

Final Report

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Syracuse University Students and Opinions Regarding Barnes & Noble

PRL 315: Public Relations Research

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Executive Summary

The problem

Barnes and Noble stores are struggling to keep a customer base with the old-style large bookstores and need to research to discover the best way to adapt to ever-changing customer needs. Barnes and Noble are looking for ways to modernize to keep up with competitors and the e-commerce market while staying true to the brand.

Research Proposal Plan

One of Barnes and Noble's current target markets is college students. College students are typically avid readers and looking for safe spaces to study. We will survey this group as well as conduct a focus group and ask them what they think of Barnes and Noble, how often they see content about the bookstore in the media, how likely they would be to attend events hosted by Barnes and Noble on campus, and if they prefer ebooks or hard copy books. The goal of this is to help Barnes and Noble properly market towards college students and gain more business from this demographic.

The Opportunity

By performing such research, Barnes and Noble has the opportunity to understand decisions and opinions from one of their large potential customer bases. This will give the chain a chance to adapt the stores and work to further please their existing customer and gain back a larger clientele.

Value for Barnes and Noble

Barnes and Noble will benefit from conducting such research in many ways. This knowledge will enable Barnes and Noble to create a positive shared experience for its customers and its brand. This opportunity can change the way that all Barnes and Noble and bookstores, in general, do business.

Specific Goals of Research:

- Help Barnes and Noble improve its marketing strategies towards college students and build customer relationships
- Ways in which Barnes and Noble can reposition itself given its current reputation
- Create brand loyalty with the next generation of customers

I. Introduction and Secondary Research

I-1. Background of Research and Goals of Proposed Research

Barnes and Noble has a need to adapt to the changing consumer landscape, people are looking for a more personal and localized experience when they buy books in person, and mega-sellers like Amazon are seeking a monopoly over online bookselling. The public is choosing to spend their money at local and indie bookstores when they buy physical books, citing the charm of the stores and staff and a desire to keep these establishments in business especially after Covid-19 dealt industry-wide blows and the threat of Amazon looms. This places Barnes and Noble right in the middle of the consumer spectrum. It lacks the convenience and price of Amazon but falls short in attracting the in-person shopper. How can Barnes and Noble reposition itself in the bookselling market to compete with both Amazon and brick-and-mortar stores? This is the central question of our study, which aims to hone in on exactly what Barnes and Noble can do to improve their marketing strategy and store experience.

The focus group we have chosen for this study is college students who have shopped or currently shop at Barnes and Noble. The reasoning behind this choice is that this is an emerging group of consumers, and Barnes has the opportunity to create brand awareness and loyalty among this age group that could last for years to come. College students typically have a pulse on the zeitgeist and may have creative ideas for a new marketing strategy. College students are not in influential positions in the business sphere, and therefore their opinions and ideas would not have the reach to inform Barnes and Noble's strategy unless accessed in a focus group study like the one we have proposed. After Barnes and Noble was sold to a hedge fund in 2019, outlets like Forbes and CNN reported that the company stood on shaky ground. With the addition of new CEO James Daunt, Barnes and Noble has been touted as the 'cool new bookstore' by the

Wall Street Journal. We aim to continue the success of Barnes and Noble's rebranding efforts by gaining firsthand knowledge from our college student-based focus groups, giving Barnes the competitive edge it needs to thrive in the changing marketplace.

The research takeaways we are looking for include the current relationship that our focus group has with Barnes and Noble, and how to improve on that relationship through marketing, store experience, design choices, and pricing. We are also looking to our focus group to learn how Barnes could become more ensconced in their communities, perhaps by hosting learning or tutoring sessions. Lastly, we would like to learn more about how Barnes and Noble can modernize its business model, ensuring market security in the years to come.

I-2. Secondary Research

To enhance Barnes & Noble's understanding of public perceptions, attitudes, motivations, and behaviors relevant to their business, as well as how college students view them, it's essential to consider a variety of studies, industry reports, and media insights. The first things Barnes and Noble must consider are the trends in the market and consumer behavior within this market. Various studies have shown that the book retail industry has evolved significantly due to the rise of shopping and e-books. Pew Research Center reports that *"21% of Americans have read an ebook. The increasing availability of e-content is prompting some to read more than in the past and to prefer buying books to borrowing them."* (PEW, 2012) Due to this increasing rise for e-books, consumers in general are looking for convenience, price competitiveness, and a seamless shopping experience when it comes to buying books, particularly in person over the ease of online book shopping.

Barnes and Noble must also consider college student preferences in relation to price, preferred formats, and book-buying habits. "A 2020 report from the affiliated Public Interest

Research Group reported that price increases had "plateaued," two-thirds of university students said they'd at one point skipped purchasing course materials because they were too expensive." (Hall, 2023) There is an area of investigation within the college-aged demographic that allows for further investigation into the cost-sensitivity of students whether that's their willingness to buy used textbooks, rent, or explore alternative sources for course materials.

"Three in ten Americans now read ebooks." (PEW, 2022) This is one of Barnes and Noble's biggest competitors in the realm of the book industry. The rise of eBooks has had a significant impact on traditional bookstores like Barnes & Noble. In one of the primary research studies related to college students' usage of e-textbooks, the National Association of College Stores (NACS) (2010) found that 87% of the 600 students surveyed in their study had not purchased ebooks within the past 6 months. To go off of that, the study also found that "If given the choice, just over 73% of the respondents indicated that they would choose a printed textbook over an electronic textbook." (NACS, 2010) Another aspect that is important to note is the rise in the Tik-Tok movement of all ages but mainly focusing on Gen-Z, "Book-Tok". Book-Tok is where readers publish their reading recommendations to Tik-Tok by giving their audience a look at what the book is about and also what the book looks like. "BookTok has helped authors sell 20 million printed books in 2021, according to BookScan." (Harris, 2022). To survive and thrive in this digital age, Barnes & Noble has had to and will continue to have to adapt by diversifying their offerings, embracing digital technology, and focusing on enhancing the in-store experience to remain a relevant and valued part of the reading ecosystem. From these studies and sources of information, we may consider conducting or including in our survey the barriers that prevent customers from embracing digital reading and continuing to buy from Barnes and Noble.

A huge part of Barnes and Noble experiences the brick-and-mortar environment known within the walls of any of their stores. Barnes and Noble have added cafés and sitting areas for customers to enjoy their book and a coffee. These distinctive competencies are rooted in many of the company's resources and the overall ambiance they set within their store environment. "The new food and beverage offerings along with a focus on hospitality will further reinforce Barnes & Noble as a destination and a place where people come to spend time and unwind." (Ruggless, 2016)

Another aspect relevant to Barnes and Noble's business is community engagement. When looking at the media coverage of community events held by competitors or similar businesses around the Syracuse area, there were only small book club groups happening at coffee shops. There were no bookstores present that could compete with the location of Barnes and Noble in the Syracuse area. From this, it is clear that there is a bigger sense of customer engagement and loyalty with being one of the only bookstores apart from the campus bookstore in Syracuse. An avenue for investigation, as we delve into our research, could be to partner with local colleges and Syracuse University to host campus events, book signings, and author talks to enhance the perception of Barnes & Noble as a community-oriented bookstore.

