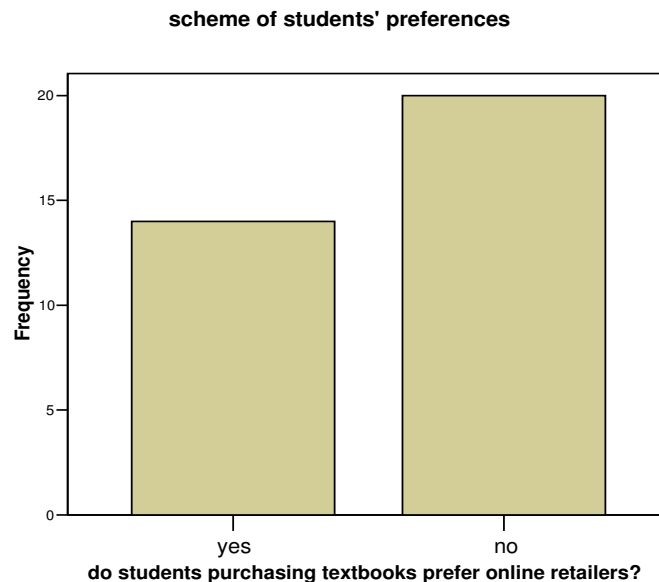
Chart 4.8.: proportion of students buying behaviour

It is evident from this chart that when students buy their textbooks they rather purchase them by a typical retailer than online. The reason why this happens is the fact that most students see the obstacle in little experiences with purchasing online, as was found out by question 15 (see figure 4.4. for better illustration).

By this description and depicted graph it is possible to dare to say that the assumption has not revealed itself as to be relevant with respect to purchasing textbooks over the Internet.

3.1.2. Hypothesis 1

On the basis of literature review the researcher has decided to investigate if the decision to buy or not to buy textbooks online depends on gender. It has been put forward by Solomon (2002) that gender means different decision-making process thereby each of them [gender] has different priorities. Nevertheless, to be able to explore this behaviour a hypothesis has been created (H_0). To have a chance to say whether this hypothesis is confirmed or not another hypothesis (H_1) must be

constructed automatically. This hypothesis (H_1) denies the statement of H_0. That hypothesis is as follows:

H_0: decision to buy or not to buy textbooks online depends on gender

H_1: non H_0

This hypothesis will be evaluated with help of SPSS. In the table below it is possible to see proportion of students preferring purchasing textbooks by online retailers and students preferring typical retailers.

Table 4.9.: preference of online retailers

		Do students purchasing textbooks prefer online retailers?		Total
		yes	no	
Gender	male	8	13	21
	female	6	7	13
Total		14	20	34

From the table is evident that students are not so keen on purchasing their textbooks via the services provided by online retailers. As it can be further seen gap between answers yes and no is markedly broader by males compared to females. Therefore, it could be quite useful to know whether this broad difference between particular gaps can be caused by dependence of gender on purchasing textbooks online. Thus the hypothesis H_0 has been constructed.

As two nominal variables are going to be compared in this test it means that the most appropriate method for this test could be **chi-square** (see table below for counted values):

Table 4.10.: Chi-square test for hypothesis 1

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	,215	1	,643
Continuity Correction(a)	,011	1	,916
Likelihood Ratio	,215	1	,643
Fisher's Exact Test			
Linear-by-Linear Association	,209	1	,648
N of Valid Cases	34		

For the enumeration of chi-squared "Pearson chi-square" is crucial (that is reason why it is highlighted in the table). As SPSS confirms values lesser than 0,05 as statistically significant hypothesis tested in this case cannot be confirmed. The sought value here is 0,643 which is more than mentioned 0,05 (0,643>0,05).

The conclusion ensues from this finding namely that hypothesis H_1 cannot be accepted and H_0 cannot be rejected. It means that **there may be some dependence between gender and students' decision to buy or not to buy textbooks online.** Now, it is possible to say that Solomon's statement (2002) can be related to the online environment with textbooks as well (as is clear from table 4.9).

3.1.3. Hypothesis 2

Age is according to Solomon (2002) another aspect (beside gender) which can cause divergence in consumer decision-making. This hypothesis is to find out if divergences in this research concerning purchasing textbooks online can be linked with changeable age as well or if it is just a case of coincidence. Hypotheses H_0 and H_1 have to be constructed as well.

