THE EFFECT OF MARKETIZATION ON STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: DO THEY THINK THEY ARE THE CUSTOMER AND DOES IT AFFECT HIGH ENGAGEMENT LEARNING PRACTICES?

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Abstract: Since the U.S. federal government moved funding from institutions to individual students, institutions of higher education increasingly have recruited students using market oriented methods. Some higher education scholars propose that because of this shift in student recruitment toward marketization, "customer" expectations are being created and reinforced within higher education students. This study investigated three institutions of higher education for possible relationships between students' customer attitude and their participation in high-engagement practices for the purposes of understanding if student learning is affected by consumerist expectations. Correlational analysis and linear regression methods were used to identify any relationship. Linear regression was used to further understand how demographic data collected from participants presented more or less relational influence over relationships. The statistical analysis revealed a positive correlational relationship between student perception and student practices in the learning environment. Subsequent demographic division of the sample revealed statistical differences in populations based on divisions by participant reported biological gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation or non-participation, living location, learning location, and percent tuition payment responsibility. Further research is proposed to gain a deeper understanding of individual majors that demonstrated stronger or weaker correlational relationships, expand participant data to additional institutions, collect data over a longer period of time tracking a cohort, and examine online student learning.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Understanding higher education is a complex and difficult task, but one thing is certain: to understand higher education is to acknowledge its unique interconnection with almost all aspects of culture and society. Within this societal connection, individual and corporate constituencies are represented, from constituents as specific as students, to corporations and even to state and federal government. Higher education influences, and is affected by, most entities within society (Eagle & Brennan, 2007; Morgan, 2006; Litten, 1980). From its inception, higher education has been a strong influence on culture. From the first universities that trained clergy in biblical study, which changed communities through their education and example, to today's universities that teach students of all levels to become the next workers and future leaders within organizations- universities have shaped our world. The influence of higher education also is not one directional; communities, culture and society also influence higher education. A need for people to work in all areas of culture drives scholars to understand and then teach concepts, ideas and skills to students. University research parks are current day examples of this intersection. Today's research parks are a hybrid of research, learning and business that allow research to evolve into business ideas that change the world (Matkin,

2001).

This dissertation sought to understand the effects culture and specifically, the economic aspects of culture, have on higher education and its students. The need for higher education to serve the public and private good (Kezar, 2004) continues to be critical. To continue to serve students within higher education, this study sought to step back and look at the broad influences of society and then focus on how those influences have affected student learning within higher education. Throughout the study the intersection of higher education and culture were viewed through the lens of students and their behavior while they participated in higher education.

Provided in this first chapter are several foundational elements of the research, as well as the research context. The background for the study, the significance of the study, the purpose of the study, the statement of the problem, research questions and hypothesis, the problem statement, an overview of the methodology are all introduced within this chapter. In addition, the definition of terms used throughout the remainder of the research are presented. These elements lay a foundation for the chapters that follow.

Background of the Study

In recent decades, higher education faced significant financial changes from challenges such as rising institutional costs and reduced funding from states (Aschenbrener, 2016; Rizzo, 2006). As these changes occurred, students paid much more and took on significant amounts of debt through student loans. This rise in cost and student debt fueled the debate over the value of higher education. Accompanying this situation were the rise of neoliberalism, marketization and higher education capitalism (Saunders, 2014; Lemke, 2001; Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). While each

of these terms is discussed in depth in Chapter Two, the economic lens of today's society appears to embrace all ideologies focused on monetary gain. This research focuses on marketization, defined as "a restructuring process that enables state enterprises to operate as market-oriented firms by changing the legal environment by which they operate" (Van der Hoeven & Szirácz ki, 1997, p. 101). The philosophical and often practical shift from "public" to "private" understanding of all entities has implications with significant reach. Higher education has been operating within a culture of marketization and bears some of the marks of culture's shift in understanding. For this research "marketization" in the context of higher education utilized the operational definition of "the market-like actions that higher education adopts to respond to the challenges that it faces."

The features of higher education marketization are demonstrated in considerations such as customer-focused student recruiting methods, institutional foci on year-to-year student population growth, the outsourcing of staff, support and faculty functions, the exploration and investment in new streams of revenue, increased cost analysis as a basis for program viability, additional attention to and primacy of fundraising, selective recruiting based on students' ability to pay, and deeper tuition discounting and promotion of the student "experience" as a central part of college (Ehrenberg, Zhang & Levin, 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004, Stoll, Bradley & Mahan, 2014). Because very few of these market-like actions align with the traditional teaching and learning function of higher education, those serving in higher education need to better understand their effects on students and higher education institutions. As with many actions that are taken today, the long-term effects are unknown. For higher education to remain a place of learning, further understanding of this trend in marketization is needed.

Significance of the Study

Leaders in higher education need to be aware of marketization and the influence that it brings to better understand the current landscape of higher education. Marketization affects significant aspects of higher education, including public policy, federal financial aid, organizational behavior, and governance structures. However, whether these marketization trends also have implications for student learning outcomes is not yet understood. Consequently, better understanding the impact of marketization on students could provide insight into the ways in which students' expectations shape their self-perception and engagement in the classroom. This study, focused on student expectations as a customer in relation to student involvement, identified some of the impact of marketization, and provided insights as to how best to lead students learning in this marketized environment.

Problem Statement

With the initiation by the US federal government to move educational funding from institutions to individual students, institutions of higher education increasingly have recruited students using market oriented methods (1944 GI Bill; 1968 Higher Education Act, Molesworth; Nixon & Scullion, 2009). Certain scholars propose that because of this shift in student recruitment toward marketization, "customer" expectations are created and reinforced within higher education students (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009). This market centered narrative is also seen in the current popular critique that as student cost and debt continue to rise, the effect of higher education to improve student learning outcomes continues to decline (Arum & Roksa, 2011). Because the current literature focuses on marketization's positive or negative effects on operation there is a need to

understand marketization's effect on student learning. More specifically, there is a need to discover if there is a relationship between students' customer attitudes and student "involvement" in engaged learning practices. To gain this understanding, this study focused on students and their experience within marketizations forces.