To enhance Barnes and Noble's public perception, data-driven insights are key to doing so. Investing in data analytics tools to collect and analyze customer data, purchasing patterns, and browsing behaviors is how Barnes and Noble can effectively utilize their own research and insights to guide them in a more beneficial direction for the audience they want to target and grow.

Barnes & Noble must be adaptive with their business model and assess their availability in the context of their customer base. When looking at industry trends and reports in emerging

business models in the bookstore market, subscription services are at an all-time high right now. “The subscription industry is a market estimated to be worth over \$240 billion globally by 2023.” (Boyarsky, 2021). It is also important to note that the younger demographic is enthralled by subscription services, with “92% of young Americans saying that they use at least one active subscription services” (Boyarsky, 2021). With that being said, Barnes and Noble is on the right path with the regular and premium subscription services they offer, but they must consider as a brand tweaking that to fit the target audience they want to attract. Incorporating these detailed insights from studies, reports, and media sources can provide Barnes & Noble with a comprehensive understanding of public perceptions and behaviors, allowing the company to make informed strategic decisions and stay competitive in the ever-evolving book retail landscape.

Lastly, it is vital to do research on the public’s perception of Barnes and Noble and where they stand in the eyes of a consumer so we can assess our survey accordingly. Their past perception in the eye of the public was, “ a place where strong-arming publishers gobble up independent stores in its quest for market share” (Harris, 2022). From this detrimental public view, they have completely turned the tables around in 2023. NY Times author and publisher Elizabeth A. Harris writes, “ Its unique role in the book ecosystem, where it helps readers discover new titles and publishers stay invested in physical stores, makes it an essential anchor in a world upended by online sales”. The pandemic helped aid them in this view due to the number of people wanting to pick up a hobby or realizing all the downtime they now had because of the virus. Even with their reputation sky-rocketing during COVID, “sales in Barnes & Noble stores were up 3 percent last year over their pre-pandemic performance in 2019.” (Harris, 2022) A key aspect that drives Barnes and Noble apart from its biggest competitor, Amazon, is its willingness

and loyalty to sell and promote print books. “They’re the other major part of the industry that is committed to print and to in-person book-selling.” (Harris, 2022) Because of their loyalty to print, they bring in and accommodate an audience that is also loyal to print. With these aspects of their business, Barnes and Noble has completely changed its reputation in the public eye and must maintain this upward trend in the eyes of consumers.

II. Qualitative Research

II.1 Purpose

In recent years, Barnes & Noble has seen a large decline in sales due to big old-fashioned brick-and-mortar stores no longer being popular and the recent increase in e-commerce. To understand how Barnes can modernize its marketing strategy, we have conducted a focus group of eight diverse students at Syracuse University to understand what that might entail, with the goal of our research being to help Barnes & Noble revamp to get back on the map. Our focus group targets an emerging consumer base, college students- who have little to no free time and are looking for the greatest value for their money. College students are perceptive of B&N’s lack of marketing towards their demographic, with almost all of our participants noting the weak social media presence of the chain. All eight of our participants were unaware that Barnes and Noble had online offerings, and resoundingly preferred to shop at the bookstore’s online competitors. It is clear that Barnes and Noble has a long way to go before it will attract the college demographic, and with this collected research, we can help better B&N’s strategies and retail practices.

II.2 Research Questions

1. RQ1: What are the main drawbacks of Barnes and Noble's current marketing strategy towards college students?

2. RQ2: How can Barnes and Noble revamp its in-store experience to attract more foot traffic from college students?
3. RQ3: How can Barnes and Noble highlight the transformation to college students?
4. RQ4: How can Barnes and Noble utilize social media to acquire new customers and greater brand awareness?
5. RQ5: How can Barnes and Noble strategize to attract college students in the competitive market battle with e-commerce?

II.3 Methodology

We chose to interview a focus group of nine individuals with different majors, ages, races, and genders. We gathered all of these different individuals so we would be able to see how people of differing qualities would react and answer the same questions so we could obtain the most unbiased answer from our group as possible.

II.3.1 Participant Profiles

S.P.: Sophomore at Syracuse University pursuing a degree in Communications Design at the VPA school. Originally from New York City with a Mexican-American background. (Female, 19, Mexican-Caucasian)

D.H.: Sophomore at Syracuse University currently pursuing a dual degree in Finance and Real Estate. Originally from Westchester, NY, D. enjoys watching and playing sports including football and golf. (Male, 19, Asian-Caucasian)

R.B.: Magazine, News, and Digital Journalism and International Relations student at Syracuse University. A sophomore, R. is originally from White Plains, New York. (Male, 19, African American)

H.S.: Broadcast and Digital Journalism major at Syracuse University. He is a sophomore from Bethesda, Maryland. (Male, 20, Caucasian)

F.S.: Advertising graduate student at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. She is originally from Syracuse, New York, and works on campus in the Newhouse advising office. (Female, 20, Hispanic)

R.C.: Biology major at Syracuse University, on the pre-med track. R. is from Rochester, New York, and enjoys reading, baking, and making outfit checks. (Male, 21, Arab-Caucasian)

J.C.: In the ISchool at Syracuse University and her major is information management and technology. J. is a junior and a member of the Delta Gamma sorority. (Female, 21, Caucasian)

K.G.: Junior at Syracuse University studying Sociology with a minor in Marketing. K. is from Boca Raton, Florida, but spends most of her time in the Hamptons. (Female, 20, Caucasian)

S.L.: Junior at Syracuse University studying teaching and is a member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority. S. is from New Jersey and plans on getting a teaching job there post-graduation as well. (Female, 20, Caucasian)

II.4 Key Findings

Theme 1: The main drawback of Barnes & Noble's marketing strategy towards college students is that its marketing team needs to emphasize perks that specifically appeal to college students.

When the moderator asked our subjects if they think B&N does a good job maintaining strong, positive relationships with college students, the answer was a resounding no. Sophie had powerful words, saying, "I don't think the staff does a good job at maintaining relationships. I never once received an email from B&N or a promotion. I am not even aware if there is one near my campus." The fact that this SU student does not know there is a B&N near her campus is alarming. Barnes must take steps to gain more national recognition from the younger generation, specifically towards students who live near a B&N location.

Ramsey's answer differed from Sophie's, as he said with a smile, "I think they do! I feel like I always feel welcome in Barnes & Noble and especially my hometown goes the extra mile

with their seating area.” The rest of the respondents stated that they disagreed with the Rochester native, but it is worth noting that Ramsey feels welcomed when he goes to B&N. Barnes and Noble should consider the importance of a warm and friendly atmosphere inside. This could be instrumental in fixing part of the chain’s student problem. If they figure out how to attract more college students by making them feel welcome at Barnes and Noble, the consumers gained from this change could be instrumental in creating brand loyalty and awareness within this age group.