H_0: Age has also an influence on decisions about purchasing textbooks online

H_1: non H_0

In previous hypothesis, two nominal variables have been compared whereas in this one, one nominal and one ordinal variable are going to be compared. In this case (comparing nominal and ordinal variable), chi-square is also possible to use.

In the table below frequency distribution of students purchasing textbooks online can be seen divided into particular age groups.

Table 4.11a: Frequency distribution of students purchasing or not purchasing textbooks online

			do students purchasing textbooks prefer online retailers?		Total
			yes	no	Total
age category	18-22	**Count**	**7**	**9**	**16**
		% within age category	43,8%	56,3%	100,0%
	23-27	**Count**	**6**	**10**	**16**
		% within age category	37,5%	62,5%	100,0%
	28-32	**Count**	**1**	**1**	**2**
		% within age category	50,0%	50,0%	100,0%
Total		*Count*	*14*	*20*	*34*
		% within age category	41,2%	58,8%	100,0%

To be able to use chi-square for the computation each cell of the table must have the frequency at least 5 (Muijs, D., 2004). According to Hinton (2004) the categories in which insufficiently occupied cells occur have to be merged with the previous one. In this case not each cell has this required frequency. Therefore, to be able to use this statistic, the third age category - mismatching the criteria – has to be merged with the second one to match the criteria. Amended table can be seen in table below:

Table 4.11b: Frequency distribution of students purchasing or not purchasing textbooks online - merged

			do students purchasing textbooks prefer online retailers?		Total
			yes	no	Total
age category	18-22	**Count**	**7**	**9**	**16**
		% within age category	43,8%	56,3%	100,0%
	23-32	**Count**	**7**	**11**	**18**
		% within age category	38,9%	61,1%	100,0%
Total		*Count*	*14*	*20*	*34*
		% within age category	41,2%	58,8%	100,0%

Now, it is possible to judge the dependence with the help of chi-square. Obtained figures are shown below:

Table 4.11c.: Chi-square test for hypothesis 2

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	**,083**	**1**	**,774**		
Continuity Correction(a)	,000	1	1,000		
Likelihood Ratio	,083	1	,774		
Fisher's Exact Test				1,000	,524
Linear-by-Linear Association	,080	1	,777		
N of Valid Cases	34				

Pearson chi-square is also higher than 0,05 concretely 0,774 which means that the hypothesis H_1 must be rejected again and H_0 can be accepted. **Now, it is possible to affirm that different decisions are influenced by different age categories**. At the same time, it is possible to add a piece of knowledge to Solomon's affirmation (2002). The age as an indicator of distinct decisions can also be observed in online environment with textbooks.

3.1.4. Hypothesis 3

This hypothesis is based on the affirmation of Degeratu et al (2000) cited by Kim & Park (2005) who claim that reputation and retailer's name enhance the probability of online purchase. The researcher tried to find out if this idea could be taken as a plausible by retailers with textbooks in relation to gender. For this reason following hypothesis has been constructed:

H_0: There is dependence between online retailer's name and gender
H_1: non H_0

The table below captures data about online retailers preferred by respondents (students). It is obvious from this table that Amazon is the most preferred retailer.

4.12a. Table of preferred online textbook retailers

	preferred online retailer					Total
	Amazon	CIPDBookstore	eBay	AbeBooks	other	
Gender male	12	1	7	1	0	21
female	4	2	4	2	1	13
Total	16	3	11	3	1	34

In this hypothesis, the same situation as in the hypothesis 2 has occurred namely that some cells are insufficiently occupied. In the table below the mergence will therefore be done to enable implementation of chi-square.