Statement of the Problem

This research sought to determine a possible relationship between a students' customer attitudes and their participation in high-engagement learning practices. These high-engagement learning practices are strongly aligned with student learning (Astin 1985, Kuh, 2008). Previous studies have not measured students' customer expectations against engagement practices.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to discover if there is a relationship between the independent variable of a student's positionality as customer or learner (Saunders, 2014a) and the dependent variable of student engagement (Astin, 1985). The research sought to understand if student learning is affected by students' consumerist expectations. The primary independent research variable was a student's positionality as a customer or learner in higher education.

Research Questions

The following primary and secondary research question guided this study.

Primary Research Question.

Q1: Does a student's perceptions that they are the customer in higher education affect the student's involvement in learning?

Secondary Research Questions.

Q1: Does a student's biological gender affect their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q2: Does a student's major affect their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q3: Does a student's academic classification affect their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q4: Does university athletic participation or non-participation affect student's their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q5: Does a student's living (either campus housing or off campus housing) and learning locations (online or in a physical classroom) affect their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q6: Does the percentage of student's tuition responsibility affect their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q7: Do the combined effects of these independent variables of biological gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation or non-participation, living location, learning location, and percentage of students' tuition responsibility predict a student's perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Hypothesis

The literature surrounding marketization and student perception is influential in the directional hypothesis decisions made within the study. Using the proposed methodology presented fully in Chapter Three, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Directional Hypothesis: There will be a negative relationship between students' responses as customers and involvement in high involvement activities.

Null Hypothesis. There is no relationship between students' responses as customers and involvement in high involvement activities.

Directional Hypothesis. There will be a positive relationship between the percent of tuition that students pay and their expression of student learning involvement.

Null Hypothesis. There is no relationship between the percent of tuition that students pay and their expression of student learning involvement.

Hypothesis. Demographic and participant-identified factors including biological gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation or non-participation, living location, learning location, and percent tuition payment will influence the level of expression of student learning involvement.

Null Hypothesis. Demographic and participant-identified factors including biological gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation or non-participation, living location, learning location, and percent tuition payment will not influence the level of expression of student learning involvement.

With these research hypotheses, the goal of the study was to identify measurable relationships between students' positions as customers and involvement in student high-engagement learning practices. Ultimately, the research sought to find the social cost incurred because of marketization efforts that may position students to perceive themselves as customers in higher education.

Overview of Methodology

Disclosure of the researcher's epistemological perspective is important when presenting research methodology because it grounds the work and informs the selection of research methods and analytical tools. Crotty (1998) discussed epistemology as the way that the researcher understands meaning and reality. The three main epistemological stances are that meaning, and reality are: in existence already and there to be discovered (objectivism), invented or constructed as the researcher interacts with subjective and objective truth (constructivism) or that meaning, and reality are imposed on the world by individuals (subjectivism). For an epistemological stance to be aligned in research, a theoretical perspective must follow naturally from the epistemological stance. For this dissertation, the research questions were approached with an epistemological stance of objectivism, using post positivism as the theoretical perspective. Post-positivism seeks explanation for regularly observed phenomena in the world (Crotty, 1998). With those perspectives grounding the research, a cross sectional survey research structure was used to collect responses and complete the quantitative analysis of participants' responses.

The main goal of the research was to measure relationships that may exist between the variables of students' customer perception and their reported participation in high-engagement practices; therefore, the study used a quantitative methodological approach. A cross sectional survey design was used to take a snapshot image of the student population within a specific place at a specific point in time. The snapshot image is an approach that allows the data to say something specific within the context of the population (Creswell 2009; Gay, Mills; & Airasian, 2012, Ruel, Wagner, & Gillespie, 2016). This design enabled a better understanding of respondents perceptions and actions

to determine if any relationships existed between student self-perception and their involvement in learning.

Data collection was achieved through the use of a three-part instrument using a sample of undergraduate students from across the United States. Preexisting survey instruments were utilized because of their validity statistically demonstrated over time through statistical analysis (Vogt et al., 2014). Sampling occurred through convenience sampling, and included individuals who met the requirement for inclusion, were easily accessible, were available during the period of the study, and were willing to participate in the study (Gay et al., 2012). Data analysis to address the research questions occurred in three phases: descriptive, correlation, and stepwise multiple regression. A more detailed description and rationale for each phase appears in Chapter Three. This method and structure were observed to analyze the primary research question and the first hypothesis of a directional correlation relationship between students' perceptions as customer and the engagement practices they exhibit. Correlational analysis methods and stepwise multiple regression analysis were performed to answer the remaining research questions. A detailed description of epistemology, theoretical framework, and research methodology appears in Chapter Three.

Limitations and Delimitations

Both limitations and delimitations existed within this research. Limitations outside the control of the study included geography, NSSE instrument bias, time, self reporting bias, and student response characteristics. Efforts in the design and analysis were made to identify and present these limitations. The research decision boundaries or "delimitations" fall within the following categories: methodology selection, sample

population, sampling decision, and online instrument delivery. A thorough discussion of these limitations and delimitations appears in Chapter Three.

Definition of Terms

Marketization

"A restructuring process that enables state enterprises to operate as market-oriented firms by changing the legal environment by which they operate" (Van der Hoeven & Sziráczki, 1997, p. 101)

Student

An individual who is currently working toward completion of an undergraduate degree at a four-year university.

Student Involvement

A concept often used within the study of student learning which proposes that students who demonstrate certain practices exhibit high levels of engagement with effective learning practices. These practices include level of challenge, active learning, student faculty interaction, and supportive environment (Astin 1985; Kuh, 2001). Measurement of student participation in these practices is the purpose of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2018).