However, gaining business from college students is no easy task, as stated by Ryan. The dual-major said he would go to B&N if they gave him “some compensation, reward, or giveaway opportunity.” Sarah had similar ideas to Ryan in terms of financial capabilities, responding with, “I think lower prices and maybe also deals if you get your friends to buy books. Maybe for each person you get to buy a book after 5, you can get half off or a free book”. Hosting a giveaway or an entire free book as a reward could be a risky opportunity for a struggling business, but it could also be rewarding. If a college student were to win a product from Barnes & Noble, such as a book, and enjoyed it, they could become more likely to turn into a regular customer.

Theme 2: Barnes & Noble can revamp its in-store experience and attract more foot traffic by playing around with its interior decor and playing music that college students enjoy listening to.

Fabi shared her thoughts on the store’s interior and vibe, saying, “I think adopting a more casual image physically- like different seating options, decorations, and better lighting will help create an ambiance. Making it feel more like a cool and cute local coffee shop. Sometimes it feels like a Walmart.” The comparison to Walmart is a strong one, as it is hard to imagine that Barnes and Noble wants to give off the same vibe as a superstore. College students enjoy coffee

shops and locations with comfortable energy, so B&N becoming more casual and welcoming on the inside could attract more business from that age group. Kaila agreed and added on to Fabi's ideas by saying, "I'd say making their cafe bigger and having more lunch options so we can spend more time there. Maybe a designated study/ quiet reading area as well?". A quiet study or reading place could attract a lot of students, particularly around midterms and finals when the libraries on campus are extremely crowded and stressful.

Ramsey added to these ideas stating, "I think music is really popular in our age group, so I think expanding their music repertoire would be great. Maybe introducing more vinyl." Playing more college-age-friendly music can also play a big part in transforming B&N's in-store experience and environment. If these students go to the bookstore and hear music they enjoy, it could make them more likely to stick around, buy a book, and buy a snack from the cafe. Vinyl also has the potential to be a nice physical addition to B&N that makes the environment feel more up-scale. Adding a vinyl section could be visually appealing and help college students stick around at B&N, additionally, this could attract new consumers to the store.

The key takeaways for this theme include that Barnes and Noble can gain business from college students by upgrading their interior design to make the store feel more like a coffee shop and less like Walmart, adding quiet reading or study areas, as well as playing music and carrying more merchandise that this age group will enjoy.

Theme 3: Barnes & Noble can highlight the transformation to college students by improving its social media presence, sending more emails, and offering rewards.

When the moderator asked the subjects how often they see content about Barnes & Noble in the media, Ramsey said, "I have seen an occasional Instagram post or email. I am pretty sure that is only because I registered an email with them a while ago. They could definitely do a

better job.” It says a lot that in an era where social media is a critical part of marketing, college students rarely see content about B&N. The bookstore should emphasize putting together a creative, hard-working social media/marketing team to get B&N’s name back into the public eye. Utilizing a mailing list with personable language is also important, this helps the subscriber feel more welcome at B&N and could inspire them to visit the store more frequently.

When asked what specific factors shape their perception of B&N, Sophie responded, “I also think that college students are looking for the most cost-efficient option, so maybe Barnes & Noble could offer some sort of premium or college student program.” This is an excellent insight, as many college students practice budgeting and live a cost-efficient lifestyle. If Barnes were to offer a premium or rewards system to college students, the word would likely spread amongst the group and would help the bookstore gain business. It is very challenging for B&N to compete with on-campus libraries for business from college students, so the bookstore needs something to make them stand out compared to more accessible alternatives. Based on the responses from this focus group, it seems that a rewards system would do just that.

Theme 4: Barnes & Noble can utilize social media to attract new customers and increase brand awareness by posting more content, specifically on TikTok, and making that content engaging.

When the moderator asked the subjects what medium they see Barnes & Noble-related content on, Fabi responded, “They should definitely increase their social media usage and post more engaging content.” As stated previously, social media is arguably the most important marketing tool for reaching Gen Z, and it is a great way to increase their business among college students. Engaging content can include giveaways and Instagram polls, as well as question and response stickers or anything that involves users responding to a post. This is also an opportunity

for Barnes and Noble to receive feedback directly from consumers, especially emerging target groups such as college students.

When asked what B&N can do to better market toward college students, Ramsey responded, “Um, I think if I was scrolling on TikTok and I saw Barnes and Noble had an account I would be pretty intrigued to see that. I think they need more advertising in general, on widely used social media platforms.” B&N should take this response to heart. TikTok is a great platform to post engaging, lighthearted content, which is what college students love. A strong TikTok presence could also show college students that B&N cares about their generation and is making an effort to market towards them. TikTok is now a part of the zeitgeist, and using this platform as part of the bookstore's social media marketing strategy toward college students will stand out in comparison to an aged platform like Facebook or X (formerly known as Twitter), which tend to be more popular with older audiences.

Barnes & Noble must expand its social media presence to have a chance at gaining business from college students. This generation spends significantly more time on social media than they do searching for books in person or online, and a strong social media presence will put information about B&N right in front of college students. Barnes should revamp its marketing strategy with a strong focus on producing social media content. Based on our findings, this change would result in a marked increase in positive brand sentiment and awareness among college students.

Theme 5: Barnes & Noble is failing to attract college students in the market battle with e-commerce, but a new marketing strategy could differentiate it from competitors.

When the moderator asked the subjects if they preferred to purchase from online competitors such as Amazon Prime compared to B&N, the answer was a resounding yes. Holden

responded, “I prefer Amazon because my family uses Amazon Prime” Ryan added, “Absolutely. It’s not close because I just don’t go to Barnes and Noble”. These responses make it clear that B&N has a long way to go to stand a chance against online retailers. While Barnes has a website customers can order books from, they need to improve it in a way that makes it stand out from major competitors. That could look like discounts on delivery, selling the books for less money, or offering a rewards program. Competing with the lightning-fast delivery speed of Amazon Prime is no easy task, so it would benefit B&N to hone in on a unique value proposition for its online bookselling strategy.

It appears that creating a marketing strategy to entice customers to visit a Barnes & Noble location to buy books instead of ordering from Amazon Prime is a more difficult task than convincing them to order from the B&N website. Sophie added, “I also prefer online competitors just because they are extremely convenient and also often cheaper.” A combination of convenience and value is difficult to compete against. To fix this problem, Barnes could consider selling books for less money at its physical locations or offering a competitive rewards system for in-person customers.

II.5 Key Takeaways and Insights

When looking at RQ1 and the themes gathered from our focus group, the primary drawback of Barnes & Noble's current marketing strategy towards college students lies in its failure to create content that genuinely resonates with this demographic. To rectify this, Barnes & Noble should prioritize content that caters specifically to college students, addressing their unique needs, interests, and challenges. By doing so, the company can effectively capture the attention of this valuable customer base.

Barnes & Noble can invigorate its in-store experience and attract more foot traffic by focusing on interior decor and music. To answer RQ2, the interior should reflect a contemporary, welcoming atmosphere that appeals to college students, making the store an inviting space for study, leisure, and exploration. Additionally, playing music that aligns with the preferences of college students can enhance the overall shopping experience and encourage prolonged visits.