Table 4.12b: preferred online retailers with textbooks - merged

	Preferred online retailer – merged			Total
	Amazon	eBay	Others	
gender male	12	7	2	21
female	4	4	5	13
Total	16	11	7	34

Now, it is seen from the table that the technique of mergence did not help as well – there are still insufficiently occupied cells. For these reasons Muijs, D. (2004) suggests to count whether "expected counts" of these insufficiently occupied cells make up 20% of all cells or less. If so, chi-square can be used if not so chi-square cannot be used for a formulation of independence and the outcomes have to be described by a simple descriptive statistics. In the table below proportion of these expected counts in particular cells is shown

Table 4.12c: preferred online retailers with textbooks – extended about expected count

			Preferred retailer - merged			Total
			Amazon	eBay	others	
gender	male	Count	12	7	2	21
		Expected Count	**9,9**	**6,8**	**4,3**	**21,0**
	female	Count	4	4	5	13
		Expected Count	**6,1**	**4,2**	**2,7**	**13,0**
Total		Count	16	11	7	34
		Expected Count	**16,0**	**11,0**	**7,0**	**34,0**

These expected counts were calculated by the help of SPSS. If there was not SPSS available for this procedure, other method of calculating it exists. Hinton, R.

(2004) explains there is a formula whereby these values can be generated. This formula is as follows:

The expected value of a cell = (row total x column total)/overall total

For example: 8.6 = (21 x 14) / 34

There are three cells lesser than 5 in the table. This means that 50 % of cells do not have count greater than 5 as SPSS calculated. In addition, 50 % is more than possible 20 % which means that chi-square statistics cannot be used for the evaluation of this hypothesis.

The only thing that is possible to be done with this task is to describe it by descriptive statistics. To this purpose table below will be of service:

Table 4.12d: preferred online retailers with textbooks – for description

				preferred online retailer				Total
			Amazon	CIPD Bookstore	eBay	Abe Books	Other	
gender	male	Count	12	1	7	1	0	21
		% within gender	57,1%	4,8%	33,3%	4,8%	,0%	100,0%
	female	Count	4	2	4	2	1	13
		% within gender	30,8%	15,4%	30,8%	15,4%	7,7%	100,0%
Total		Count	16	3	11	3	1	34
		% within gender	47,1%	8,8%	32,4%	8,8%	2,9%	100,0%

From the table is evident that the highest interest among retailers aroused Amazon. 57.1% of males and whole 47.1% of all respondents prefer this retailer when go online. Second place holds the biggest competitor of Amazon – eBay (32.4%). However, it is still rapid "abyss" between them – 15% in favour of Amazon. On the other hand, other online retailers offering textbooks recorded merely negligible percentage of use (2.9%).

Yet the fact that only 34 questioned respondents stated that they purchase textbooks may stand for that the distinction between two most preferred online retailers would not be so immense if larger amount of respondents purchasing textbooks stressed their interest in their purchasing online.

Chapter 4: Discussion

The results have been finally evaluated and described briefly. In this section, they are going to be discussed more thoroughly.

During the writing of this dissertation a lot of questions possible for an exploration crossed researcher's mind. For the purpose of this survey researcher eventually decided to choose such questions which seemed to him the most important – concretely 4 of them seemed to be. These questions were constructed in the form of 3 hypotheses and one assumption.

Assumption

Thanks to Solomon (2002) and the section 2.1. is now clear that online retailers pose really big threat for typical retailers and that especially because of higher competition and their rapid growth. However, Solomon (2002) looks at this problems as a whole and do not state whether this situation could be opposite in some specific areas of online retailing or not. Therefore, it was determined that it would be quite interesting to look at the online retailers with textbooks and to know whether students prefer purchase of textbooks online rather than by typical retailer as well.

As the researcher tried to confirm the assumption no hypothesis could be used for the evaluation. Instead of evaluating hypothesis, questionnaire was used for this purpose. After gathering the data by question 6 interesting results were retrieved. It has shown that testing this assumption and confirming Solomon's (2002) claim has paid off. Students namely stated in the research that online retailers are not too much prioritized when students purchase their textbooks. Majority of them prefers typical retailers for the purchase. It is possible to conclude then that Solomon's affirmation cannot be taken as a whole and definitely not in conditions of the online environment with textbooks.

As research further showed, the main incentive of not buying online is insufficient experience or inexperience with online purchasing and not the anxiety of security, as affirmed Grabner-Kräuter & Kaluscha (2003).

From the results indicated above ensue that it would not be very prudent to confirm the assumption.

1. Hypothesis

It is evident that different people have different needs and longings. So do men and women. Incidentally, this has been already put forward by Solomon (2002) in literature review. Nevertheless, could be these different approaches implemented to students and tendency to purchase textbooks online? This question tried to answer this hypothesis.