Student as Customer

An independent variable used in the study to measure students' perception of being in the role of the "customer" within higher education. The term *customer* was employed primarily due to its use in the relevant literature. The terms *customer* and *consumer* were used interchangeably but sparingly throughout the research. When *consumer* was used, the term referenced the mindset characteristics of an individual or group (expectations of

ease, efficiency, and expectations mediated by money exchange), not the act of consumption sometimes associated with the term.

Organization of Study

This chapter provided an introduction and overview of the study. Chapter Two presents a review of literature related to the present study. Relevant literature is presented in four broad areas: field of student affairs, new student affairs professionals, attrition in student affairs, and wellness. Chapter Three details the research perspective along with the research methodology to include design, respondents, data sampling, collection, and analysis. Chapter Four reports the results of data analysis and, finally, Chapter Five contains a discussion of the findings, their implications and recommendations for future research.

Conclusion

Higher education operates within an open system, defined by Morgan (2006) as any system that functions within the influences of its own as well as outside forces. As such, it is important for higher education leaders to understand how changes over time affect the goal of the organization; in the case of higher education this goal is for students to learn. Although methods, means, and disciplines change over time, the cultural and economic shifts provide opportunity to focus the attention on students and how changes by way of marketization affect them and the activities they participate in while learning.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The cost of and the need for higher education have been increasing together for some time and both have reached critical levels. Although some researchers argue that the amount of learning that takes place by students in higher education has declined (Arum & Roksa, 2011), this discussion of the literature does not enter into that debate; rather, it presents a discourse in the areas surrounding marketization and the impact on students. In an attempt to clearly present this information, the chapter begins with the presentation of the concepts of neoliberalism, capitalism in higher education, and marketization, providing a historical and cultural context for where higher education finds itself today. Because this research focuses on students and the impacts of marketization on them, a discussion from the literature regarding student identity, expectation, and motivation continues the discussion. Following the presentation of student expectation, learning, and engagement, there is discussion of the theoretical framework of student involvement. Concluding this chapter is a presentation of the current body of research related to students' perceptions that they are the consumers in higher education and a summary pointing to the research question and methods that are

presented in subsequent chapters.

In recent decades, higher education has faced significant challenges in the form of rising institutional costs and reduced state funding that have shaken the American model of higher education (Aschenbrener, 2016; Rizzo, 2006). The literature supports the fact that costs have always been a challenge in higher education, yet today's ever-growing number of college students experience unique increases in costs (Chow, 2014). With this increase in costs, students are taking on significant amounts of debt. In June 2019, the American business and consumer credit reporting service Experian reported that Americans held on average $35,359 in student loan debt, a 26% increase since 2014. In addition, among total debt in the United States, student loan debt now ranks second behind mortgage debt (Stolba, 2019).

Although institutions continue to experience rising operational costs, higher education institutions are also facing reduced tracts of funding and experiencing fewer state subsidies per student (Aschenbrener, 2016; Rizzo, 2006). In these times of cost increases and resource challenges, marketization has become a growing trend in higher education. Marketization is defined from a public policy perspective as "a restructuring process that enables state enterprises to operate as market-oriented firms by changing the legal environment by which they operate" (Van der Hoeven & Szirácz ki, 1997, p. 101). Because this definition presents a policy orientation and not a comprehensive institutional conceptualization toward an understanding of the term, throughout this dissertation the term marketization is broadened to refer to the market-like actions that higher education adopts to respond to the challenges or opportunities faced.

Higher education marketization is exhibited in a number of ways, including student recruitment methods that emulate retail customer advertising; institutional priorities of year-to-year student population growth; outsourcing of many areas of higher education, including instruction; investing in revenue sources outside of tuition; cost analysis of all curricular and co-curricular programs; prioritizing students' by their ability to pay; significant tuition discounting; and central messaging of the student "experience" (Ehrenberg, Zhang & Levin, 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Stoll, Bradley & Mahan, 2014). Because few of these market type actions are directly tied to the educational function of higher education, understanding their effects on students and higher education institutions is important. As with many actions that are taken, the long-term effects are unknown. For higher education to remain a place of learning, a deep understanding of this trend in marketization and its effect on students is needed. A discussion of marketization and associated concepts of neoliberalism and higher education capitalism begins this discussion.

Neoliberalism and Higher Education Capitalism

Neoliberalism: Cultural Foundation for Marketization

Neoliberalism as a concept was introduced into the American lexicon in the 1970s and is an extension of traditional liberalism that embodied the thinking of the 19th and early 20th centuries (Saunders, 2014; Turner, 2008). Different from the traditional liberalism of a "hands-off" approach that allowed the economy and society to develop without interjection, neoliberalism champions the belief that the path to economic success lays in a free market logic that moderates all economic, social and political fields (Harvey 2005). This thinking understands the entire world in "economic terms." This is evidenced

when people use common phrases found in business to describe situations and relationships outside of the business realm, such as “investing in this relationship” to discuss a close personal friendship, or “I don’t buy that” to refer to a fact that someone does not agree with a statement, or “measurable return on investment” to describe an individual’s use of free time with the outcome of better emotional or physical health. Neoliberalism is the conception that all areas of life could and should be conceived in an economic manner (Harvey, 2005; Lemke, 2001; Saunders, 2014a).

Neoliberalism’s impact and incorporation into the fabric of higher education has been accelerated by financial pressures and government funding intervention and has become embedded in the ideology of nearly all participants just as it has taken hold of other avenues of society. In higher education, these accelerants have included the reduction of state subsidies (Rizzo, 2006), which has naturally shifted the priority of higher education to increasing the size and number of diverse sources of revenue, including research funding, fundraising, and merchandising, (Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017; Duderstadt, 2007; Kezar, 2004; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004;). Neoliberalism has also moved beyond only financial pressures and measures to affect the ways that higher education administrators lead. This movement to “manage” well has resulted in the increased use of adjunct instead of full time faculty and outsourcing other functions across the university (Saunders, 2014a; Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004).