For RQ3 and Barnes and Noble's ability to communicate its transformation effectively to college students, it needs to bolster its social media presence, employ email marketing more strategically, and institute rewards programs. By consistently engaging with students on social media platforms, providing valuable and relevant content, and offering exclusive deals and rewards, Barnes & Noble can build a stronger connection with its target audience.

To answer RQ4, the company can leverage social media platforms, especially TikTok, to acquire new customers and increase brand awareness. Posting engaging, entertaining, and informative content on TikTok can help Barnes & Noble tap into a wider audience, one that is highly active on this platform. This engagement can foster brand recognition and loyalty.

In the fierce competition with e-commerce giants, Barnes & Noble must take active steps to differentiate itself. To respond to RQ5, the company needs to emphasize its strengths, such as in-store experiences, expert staff, and the immediate availability of books. By focusing on these aspects and ensuring that they are well-promoted in marketing campaigns, Barnes & Noble can remain relevant in the evolving landscape of retail, catering to the needs of customers who value the in-person bookstore experience.

Survey Research

Purpose

The design of the current survey is intricately connected to the findings and recommendations derived from our group's previous research on Barnes & Noble. The aim of the study is to address the challenges faced by Barnes & Noble in its marketing strategy and in-store experience, particularly concerning college students and the competitive e-commerce landscape.

The insights gathered from the initial research highlighted key areas of concern, such as the need for tailored content for college students, improvements in in-store ambiance, effective communication of the company's transformation, strategic use of social media, and differentiation from e-commerce competitors. These insights form the foundation for the survey questions, guiding the investigation into specific aspects identified as crucial for Barnes & Noble's success.

Based on the identified themes and recommendations, the survey includes questions aimed at gauging respondents' preferences and expectations regarding content creation, in-store ambiance, social media engagement, and the communication of Barnes & Noble's unique strengths. For instance, questions may focus on the type of content college students find appealing, the elements that contribute to a positive in-store experience, and the effectiveness of Barnes & Noble's current social media strategies.

Despite the insights gained from the previous research, certain questions remained unanswered. The current survey seeks to fill these gaps by delving deeper into specific aspects that require further exploration. For example, the survey may inquire about the preferred content formats on social media, specific aspects of in-store decor that resonate with college students, and the most effective channels for Barnes & Noble to communicate its strengths.

To enhance the robustness of the study, the survey design integrates information obtained from various sources, including social media analytics, secondary research, and focus groups. This multi-faceted approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of Barnes & Noble's challenges and opportunities, allowing for a more nuanced analysis and tailored recommendations.

In summary, the design of the current survey is a strategic response to the findings of our group's previous research, aiming to gather detailed insights that will contribute to the refinement of Barnes & Noble's marketing strategies, in-store experiences, and overall competitiveness in the dynamic retail landscape.

Research Questions:

RQ1: What are the main drawbacks of Barnes and Noble's current marketing strategy towards college students?

RQ2: How can Barnes and Noble revamp its in-store experience to attract more foot traffic from college students?

RQ3: How can Barnes and Noble highlight the transformation to college students?

RQ4: How can Barnes and Noble utilize social media to acquire new customers and greater brand awareness in the college student demographic?

RQ5: What can Barnes and Noble provide to attract college students in the competitive market battle with e-commerce?

Method

1. Population:

The population for this research study is defined as all college students. The qualtrics survey is being distributed on social media platforms in which college students may or may not engage with.

2. Sampling Frame:

The sampling frame is the list of individuals who were eligible and had the potential to be contacted for participation in the survey. In this study, the sampling frame is unknown as this survey is being distributed via social media platforms for any higher education students to come across and interact with.

3. Sampling Method:

The sampling method employed in this study is a form of convenience sampling, as participants were selected based on their easy accessibility through social media pages and group chats. This method was chosen due to the practicality of reaching a large number of individuals within a short time frame and resource constraints. However, it is important to acknowledge that this convenience sampling method may introduce a bias, as those who are active on these online platforms may differ in characteristics from those who are not.

By using this sampling approach, the researchers recognize that the target population, which ideally includes all individuals with relevant perspectives or experiences, may differ from the accessible population due to the selective nature of online engagement. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted with caution of this potential bias and limitations associated with the sampling method.

Key Findings

This survey research was conducted to study the current opinions on Barnes & Noble and the effects of the transformation on a larger set of college students. We have received thoughts and opinions from over 100 students. The results presented in this research report are based on a sample of the population of college students and are inherently subject to such limitations. These findings should therefore be intercepted with caution.

The beginning portion of the survey regarded the students' feelings about Barnes & Noble. Most people currently feel neutral about the bookstore, whereas the other half of responses were split between somewhat positive and somewhat negative. Additionally, a total of 70% of students said that they visit Barnes & Noble annually or never, and similarly, 74 students believe that their peers visit annually or never as well.

College students have many different motivations for shopping at Barnes & Noble as they do for all shopping decisions. 37.5% of students said that they shop at Barnes & Noble because it is convenient and 29.6% of students selected because of the wide selection. Through the responses, we also collected data that most students do not find Barnes & Noble affordable which is a reason that they have lost business to other retailers. Additionally, the majority of students responded that the addition of a Starbucks or coffee shop to Barnes & Noble stores entices them to shop there.

In this day and age, social media and advertising play a crucial role in reaching the college student demographic and motivating purchase decisions. To collect data on which social platforms would be most effective, we asked students to choose which social media platforms they would be most likely to engage with Barnes & Noble content on. Between TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, X (Twitter), Facebook, and Pinterest, Students are least likely to engage

with content on Snapchat and most likely to engage with content on TikTok. They also shared that they would be most receptive to advertisements placed on Instagram and least receptive to Twitter and TV advertisements.

It has been a question of whether Barnes & Noble has failed to hit the mark on spreading the word about its transformation. 82% of college students said that they have not heard about the transformation that Barnes & Noble is undergoing. We then asked a series of questions regarding the transformation and how likely students would be to shop after these changes were made to the store.

The data we collected will help Barnes & Noble assess how successful their transformation will be in reaching college students. 47 students said that they would appreciate better customer service as a factor of transformation. Additionally, the transformation is clear that it will only have benefits as the majority of the students answered that they are neutral, somewhat likely, or extremely likely to attend Barnes & Noble with the transformation statements. The biggest factor that would make students more likely to shop is more affordable pricing as 80.58% answered that they would be somewhat or extremely likely to shop at B & N.

Many students are not aware that Barnes & Noble has an ebook selection. College students suggest that Barnes & Noble turn to social media promotions and advertisements, specifically on TikTok with a hashtag to increase awareness. They are most likely to engage with content on such platforms. Additionally, 51% of students said they are more likely to shop for books from online retailers such as Amazon, which is why Barnes & Noble needs to better position itself as an online retailer.