It was found out that males do their purchase over the Internet less than females do. By the help of SPSS was found out that there may be some relation between gender and purchasing textbooks online. From this result it is right to assume that claim of Garbarino & Strahilevitz (2004) is not wholly true. On the other hand, Solomon's claim (2002) has been confirmed in this case as there are truly differences between genders in purchasing textbooks online as well.

2. Hypothesis

Similarly to gender age has also influence on different purchasing decision-making according to Solomon (2004). Similarly to previous hypothesis this hypothesis was to find out if distinctive age groups could result in different decisions concerning purchasing textbooks online.

It has to be admitted that results were not surprising. It was surely awaited that the age group has an influence on purchasing textbooks online. However, it could seem that the younger the age group is the more online purchases they do. This has really approved competent. With increasing age the willingness to buy textbooks online decreases. It is now possible to say here that Joines's et al (2003) dissent with Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999) has shown to be competent.

3. Hypothesis

Aim of this hypothesis was to verify the statement of Degeratu et al (2000) cited by Kim & Park (2005) claiming that retailer's reputation raises online purchases. During the evaluating of this hypothesis researcher encountered a problem which had to be solved by using descriptive statistics. The hypothesis could not be tested and therefore evaluation by description must have been done.

From the results is evident that Amazon is the most prioritized online retailer. Mainly males do their purchases of textbooks by the help of this online retailer as well as by means of eBay – second the most used online retailer. However, somewhat startling is that females do their purchases in relatively unknown retailers. But, from the overall perspective there may be seen a tendency that well-reputed online retailers are preferred to other ones.

4.1.: Appraised objectives of the research:

The researcher is finally eligible to appraise his objectives stated in the very end of literature review.

1. investigation of potential risk posing online retailers for typical ones – on the basis of the Assumption and motivated results can be clearly said that typical retailers do not have to worry about anything at all. There position does not seem to be jeopardized in nearest *future.*

2. investigation of relation between brand name and online purchasing – results showed an evident tendency to purchase textbooks from well-known retailers. It was proved there is significant relation between brand name and online purchases.

3. investigation of dependence of age on purchasing online – hypothesis 2 demonstrated that the number of students purchasing textbooks online descends gradually in each age group. So, there is a relation between age group and willingness to buy textbooks online.

4. investigation of dependence of gender on purchasing online - quite big discrepancies were found between males and females in yes/no answers.

Subsequently, the hypothesis 1 evidenced that it was caused by mutual relation and confirmed the objective namely that dependence between genders and purchasing online must be taken into account.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

As no research has been so far done exploring relation of students in the UK at the University of Huddersfield to purchasing textbooks over the Internet it was decided by the author that this might have been quite useful to know what the situation was. Thus, the main goal of this dissertation was constructed namely to investigate students' attitudes towards purchasing textbooks online. Therefore, such questions as the most prioritized and the most discouraging factors when purchasing online have been put forward.

Some related literature was searched and then, on its basis, a questionnaire was composed along with couple of hypotheses. Process of the research was monitored in methodology. Primary data were used for evaluating the questionnaire as well as for confirming or rejecting created hypotheses.

The results of this survey showed that the interest in purchasing textbooks via online retailer is not too much popular. Students purchasing textbooks rather prefer typical retailers to online ones. This is, on the one hand, good information for typical retailers with textbooks that they do not lose their position but, on the other hand, the fact that students who do not purchase their textbooks at all prevailed in the research does not seem to be auspicious. Main factor why students do not buy textbooks by typical retailers is their exorbitant price. On the other hand, the fact that the main factor why students do not buy textbooks online is little experience with purchasing online might seem a little bit surprising.

The author would also like to mention that this work was also connected with a couple of limitations and would like to acquaint readers with them.

Firstly, there is a need to say that by virtue of only 78 returned questionnaires the results cannot be fully taken as a matter-of-fact. However, this respondent rate has hinted potential trend of declining interest in textbooks in general.

Secondly, the fact that the research has been carried out only at the local university may misrepresent overall results.

However, deduced from the questionnaires it is meaningless to assume that the trend could be opposite than declining. It is possible to presume that with rising number of respondents the gap between purchasers and non-purchasers would rise significantly. Respondent rate of 78 is satisfactory for this affirmation.