Neoliberalism also influences the way that society views higher education. The movement from a public good to a private good has shifted the way communities and students view higher education. Instead of thinking of higher education as a method to improve entire components of society, individuals think more about how higher

education impacts them specifically (Arum & Roksa, 2011; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009). This change in thinking is in concert with the ways that neoliberalism has formed around the conception of other "public goods," including federal and local governments, and public service and non-profit organizations, which now constantly measure investment and impact.

Though some theorists argue that the effects of neoliberalism on society and higher education have been negative, others suggest that there have been areas that have been positively impacted by neoliberalism and its focus on standardization and measurement (Saunders, 2014b; Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004). Although standardization is not typically viewed as a benefit within higher education, the movement toward a private good has required objective reflection and assessment in curriculum and in the classroom. With course objectives and outcomes required and monitored, there has been more clarity and transparency for the public regarding the goals and desired outcomes for the courses that students take (Sadlack, 1978). In addition to this clarity of outcomes, measurement has also been incorporated into many higher education settings. The rise in prominence of accrediting organizations has been decried by many but has brought more information about the purpose and function of programs of study and specific courses within the curriculum into the public eye. This has required higher education to rethink long held beliefs and, in some cases, to modify assumptions in a way that benefits students (Sadlack, 1978).

As previously noted, one of the incarnations of neoliberalism in higher education has been the importance of additional streams of funding beyond traditional tuition and fees. To clearly discuss the marketization of higher education, an analysis of what has

been called “Academic capitalism” is presented, providing an opportunity for the reader to understand how institutions of higher education and their agents have responded to the neoliberal forces present in society. Some of these actions have been intentional, while others are unintentional. After this foundation is firmly established, the review will build on the discussion of marketization of higher education.

Academic Capitalism: Evidence of Neoliberalism in Higher Education

Slaughter and Rhodes (2004) present the concept of academic capitalism as the tangible presence of neoliberalism in higher education. Although their discussion of the topic is often one-sided, it provides an integrated picture of the influence of neoliberal ideals within higher education. Slaughter and Leslie (1997) define academic capitalism as “the phenomenon of universities and faculty’s increasing attention to market potential as research impetus” (p. 114). They argue that globalization has efficiently linked prestige to research funding to marketability (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Slaughter’s accompanying work with Rhoades (2004) further presents the global economic and political trends that have pushed forward the academic capitalism that they propose is evident today.

Key components of academic capitalism are pertinent to a discourse on the topic of marketization, because they demonstrate areas that the academic environment has responded to the neoliberal ideals discussed earlier. As previously stated, the central component of neoliberalism and academic capitalism is the movement of perception and the promotion of higher education from a public to a private good. Higher education, when conceived as a public good, prioritizes low cost tuition for mass access, basic research only with few ties to corporations, state funding, block grants, non-federalized or marketized ideas, teaching as a central rewarded function of faculty, public service and

public outreach as primary, and clear boundaries between state and public sectors. Higher education as a private good exhibits the converse of the list above with high tuition and prestige as a focus; research as a primary and rewarded component of faculty expectations; many ties to corporations and a blurring of lines between state and private sector leadership, influence and funding (Slaughter & Rhodes 2004). This shift has implications for culture and society as well as individual students.

Although there are many examples of academic capitalism, two diverse examples illustrate the breadth of its existence and the evolution of higher education's priorities and structures around these opportunities. The first example is related to research funding in higher education. Since World War II, the U.S. Federal Government has awarded research and training funding to universities. In the early years, there was significant training done by higher education, but since then the funding has shifted heavily toward research. The amount of this funding has increased so much that in 2016 over 55% of all federal funding distributed to higher education was for research (American Association for the Advancement of Science, 2017). Of all 2013 federal funding to higher education, research funding ranked second only to federal pell grant funding at $24.6 billion to $31.3 billion, respectively (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2015). This amount represented a significant percentage of funding that went to only research universities. These institutions have responded to the phenomenon by increasing the size of their research facilities, number of research faculty and administrative supporting departments. Currently, offices such as grant writing and reporting functions are often larger than academic or student support offices. This movement from the primacy of teaching to research has been a seismic shift in the landscape and reflects one example of academic

capitalism (Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017; Kimberling, 1995; Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004; Saunders, 2014; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997).

A second very different example of academic capitalism is highlighted by the research of Lee and Helm (2013) in the area of early career student affairs professionals. Far from the federal funding stream of research, early career student affairs professionals prioritize their work around the areas that provide the most revenue that is important for the institutions that they serve. This population typically serves and engages traditional students; yet, even in this service role, the way they articulate their work and importance within the campus is reflective of academic capitalism at work. This understanding of the financial interests includes high rates of occupancy in residence halls, increased utilization rates of food service, and use of low cost student labor. These concepts exhibit themselves in themes reported by young professionals of the ideological tensions between the philosophy of student support and institutional priorities, early career professional entrepreneurs, and use of students as cheap labor (Lee & Helm 2013).

Academic capitalism is viewed as a natural response when neoliberalism takes hold of the thinking and operation of higher education. This orientation of individuals and organizations toward funding is not in itself a bad thing, but it represents unique challenges in the case of higher education. The literature surrounding neoliberalism and academic capitalism is most often very critical in the protection of the traditional values of education, which are learning and the primacy of discovery (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009). This conversation most often takes place in the context of the marketization of higher education. There are many definitions given for marketization but as a reminder from the early portion of the chapter, marketization is the movement of an

industry into a "marketplace." The use of this term presents the opportunity to discuss the impacts on finance, faculty, and-most importantly-students as higher education moves into or resists the marketplace.