We collected data from a large number of college students. Of the 102 students surveyed, we had responses from 2 freshmen, 43 sophomores, 25 juniors, 27 seniors, and 5 graduate

students. 30 students live in an urban area, 63 in the suburbs, and 9 in rural areas. Additionally, we believed it was necessary to ask about monthly income and or allowance. 42% earn between \$0.00 and \$500.00. 41% receive between \$500.00 and \$1000.00. 13% make between \$1000.00 and \$5000.00 and 4% receive \$5000.00 or more. We believe that these demographics were the most important to survey to get a better understanding of who shops at Barnes & Noble and a wide variety of college students.

Takeaways/Insights

One main takeaway from the survey research is that Barnes & Noble must use social media as its main marketing tool for college students. According to Chart 1, a very successful tactic would be building a strong TikTok presence, as the results show that college students are likely to engage with that content. If they do engage with B&N content on social media, it would increase their likelihood of visiting the bookstore. Using social media is a huge part of college students' daily lives, and the marketing team for any business trying to attract this demographic, not just B&N, should take advantage of that fact. It will not be easy for the struggling bookstore to overcome the convenience of on-campus libraries or online options like Amazon Prime, but jumping that hurdle starts with becoming more relatable to college students.

Another insight from the survey research is if B&N wants to receive business from college students, it must be an affordable option. According to Table 1, when respondents were asked how much more likely they would be to attend the bookstore if the pricing became more affordable, the most commonly selected response was extremely likely, combined with somewhat likely, accounted for 79/99 responses to the question, "How likely are you to attend Barnes & Noble based on the following statements - more affordable pricing." The survey results

also showed that a student discount would make college students extremely likely to join a B&N rewards program. Transformation decision-makers must remember that many college students do not have a strong, consistent source of income, so they cannot draw business from this demographic if their products are overpriced.

The final key takeaway from surveying college students about B&N is that a challenging part of the transformation will be making it known to students who do not live close to the bookstore or do not visit often. Table 6 showed that college students who live 20+ miles away from their nearest B&N are the group with the highest percentage of respondents who had never heard of the transformation. The second crosstab showed that students who visit the bookstore weekly are the group that had the highest percentage of respondents who know about the transformation. Both of these results show a correlation that students who live closer to a B&N location are more likely to visit and therefore know about the transformation. Throughout the transformation, key decision-makers must know that their biggest challenge will be marketing to college students who do not live near a B&N or visit often and execute their tactics accordingly.

Discussion and Recommendations

In synthesizing the qualitative and quantitative findings from our research on Barnes & Noble's challenges in marketing and in-store experience, a comprehensive understanding emerges. The qualitative investigation, conducted through a focus group, uncovered key themes related to marketing strategy and in-store ambiance. Our survey, involving over 100 college students, provided quantitative data that supplements and reinforces these qualitative insights.

One crucial aspect highlighted in the qualitative segment is the need for Barnes & Noble to tailor its marketing content to resonate authentically with college students, a notion supported

by quantitative data suggesting that 70% of students visit the bookstore annually or never. Furthermore, the emphasis on enhancing the in-store experience, as revealed through themes in the focus group, aligns with the quantitative data indicating that interior decor, music, and the addition of a coffee shop are significant factors influencing students' decisions to visit.

The quantitative findings deepen our understanding of students' motivations and preferences. The survey indicates that affordability is a major concern for students, with over 40% stating that they do not find Barnes & Noble affordable. Additionally, the survey offers insights into potential merchandise additions, such as arts & crafts, room decor, and clothing, which could attract students. This complements the focus group's suggestion to invigorate the in-store experience.

The alignment of qualitative and quantitative data is evident in the discussion around social media. Both components stress the importance of social media in reaching the college demographic. The focus group recommended bolstering social media presence, while the survey data specifically highlights TikTok as a potential platform for engagement.

The quantitative findings also shed light on the awareness gap regarding Barnes & Noble's transformation, with 82% of students stating they were unaware. The recommendations from the focus group regarding strategic social media promotions, especially on TikTok, coincide with the survey respondents' inclination toward engaging with content on such platforms.

We sent out our survey to college students and collected responses from a wide variety of students of all years and graduate levels. We received opinions from over 100 students on Barnes & Noble, ways in which the bookstore can improve their strategies, and information regarding

the Barnes & Noble transformation. We understand that this survey report and the interviews conducted are only representative of a small portion of the population and a sample of college students. Thus, the results presented in this research report are based on a sample of the population of college students and inherently subject to such limitations. These findings should therefore be interpreted with caution.

The synthesis of qualitative and quantitative data paints a cohesive picture of Barnes & Noble's challenges and potential solutions. The research suggests that addressing content resonance, enhancing in-store ambiance, improving affordability, and strategically leveraging social media, especially TikTok, are key strategies for the company's future success in attracting and retaining college students. This comprehensive approach considers both the nuanced insights from qualitative research and the broader trends and preferences identified through quantitative data, providing a robust foundation for Barnes & Noble's strategic decision-making moving forward. The collected data should be used as a guide by Barnes & Noble to attract more college students and smoothly transition their stores to appeal to this demographic. The first step to improving the connections and relationships with college students is increasing marketing strategies towards this group. We believe that the collected data will help B&N increase sales, improve its marketing, and gain more student engagement. In years passed Barnes & Noble has failed to keep up with the ever-changing trends of the market, but we believe that by taking into consideration some of our findings the stores will be able to reposition themselves.

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Appendices

Final Research, Group Peach

Syracuse, NY

Researchers: Kayla Kavakeb, Heather McClure, Julian Frucht, Ava Brenneman

Appendix 1:

Demographics of Respondents

Demographic Information of respondents (N = 103)

Demographic Characteristics	N	%
<i>Year in College</i>		
Freshman	2	1.9
Sophomore	41	39.8
Junior	25	24.3
Senior	26	25.2
Graduate Student	4	3.9
<i>Hometown</i>		
Urban	29	28.2
Suburban	60	58.3
Rural	9	8.7
<i>Monthly Income</i>		
\$0-500	39	37.9
\$500-1,000	41	39.8
\$1,000-5,000	12	11.7
\$5,000+	4	3.9