5.1. Recommendation for further research:

To get deeper into the issue of online textbooks purchasing and to acquire comprehensive data about this issue a survey at national level should have been done.

To be more involved in the issue of lowering interest in textbooks research concentrated on students' behaviour, their needs and their requirements when purchasing textbooks should have been done. Then, it might have been easier to recognize pivotal problems, rectify them and reverse this downbeat trend.

APPENDIX - QUESTIONNAIRE

I am an undergraduate student at the European Business course at the University of Huddersfield. I am doing my dissertation concerning the students' attitudes at Business Studies to buying textbooks online. The research is aimed to the students on Higher Education. My intention is to investigate these approaches because no similar research like this has been carried out so far amongst British students.

Therefore, I would like to beg of you for devoting 5 minutes of time to fill in this questionnaire. At the same time, I assure you the data provided will be handled with the utmost level of security and will serve only for the reasons of my research.

1. What is your gender?

Male ☐   Female ☐

2. What age category do you fall into?

18-22 ☐   28-31 ☐

23-27 ☐   32+   ☐

3. Do you buy course textbooks?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If you answered 'No', please, fill in questions No. 4 and 5. If you answered 'Yes', please carry on with the question No. 6.

4. What materials do you use to study when you do not buy textbooks?

Lecture notes ☐   borrowed materials from the library ☐

E-books   ☐   Other (please, specify):

5. Why do not you buy textbooks?

It is useless ☐   they are expensive ☐

Limited time of use (mostly 1 academic year) ☐   I borrow textbooks in a library ☐

I acquire them from previous students ☐   other (please, specify):

6. If so, do you prefer purchasing them over the Internet rather than in traditional stores?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If you answered 'No' carry on with the questions no. 11, 14 and no. 15. If you answered 'Yes', please, fill in question 7 – 13.

7. What aspects encourage you to buy textbooks online (tick all possibilities)?

You can procure a textbook from everywhere due to the online purchasing ☐

You do not have to go anywhere to purchase a textbook → it is convenient ☐

You may have a better chance that a textbook will still be available over the Internet instead of the bookstore where it can be already sold out ☐

You can also save some money in contact with online vendors ☐

Other (please, specify):

8. Please, rank following attributes of online vendors according to the importance (1 – the biggest importance, 5 – the least importance)

Lower price of desired textbook   (value)

Reputation of particular retailer   (value)

No need to go anywhere to buy a textbook   (value)

Immediate information about textbook availability   (value)

No dependence just on local booksellers   (value)

9. How often do you purchase textbooks online?

I am a new user   ☐   From time to time ☐

Regularly   ☐   Seldom   ☐

10. Do you purchase textbooks just from one specific online retailer?

Yes ☐   No ☐

11. Which online textbook retailer do you or would you give a priority to?

Amazon   ☐   eBay ☐   Abe Books ☐

CIPD Bookstore ☐   other (please, specify):

12. What form of textbooks do you prefer when purchasing online?

New textbooks ☐   used textbooks ☐

13. Please, express level of your satisfaction with purchasing textbooks online

Very satisfied ☐   Neutral   ☐   Very disappointed ☐

Satisfied ☐ Disappointed ☐

14. What are the main factors which discourage you from purchasing textbooks online? (tick all possibilities)

Possible threat of misuse of personal information such as credit card numbers ☐

Not to much experience with the online purchasing ☐

Insufficient skills in PCs ☐

Anxiety of insufficiently secured computer systems ☐

Satisfaction with existing vendor ☐

I do not have anything against purchasing textbooks online I just do not buy them (there is no need to fill in the question No. 15) ☐
Other (please, specify):

15. Please, rank following incentives of not buying textbooks online according to your priority (1- the least priority, 5- the biggest priority)

Anxiety of information misuse (value)
Little experience with purchasing by online textbook retailers (value)
Satisfaction with a retailer in a bookshop (value)
Missing contact with a marketer (value)
Missing contact with a textbook (value)

If you want to know the results of the research, tick this box ☐

I do really appreciate the time you devoted to filling in this questionnaire. I would really like to thank you for your time.

Please, send filled questionnaire to michalurbanek@centrum.cz or university e-mail u0767464@hud.ac.uk.

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