Marketization

Introduction

The diverse topics of funding, staff, faculty, and students are all features within the complex discussion of marketization in higher education; thus, truly understanding marketization and its effects is a difficult task. To present a context for the research, this discussion of marketization is divided into themed sections. The first section describes the financial complexities of marketization, including higher education cost structures as well as government education funding policy which drives marketization's reach within higher education. From there marketization's impact is discussed from the different perspectives of the campus, including financial operations, student populations, and recruiting. This division of subject matter allows a presentation of marketization that presents the complexity and connections between the forces of neoliberalism and the market-like responses of higher education.

Marketization: Funding, Costs, and Growth

Many scholars agree that the rise of marketization has been caused by federal and state funding changes in recent decades (Aschenbrener, 2016; Bunce, Baird & Jones, 2016; Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017; Hossler & Kwon, 2015). Beginning with the 1944 Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill) and the 1968 Higher Education Act and continuing today, federal aid in the form of grants and loans has moved from institutions to the hands of individual students. This move toward students and away from

institutional funding has been the single largest contributing factor to marketization within higher education (Aschenbrener, 2016; Bunce, Baird & Jones, 2016; Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017; Hossler & Kwon, 2015; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009).

Another significant force toward marketization is the rising cost associated with higher education. These cost increases are the result of at least three contributing factors. The first is the cost of paying highly skilled full time faculty. Higher education suffers from what Baumol and Bowen (1966) term "cost disease." This theory from economics explains that in certain industries like education, the skill that is required does not allow for savings from efficiencies over time. An example of this expectation within higher education is less faculty required to teach the same number or more students at the same level and quality over time. The second force increasing costs is the reduced amount of state funding spread out over a larger number of students (Rizzo, 2006). While total appropriations for universities have declined in many states, the total number of students have increased. With an increase in students, but a reduction in funding, this means costs increase rapidly instead of incrementally.

The third factor attributing to cost increases deals not with the cost but with the demand for graduates. In recent years, the number of jobs that require college degrees has increased (Elejalde-Ruiz, 2016). For example, Career Builder, a popular website for American job postings, found that in the past five years one third of all employers increased the required educational level for all positions. These three factors of federal funding going directly to students, reduction in state institutional support, and greater demand, combine to be a powerful force influencing cost increases in higher education. These forces point toward marketization as a mechanism for response. The following

sections look at how the campus and students are confronting, implementing and being affected by marketization.

Marketization and Federal Financial Aid

Federal financial aid background.

This chapter began with a definition that attributes marketization to policy decisions that either eliminate protections from a market environment or make it easier for an industry to be part of a market (Van der Hoeven & Szirácz ki, 1997, p. 101). Under that definition, federal financial aid has been one of the most significant policy forces toward marketization in higher education. The history of federal financial aid policy is extensive, beginning in 1944 and continuing today. To begin the discussion, a chronological but not exhaustive list of federal policies is included below (Aschenbrener, 2016; Burke, 2014; Isidore, 2010).

1. 1944 – The Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill of Rights)
2. 1965 - The original Higher Education Act established student grants to non-veterans (Pell) and a Government Student Loan (GLS) program.
3. 1972 - Higher Education Act Amendments expanded grants and loan thresholds to impact many more students.
4. 1978 - Middle Income Student Assistance Act (MISAA) expanded the federal student loan program to include all students, regardless of income.
5. 1986 - Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act expanded borrowing limits of the Parent PLUS loan program.
6. 1992 - Higher Education Amendments established the Federal unsubsidized Stafford Loan Program.

7. 1997 - Taxpayer Relief Act established tax benefits relating to education expenses, including the Hope Scholarship Credit and the Lifetime Learning Credit. These credits provide substantial tax credit benefits to middle-class families.
8. 1998 - Higher Education Amendments reauthorization increased the Pell Grant value, extended student loan repayment options, and cut Stafford Loan interest rates.
9. 2005 - Higher Education Reconciliation Act cut $12.7 billion in value from federal student aid.
10. 2007 - The College Cost Reduction and Access Act enacted the largest increase in federal student aid since the GI Bill, including an increase to the maximum Pell Grant award and reduced interest rates on subsidized Stafford Loans for undergraduate students by half.
11. 2009 - The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act increased the maximum and minimum Pell Grant awards and increased the Hope Scholarship tax credit. The legislation added $200 million in additional Federal Work-Study (formerly College Work Study) funding and $200 million in AmeriCorps funding.

The first piece of federal higher education financial aid policy was signed into law in 1944 under the title “The Servicemen's Readjustment Act.” What today is known as the “GI Bill of Rights” aimed to support veterans through education and training, loan guarantees for homes, farms or businesses and unemployment pay (US Department of Veterans Affairs, 2017). Without this bill, returning veterans who would have flooded the

job market instead opted for college. This significant federal support changed the landscape of higher education, increasing enrollment at most schools throughout the country. Scholars believe this was the single most important piece of legislation for higher education within the history of the United States of America (Aschenbrener, 2016; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Since its initial adoption into law there have been enhancements and modifications; today the GI Bill still supports veterans and their families enhancing educational benefits such as educational expenses, living allowances, money for books and the ability to transfer unused education benefits to spouses or children.

After the GI Bill, the 1965 Higher Education Act was the second most significant turning point in federal financial aid policy. The Higher Education Act and its 1972 amendment, while consolidating laws authorizing the national defense student loan program and the college work-study program, also created two new programs; The Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) and the Guaranteed Student Loan Program (GSL). The EOG (later renamed Pell grant) provided grants to subsidize higher education costs for students matriculating from families with income below a certain threshold. In addition to this component of the legislation, the GSL program allowed students to take out government subsidized loans to pay for college. This piece of legislation opened doors and for the first time made higher education accessible for the majority of American citizens who were not veterans (Aschenbrener 2016, Kimberling 1995).

Six years later, another significant expansion of support emerged in higher education policy with authorization of the Middle Income Student Assistance Act (MISAA) of 1978. MISAA expanded federal loan support to all students and broadened

the income range for eligible students. In the 2007 College Cost Reduction and Access Act, the Pell grant maximum increased and interest for Stafford Loans for undergraduate students decreased by half. Since that legislation was introduced there have been slight adjustments to aid, but on the whole legislation has focused on institutional transparency relating to cost (Net Tuition Calculator) and protection of students as consumers (restrictions of federal funding for students attending non-performing, for-profit institutions).