Distance from closest Barnes & Noble

1-5 miles	39	37.9
5-10 miles	39	37.9
10-20 miles	14	13.6
20+ miles	6	5.8

Chart 1: Participants' Engagement on TikTok

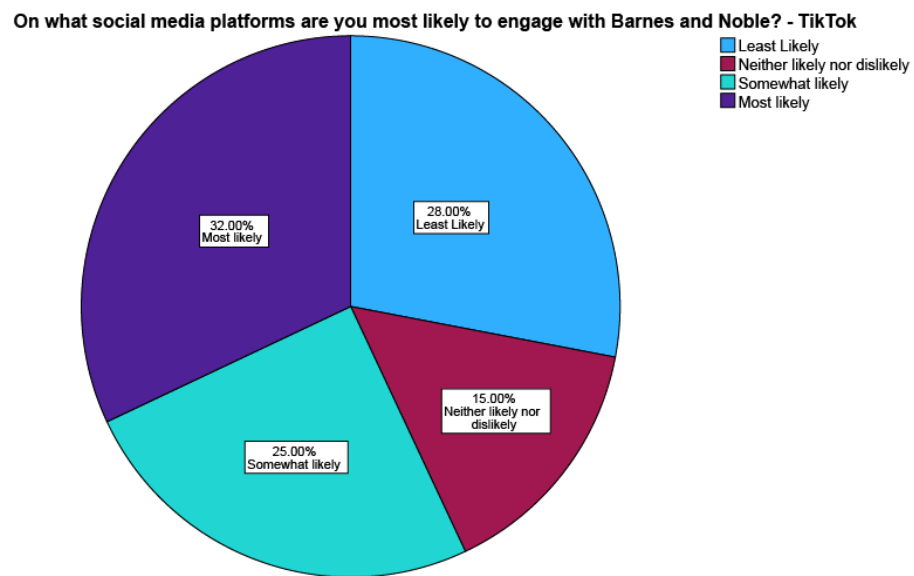


Table 1: Participants' Likelihood to attend B&N if Pricing were more Affordable

How likely are you to attend Barnes & Noble based on the following statements - More affordable pricing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Extremely unlikely	5	4.9	5.1	5.1
	Somewhat unlikely	9	8.7	9.1	14.1
	Neither likely nor unlikely	6	5.8	6.1	20.2
	Somewhat likely	35	34.0	35.4	55.6
	Extremely likely	44	42.7	44.4	100.0
	Total	99	96.1	100.0	
Missing	System	4	3.9		
Total		103	100.0		

Chart 2: Participant's Year in College

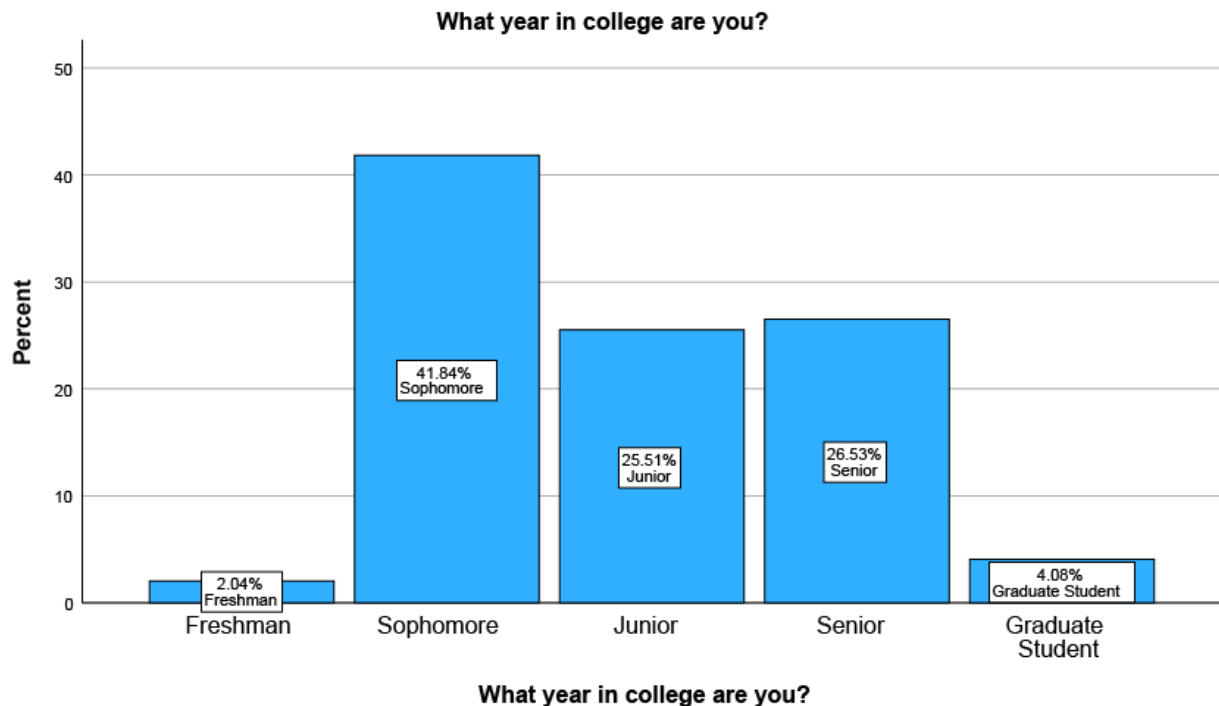


Table 2: Participants' Monthly Income

What is your monthly income or allowance?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	\$0-500	39	37.9	40.6	40.6
	\$500-1000	41	39.8	42.7	83.3
	\$1000-5000	12	11.7	12.5	95.8
	\$5000+	4	3.9	4.2	100.0
	Total	96	93.2	100.0	
Missing	System	7	6.8		
Total		103	100.0		

Table 3: Participant's preferred book Retailers

Where do you prefer to buy books from?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Chains like Barnes & Noble	23	22.3	23.2	23.2
	Smaller, independent bookstores	25	24.3	25.3	48.5
	Online retailers such as Amazon	51	49.5	51.5	100.0
	Total	99	96.1	100.0	
Missing	System	4	3.9		
Total		103	100.0		

Chart 3: Where Participants choose to Study

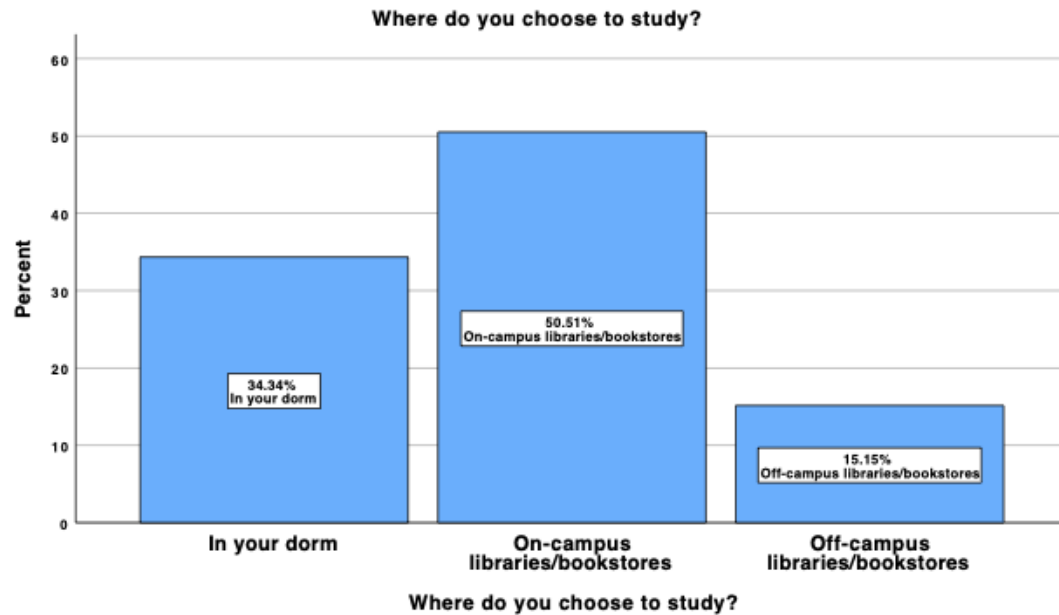


Table 4: Participant's Likelihood to Join a B&N Rewards Program if it included a Student Discount