Summarizing the historical progression of federal financial aid illuminates a few specific themes that have emerged during recent decades. The first is the introduction of financial aid (GI Bill), which for the first time provided funding to individual students. The second theme is the introduction of grants (Pell program) and government subsidization of loans (GSL). The third is the expansion of financial aid to middle and upper middle-income students and their families, including tax credits for education. Fourth is the introduction of legislation that introduces consumer type markets (unsubsidized loans, further expansion of grant and subsidy requirements) and protections (net tuition calculator). The following section presents two areas of critique of federal financial aid policy that apply to the broader discussion of marketization.

Financial aid benefits middle and upper middle class students.

With the introduction of student centered financial aid starting in 1965 (Higher Education Act), money through grants and loans was placed directly in the hands of students (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). This change toward a voucher system was intended to do two beneficial things. First, it was supposed to increase access to higher education for students without the ability to pay. Second, with students able to move to

any institution of their choice, higher education would be forced into a market environment with increased competition that would promote quality and value for students. To some critics, however, these goals had unintended consequences over time and during policy expansion. As grants and loans were made accessible to those with higher income, there also was a shift in the amount and in the institutions that could receive federal dollars. Expansion of policy over time shifted the benefit from those in the lowest economic tiers to those that did not need aid in the first place, and from traditional universities to elite private and public universities. This is evidenced by the growth of loan amounts and the demographics of those that receive loans (Slaughter & Rhoades, 1997).

Between 1957 and 1991, student loan volume increased from 31 million dollars to almost 9.95 billion dollars (Kimberling, 1995). In 1965, most college students were recent high school graduates attending full-time and financial aid was focused on students with low incomes. Today, that is not the case as federal financial aid legislation has segmented student markets in higher education and directed different types of aid to very different kinds of students (Slaughter & Rhoades 2004) Some programs, such as MISAA and other expansion policies, over time have encouraged upper-middle class as well as high achieving students from other social strata to attend elite private institutions. The premise of the critique is that the expansion of aid accessible to middle income students enabled them to "upgrade" their institution of choice, instead of just attending. This assumption is supported by data related to loans as a percentage of total student cost. In 1963-1964, a student on average took out a loan for 20% of the cost of education, but by 2000-2001 that number had grown to 58% (College Board, 2014).

Slaughter and Rhodes (2004) argue that higher education markets give preference to students and their families who they believe can repay loans. This confidence is normally tied to family income, so today there is a preference toward those with higher household income. While this is not an alien concept within business, higher education's evaluation of a student's ability to pay is not one that has always existed and could be contrary to the "public good" that is the focus of many higher education institutions with broad access as their mission (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). A review of federal policy over time illustrates that the initial policy has expanded and is now within reach of a larger wealthier population of students. Inasmuch as this was not the initial intent of federal aid, the trend itself is a critique of the policy. Although this change could be explained as the natural lifecycle of policy, even this explanation points to a deeper question and a second critique: federal aid policy increases the cost of higher education. Could it be that federal aid itself contributes to a circular issue, which will continue to reinforce inequity in access of funding?

Federal financial aid increases college costs.

In his 1987 New York Times op-ed piece, William Bennet voiced what many others had been asking with the expansion of federal financial aid policy: "If anything, increases in financial aid in recent years have enabled colleges and universities blithely to raise their tuitions, confident that Federal loan subsidies would cushion the increase" (1987). This statement so sums up sentiments then and now that is has become known as the "Bennet Hypothesis." In essence, he was asking, "Will increases in aid have the unintended effect of raising list price tuition?" (Stoll, Bradley, and Mahan, 2014)

These are legitimate critiques as institutions of higher education have had drastic price increases that at times tracked with the expansion of federal grant and loan amounts. In fact, when one understands that institutions are able to craft their own financial support to students after they see what the students are going to receive in aid and loans (Archibald & Feldman, 2016), it is even a more biting critique. Some view the financial aid that students bring with them as a reduction in financial responsibility placed on universities, allowing them to be entrepreneurial beyond their mission of education. In a sense, universities use those funds to build other sources of revenue by bearing a lower burden to support students (Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004).

Summary.

The discussion of any industry must begin with money. Considering the financial side of higher education, it is clear to see that federal funding and cost increases have strong influences in higher education. These two features of federal funding and cost are linked (Slaughter & Rhodes, 1997) and it appears they will remain linked in the future. With funding and cost discussion as a backdrop, evidence of market like actions on campus and the classroom will be examined.

Marketization - On Campus

Financial.

As cost and federal funding policy influenced marketization, they also affected campus financial operations in many ways. Federal funds being moved from institutions to students, created a new competitive reality and make students the "prize," with each student bringing along federal funds (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). State support for higher education declined per student making each dollar in federal funds even more important

(Rizzo, 2006). This reality stimulated revenue-seeking policies consistent with the environment as explained by "resource dependency theory" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). This theory states that organizations are oriented to focus around the external resources on which they depend. This is at play within higher education in that as sources of revenue continue to decline or go away altogether, higher education responds by trying to expand current streams of revenue in marketized ways. For larger institutions, this resource dependency response reinforces a focus on research, currently the largest form of federal funding going directly to higher education institutions (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). This dependence on additional resources also motivates revenue generating activities including donor funding, investment in revenue generating athletics programs, public-private partnerships, and the expansion of research parks (Lane, 2012; Matkin, 2001; Pruess, 1999).

Admissions approaches.