What perks would entice you to join a Barnes and Noble rewards program? Select all that apply. Student discount

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Student discount	86	83.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	17	16.5		
Total		103	100.0		

Table 5: Participant's Receptiveness to Instagram Advertising

What advertising placements for Barnes and Noble would you be most receptive towards? Select all that apply. Instagram Advertisement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Instagram Advertisement	76	73.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	27	26.2		
Total		103	100.0		

Appendix 2:

Table 6: Subgroup - How Frequently Participants Visit B&N based on how close they Live to It

How often do you visit Barnes & Noble? * How close do you live to your nearest Barnes & Noble? Crosstabulation					
			How close do you live to your nearest ...		
			1-5 miles	5-10 miles	10-20 miles
How often do you visit Barnes & Noble?	Weekly	Count	2	4	0
		% of Total	2.0%	4.1%	0.0%
	Monthly	Count	7	13	3
		% of Total	7.1%	13.3%	3.1%
	Annually	Count	20	12	7
		% of Total	20.4%	12.2%	7.1%
	Never	Count	10	10	4
		% of Total	10.2%	10.2%	4.1%
Total	Count	39	39	14	
	% of Total	39.8%	39.8%	14.3%	

How often do you visit Barnes & Noble? * How close do you live to your nearest Barnes & Noble? Crosstabulation				
			How close do ...	
			More than 20 miles	Total
How often do you visit Barnes & Noble?	Weekly	Count	1	7
		% of Total	1.0%	7.1%
	Monthly	Count	1	24
		% of Total	1.0%	24.5%
	Annually	Count	2	41
		% of Total	2.0%	41.8%
	Never	Count	2	26
		% of Total	2.0%	26.5%
Total	Count	6	98	
	% of Total	6.1%	100.0%	

Table 7: Subgroup - Participant's Knowledge of the Transformation based on how often they Visit

Have you heard about the transformation Barnes & Noble is undergoing? * How often do you visit Barnes & Noble? Crosstabulation

			How often do you visit Barnes & Noble?			
			Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never
Have you heard about the transformation Barnes & Noble is undergoing?	Yes	Count	2	6	8	2
		% of Total	2.0%	6.0%	8.0%	2.0%
	No	Count	5	18	33	26
		% of Total	5.0%	18.0%	33.0%	26.0%
Total	Count		7	24	41	28
	% of Total		7.0%	24.0%	41.0%	28.0%

Have you heard about the transformation Barnes & Noble is undergoing? * How often do you visit Barnes & Noble? Crosstabulation

			Total
Have you heard about the transformation Barnes & Noble is undergoing?	Yes	Count	18
		% of Total	18.0%
	No	Count	82
		% of Total	82.0%
Total		Count	100
		% of Total	100.0%

Appendix 3:

Discussion Guide:

Moderator: As a college student, do you make time in your schedule to independently free read?

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucasian): I do not devote much of my free time to reading.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): Yes! I tend to read more when I'm at home from school.

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): Yes! Usually, I spend each month on one book.

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): I rarely independently read.

Ryan (19, African American): I actually do. Before I go to bed every night, I try to read at least a chapter of a book.

Holden (20, Caucasian): Similarly to Ryan, I also read before bed every night. However, I don't have the attention span to read a chapter of a book, but I read my favorite sports subscriptions. I try to read what the best NBA and NFL reporters write.

Jamie (21, Caucasian): I wish I did! I always have a pile of books I want to read but am always too busy between work and school to find the time.

Kaila (20, Caucasian): I start my day by reading for 30 minutes every morning.

Sarah (20, Caucasian): Sometimes I end my day by reading, but it depends how busy I am.

Moderator: What motivates you to shop at Barnes and Noble instead of other independent bookstores or online?

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): I do not shop at Barnes and Noble much. I definitely like that it has a coffee shop though.

Kaila (20, Caucasian): It is so close to campus and I enjoy being able to get a drink and read my book after I check out!

Holden (20, Caucasian): I don't shop at Barnes and Noble.

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucassian): Same.

Sarah (20, Caucasian): Me too.

Ryan (19, African American): Neither do I. I have a lot of memories at B&N but no longer shop there because of the much more convenient options.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): I shop at Barnes and Noble because I like that it has a coffee shop and a wide range of inventory. The employees are insightful and offer a traditional book-shopping experience. I wish there were more in the area.

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): I still shop at Barnes and Noble because it has a large selection but I definitely prefer a smaller-scale bookstore.

Moderator: To follow up, do you prefer online competitors such as Amazon compared to Barnes and Noble?

Holden (20, Caucasian): I prefer Amazon because my family uses Amazon Prime.

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): I definitely prefer to order books online because it is much more convenient.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): I prefer to shop at Barnes and Noble. I like the experience!

Ryan (19, African American): Absolutely. It's really not close because I just don't go to Barnes and Noble.

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): I also prefer online competitors just because they are extremely convenient and often cheaper.

Sarah (20, Caucasian): 100%

Jamie (21, Caucasian): It's just easier and cheaper being able to order from Amazon.

Moderator: Do you prefer to read hard-copy books or ebooks?

Fabi (20, Hispanic): Hardcopy.

Kaila (20, Caucasian): Definitely hardcopy.

Jamie (21, Caucasian): Ebooks are so convenient because I have my Ipad with me at all times.

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): No preference

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): Hardcopy, I just think a more tangible object makes it more fun to read, and turning the pages and having my own bookmark. I like building a visual collection of the books I've read.

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucasian): Definitely ebooks.

Ryan (19, African American): Hard-copy. It's not even close. It hurts my head to read a book online for a while. I can't remember the last time I touched an ebook. I feel like I retain a better memory of the book when I actually have it in my hands.

Holden (20, Caucasian): Hard copy. I feel like a book is something you're supposed to get lost in, and technology's obviously a distraction. It hurts my eyes to read ebooks and I don't think it's the same experience, but that's just me. I do think reading a book on an iPad is more efficient, though.

Moderator: It seems like most of you like hard copies. On a scale of 1-5, one being not at all likely and five being extremely likely, how likely would you be to buy an ebook from the Barnes and Noble website?

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucasian): 4. If the price is reasonable, I don't see any reason why I wouldn't.

Ryan (19, African American): 1. For the reasons I mentioned, I just don't buy ebooks.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): 2

Holden (20, Caucasian): 1. I don't see a reason to if I have Amazon Prime.

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucasian): 3

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): 1

Kaila (20, Caucasian): 2

Jamie (21, Caucasian): 5. I love them.

Sarah (20, Caucasian): 2

Moderator: Did you know Barnes and Noble sells ebooks?

Ryan (19, African American): Yes I did.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): I did not know that.

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): I did not know that either.