Unstable traditional revenue structures put even greater pressures on recruiting and retaining students. Within the student recruiting and marketing arms of the university, institutional ratings, student extracurricular experience, and return on investment have been the focus of promotion. In addition, the type of students who attend has become a priority, but not in the way that one would typically think. Because of recruiting pressures, each student has become a commodity within admissions that is valued not only for their ability to succeed but also for their ability to pay. The financial aid strategy of "crafting a class" is now common speak in admissions offices and is strategically used to attract and maximize university revenue from each student (Ehrenberg, Zhang & Levin, 2006; Hossler & Kwon 2015; Joffey-Walt & Goldstein,

2012; McDonough, 1994). Affirmative action programs that prioritized historically under-represented groups to meet targets have drawn criticism; but in this instance, universities are setting intentional parameters to recruit students with a certain financial profile to meet financial, retention, and prestige targets (Hossler & Kwon, 2015; McDonough, 1994).

Staff and faculty.

Research demonstrates that as institutions continue to adjust their priorities, faculty and staff are reorienting their priorities as well. With renewed focus on the management of the operation, administrative positions precipitously increased in recent years. These staff and administrative roles have been justified by the increase in non-academic programs offered to recruit and support students (Lee & Helm, 2013). Additional staff support has also naturally followed the focus on retention, completion, and exposure of university athletics (Natale & Doran, 2012).

As previously addressed in the discussion of academic capitalism, faculty also adjusted their work to align themselves with shifting university priorities. Grant funding and new programs are most valued by universities, and in response, faculty understand new realities and increasingly focus on research and away from teaching (Lee & Helm, 2013; Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004). As previously noted, "academic capitalism" is a focus on the privatization of faculty research activities and knowledge production and a movement away from teaching. "Teachprenuers" is another naming convention used in current literature to define a new type of faculty whose priorities are to seek after research funding and new program expansion (Natale & Doran, 2012).

Summary.

Market-like actions on campus were significant in recent history. Financially, leaders on campus sought and found new sources of revenue to continue operations, admissions offices took new approaches to recruiting and faculty responded by creating new programs and funded research laboratories on campus. These changes to campus operations are significant but how do they impact and effect students? The following sections present the current understanding of the effect of marketization, thus a more detailed understanding of students' external environment and internal perception is presented. This focus leads to the research questions within the dissertation that sought to understand the intersection of marketization within higher education and its impact on students.

Marketization – Influence on Students

Shifting the focus from institutional marketization to students, one must consider a number of areas. Student demographics and student expectations are two of the most visible areas where marketization impacts the student population. As the student is the focus of education, the student perspective may be the most important vantage point to understand when making judgments about marketization in higher education.

Student Populations.

Marketization has changed the face of the student populations represented in the classroom, creating widening gaps among educational institutions and creating a new class system within higher education (Slaughter & Rhoades 2004). Students' increased access to debt allows strong universities to be even more selective in admissions, creating a wider gap between high- and low-stature institutions, high- and low-income students,

and high- and low-achieving students. This position is bolstered by the data related to loans as a percentage of total student cost. As introduced in the discussion of federal financial aid, a deeper look into student loans illustrates this concept of higher education class systems. In 1963-1964, a student on average took out a loan for 20% of the cost of education, but by 2000-2001 the percentage grew to 58% (College Board, 2014). That data may reflect the difference between affordable tuition and aspirational institutional tuition levels. The ability to afford tuition through loans has allowed elite universities to become even more elite and caused struggling universities to lose students who can now aspirationally afford "better" universities. This is illustrated not only at elite private institutions but also at state schools with the flagship research universities creating wider gaps within their state systems (Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004; Kimberling, 1995).

Student Expectations.

Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009) identified an unintended but serious implication of marketization as the shift of students' expectations away from being learners. The assertion is made that marketization changes students' expectation of their role within higher education from "being" a learner to "having" a degree. This understanding of higher education trades the mindset in the classroom to completion of task, instead of discovery and investigation through the challenge of learning. This transition in and of itself moves the cultural mindset of learning into a commodity market in which the student can buy what is needed for the right price. This concept of student as customer has been researched with mixed results (Saunders, 2014), but understanding signs of students' customer expectations is critical to understanding students' expectations within higher education.

Student expectations are also shaped around understanding the purpose of higher education. Seventy percent of college students believe that social interaction and activity is more important than academics during their time in college (Arum & Roksa, 2011). Students arrive at college with an expectation shaped by upperclassmen and culture that they will meet friends, party, and go to athletic events (Williams, 2005; McDonough, 1994). Images within media more often portray the social realm of college than the academic one (Jung, 2010). This expectation often shapes the way that students use time, which is invested in student activities rather than study (Williams, 2005). Empirical findings show most students do see a degree as a route to a better career. Many students, it seems, are indifferent regarding whether or not there are high academic standards (Rolfe 2002). As students are a valuable and competitive revenue source for universities, there is therefore a tension that exists between attracting students to attend and engaging them in the rigor and challenge of learning.

Marketization: Benefits and Drawbacks.

A significant amount has been written since the 1970s relating to marketization's philosophical place within higher education. Many from within the academy critique the idea of marketization from a functional and ethical perspective. Others support the idea that higher education should enter a market environment because of the transparency and efficiency that a "market" creates. This section attempts to present and summarize some of those perspectives that stimulate this research. The first grouping of literature presents the case that higher education cannot be a good to be sold, or an industry that can ever enter the market. In the 1970s, Swagler (1978) argued that higher education cannot be a marketed good because it misses the central components of a marketed good, namely, the

ability for individuals to be educated and experienced enough to purchase it. In essence, the argument is that students do not have enough information at the time they make a decision to make a market-driven judgment. He proposed that students do not have the information and experience needed to make a decision until they complete the process and thus higher education cannot be completely marketized. Although this argument bears weight, in recent years it has lost some, but not all, of its potency with the introduction of the Internet and standardizing tools that allow students and parents to compare metrics like student teacher ratios, graduation rates, and job placement (Natale & Doran, 2012; Obermiller, Fleenor & Raven, 2005).