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): Same. They should really market that better.

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucassian): Me too.

Holden (20, Caucasian): I did know that B&N sells ebooks but they do not do a good enough job to market that.

Kaila (20, Caucasian): I really didn't. Now I am going to buy some because I have my Ipad with me everywhere.

Sarah (20, Caucasian): I knew but I always just thought that it'd be more expensive than Amazon.

Moderator: If you said a 4 or 5, what factors influenced you to buy Barnes and Noble ebooks?

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucassian): I answered 4. There are no specific influencing factors that come to mind, I just can't think of any reason not to. Barnes and Noble also has such a large selection so I know they will have what I am looking for.

Jamie (21, Caucasian): I said 5 because I really respect Barnes and Noble as a company compared to a big online shopping platform such as Amazon. The

Barnes and Noble membership allows you to get money off sometimes and same with being a student. I am just loyal to the company.

Moderator: Do you believe the Barnes and Noble corporate department does a good job maintaining strong, positive relationships with college students? Why or why not?

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): I don't think the staff does a good job at maintaining relationships. I never have once received an email from B&N or a promotion. I am not even aware if there is one near my campus.

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): I think they do! I feel like I always feel welcome in Barnes & Noble and especially my hometown goes the extra mile with its seating area.

Jamie (21, Caucasian): I think so because whenever I go to sit down at the cafe I always see other college students. I remember one time my friends and I all wanted to study together at the cafe but there weren't any tables big enough so an employee came over and pushed two tables together so we could all be together.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): I disagree with Ramsey. I feel like my B&N experiences are always rushed and I am usually just getting a book and leaving.

Ryan (19, African American): I also do not think the corporate department does a good job because I haven't thought of Barnes and Noble since I've been on campus for the past year and a half. They don't offer college students any exclusives or premiums.

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucassian): I think everyone covered my thoughts for the most part, I feel as though there is little to no relationship there.

Holden (20, Caucasian): Same. I probably won't think about Barnes & Noble again after this focus group.

Moderator: Which specific factors influence college students' perceptions of B&N's relationship-building efforts?

Kaila (20, Syracuse): I'm not sure there are any specific factors other than the inclusion of a cafe or the Book-Tok section because I feel like a lot of the Book-Tok demographic are students.

Jamie (21, Syracuse): I'm not sure they do a lot to actually build relationships but they make their stores cater to college students with the cafe area.

Holden (20, Caucasian): I don't really think there's any relationship effort. I think B&N needs to find a way to be more niche. It's 2023, not 2003, and the needs of people have changed.

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucassian): I believe college students want to feel represented and wanted in every company and I think Barnes & Noble really fails to hit the mark in that aspect. They don't reach out to college students.

Ryan (19, African American): I don't see any of their relationship-building efforts. I don't even know if they do build relationships with college students.

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): I agree with Dylan. I also think that college students are looking for the most cost-efficient option, so maybe Barnes & Noble can offer some sort of premium or college student program.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): I believe that there are a lot of outside influences and stereotypes surrounding Barnes & Noble, and students are looking for trendy brands rather than traditional ones.

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): I'd like to add that the social factors and cultural behaviors of college students aren't typically related to shopping at a bookstore, or Barnes & Noble's, which definitely affects the perception of others.

Moderator: How often do you see Barnes and Noble-related content in the media?

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): Hardly ever.

Kaila (20, Caucasian): Only when they got a new CFO.

Jamie (21, Caucasian): Honestly never.

Sarah (20, Caucasian): I don't.

Ryan (19, African American): Never.

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucassian): Me too.

Moderator: What medium have you seen this content on?

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): I have seen an occasional Instagram post or email. That is only because I registered an email with them a while ago. They could definitely do a better job.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): They should definitely increase their social media usage and post more engaging content.

Kaila (20, Caucasian): I'm pretty sure it was the New York Times app where I read the article.

Moderator: Have you heard anything about the recent Barnes & Noble's plans for a transformation that would turn the bookstores' physical locations into smaller scale more personable stores?

Holden (20, Caucasian): I have not. That sounds like a good idea though!

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucassian): I also haven't but this could be a great way to reach more college students.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): I also haven't.

Kaila (20, Caucasian): No, but now I am so excited.

Jamie (21, Caucasian): No. That will get me to go into the store now though.

Sarah (20, Caucasian): I haven't .

Ryan (19, African American): Me too.

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): This is definitely something that we should be seeing coverage on.

Moderator: Will you as a college student continue to visit B&N, make purchases, and recommend it to your peers after the transformation?

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): I definitely think that this transformation will make me much more likely to attend B&N.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): I will definitely continue to shop at Barnes & Noble and I think this will be a great way to reach other audiences and get publicity.

Moderator: If you are not a current customer of B&N, are you more likely to be after the transformation?

Ryan (19, African American): If it becomes more modern, I might be more likely to go there. I still doubt I would choose it over campus libraries though.

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): I think I would definitely go there.

Holden (20, Caucasian): If they can somehow become more convenient to buy books from than Amazon Prime, maybe I will become a customer.

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucassian): I still can't see myself ever shopping there but I think this could be a great idea to attract college students.

Sarah (20, Caucasian): If they lower the prices and make it more alluring for college students, definitely.

Moderator: What could Barnes and Noble do to better market to your age group?

Ryan (19, African American): If they gave me some compensation, reward, or giveaway opportunity I would go to their store.

Sarah (20, Caucasian): I think lower prices and maybe also deals if you get your friends to buy books. Maybe each person you get to buy a book after 5, you can get half off or a free book.

Fabi (20, Hispanic): I would say it's hard in college because even though I love reading, I don't have the time when I'm on campus. I think adopting a more casual image physically- like different seating options, decorations, and better lighting will help create an ambiance. Making it feel more like a cool and cute local coffee shop. Sometimes it feels like a Walmart. I think they should start by posting a lot on social media, and I think that giveaways would be huge. I would market events in a community space online where people could bond over Barnes and Noble and books.

Kaila (20, Caucasian): I'd say making their cafe bigger and having more lunch options so we can spend more time there. Maybe a designated study/ quiet reading area as well?

Ramsey (21, Arab-Caucasian): I think music is really popular in our age group, so I think expanding their music repertoire would be great. Maybe introducing more vinyl, I also think that my age group has a preference for fiction, so expanding on that section as well.

Um, I think if I was scrolling on TikTok and I saw Barnes and Noble had an account I would be pretty intrigued to see that. I think they need more advertising in general, on widely used social media platforms.

Jamie (21, Caucasian): Maybe a book club with students at your school, that could be fun.

Sophie (19, Mexican-Caucassian): I definitely think that this transformation will be good to target college students. Aside from that, there should definitely be some rewards programs in place for students who shop there and more of an effort to reach college students.

Dylan (19, Asian-Caucassian): I think the transformation will definitely help. If they make reading fun it will be more fun to attend the store.

Holden (20, Caucasian): Find a way to make reading books cool. Or find a way to maybe create a book cub. What if instead of being just a bookstore, they offered for people to join book clubs.