Along those lines, others present the idea that learning incorporates ideals that are antithetical to a transaction, the foundation of any market (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009). The argument proposes that learning does not fit the customer relationship because of the corrective, iterative, and discovery environment that is essential for learning. If students are the customers, do they have the ability to reject the provider? Obviously, they could in fact walk out, but functionally they are still at a power disadvantage within higher education learning environments. While both of these perspectives stem from a functional mismatch of ideology and environment, others propose the benefits of a marketlike understanding of higher education.

Scholars have also proposed benefits of marketization within higher education and argue for the deeper understanding and incorporation of some of its attributes. First, some propose that marketization has lead institutions to rethinking and refining the unique qualities of their institutions (Litten, 1980). In fact, because institutions of higher education think about "institutional distinctives," "target populations," "demographics,"

and “metrics,” they are now stronger and better able to understand who they are, who they serve, and how they need to improve (Eagle & Brennan, 2007).

This same thinking is represented by those who propose that marketization has required higher education to refocus efforts on serving and supporting students’ educational and developmental needs (Litten, 1980). Although teaching and student learning are assumed to be the foci of higher education, data demonstrate that faculty and administration increasingly focus their time on funded research and revenue generation (Slaughter and Rhodes 2004). This shift in focus has been attributed to the forces of marketization and academic capitalism; however, the argument is also made that a competitive environment and requirement to demonstrate measurable student outcomes has a corrective and balancing effect.

Finally, though the large majority of what is written within the academy is critical of marketization, there is support and empirical evidence that higher education should operate in many different spheres (Saunders, 2014a). As higher education evolved, it is now not only in the education business, but also in the housing, food service, entertainment, community building, and social action business (Saunders, 2014b). As prices for students continue to rise, the opinion of some researchers is that many of these roles played by higher education should be thought of and expected to be within the marketplace (Duderstadt, 2007; Eagle & Brennan, 2007; Saunders, 2014b). In fact, without marketized quality, thinking, and leadership, students are not served in the way they should be.

Summary.

As previously mentioned higher education marketization is complex, with forces pressing in being met by resistance and acceptance. While critics argue that money is the chief driver behind marketization, it is not the only force at play. One force at play is the response of students and their experience. This summary of forces only begins to lay a foundation to understand the environment in which students and learning mix. To build on that foundation, a discussion of theories and theoretical frameworks related to students is important.

Behavioral Theories and Student Involvement

A significant amount of marketization literature takes an institutional operation perspective; however the purpose of higher education is the interaction with and formation of students through learning. To understand students' behaviors as humans and learners, one needs to evaluate data gathered from students. This debate of higher education as a public versus private good, and whether marketization is good or bad, may be a passionate one, but without constant focus on students, the fog of discourse between competing positions may drown out the student perspective. In order to bring clear vision to these issues, theory and literature relating to human and student expectation, motivation, and learning may help shed some light on these issues.

In order to study students in higher education and the effect of marketization, it is important to understand students in general and as a unique population. The presentation of literature related to identity, motivation, and expectations of students is an attempt to add to the reader's understanding of students and the theoretical grounding of human

behavior. This discussion provides an understanding that grounds the theoretical framework of the research being used.

Student Identity, Motivation and Expectancy Theoretical Perspectives

Three theoretical perspectives are important to frame an understanding of student perceptions and actions which are components of the theoretical framework of student involvement. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), motivation theory (Hennessey, Moran, Altringer, & Amabile, 2015) and expectation theory (Vroom, 1964) provide insights to the concepts that interplay within students as they form their identities, shape their expectations, and are motivated within higher education. Although researchers have asserted that marketization has had an effect on these components of human identity and motivation, an introduction to these theories enables an informed understanding.

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) is a broad theory developed to explain individuals' actions within groups and the process that takes place within individuals in group identification and selection. Of the few categories of "being" defined in this theory, "social identity" outlines the process that individuals follow in order to select and belong to a group. Within the context of students within higher education a broader group would be "college" students; further subsets would be students at a certain university, students within a major, students in a certain social club, or students in a certain year of school. Norms within those groups are powerful, rehearsed, enforced within groups. This theory of social identity posits that students have and shape their identity as they try to gain access to and maintain a place within different social groups. The theory also makes clear that their identity with groups may shift over time.

Motivation theory is also relevant to the discussion of students' behavior as it introduces motivation for action as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation prompts someone to do something for his or her own sake and is associated with feelings of self-determination, control, and satisfaction. Extrinsic motivation is motivation to do something in order to attain some external good or meet some externally imposed constraint. The same feelings of self-determination and accomplishment have to be mediated by a good or reward specific to the individual if extrinsic motivation is to activate action (Hennessey et al., 2015). As it relates to students in higher education, Somech (2002) and Aittola (1995) documented change in students' motivation from intrinsic to extrinsic, primarily instrumental motivation with a degree seen as assisting both employment prospects and social mobility.

Finally, expectancy theory as introduced by Vroom (1964) articulates layered components of motivation. Vroom proposed a three-fold equation that directs and adds velocity to action by including expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Expectancy is the idea that if individuals have the right tools or do the right thing they can expect a certain result. Instrumentality is the concept that individuals need to believe that if they perform in a certain way, there will be a certain outcome. Finally, valence is the importance an individual places on an outcome. Another way to state these three theories is that effort equals performance, which equals instrumentality, which equals outcome. And the individual mediates this progression through his or her desire for a certain result.

These three concepts of identity, motivation and expectation are a unique part of students' journeys through higher education, and they interact with and mediate each other. These concepts come into play as students understand and create their identity

(their social identity), and responding to what motivates them (motivation theory). This will shape the motivation they have, to take or not take certain actions.

This interplay of sociological and behavior theory forms a basic understanding of students' identities, the environment they are in, and the actions they take within the environment. While each of these three variables will not be individually measured in this research, they form the groundwork on which student involvement theory is built. While studies have asked students to identify effort and outcomes by offering grades within a course as the result, this study takes into account the interrelationship of these concepts and will measure students' identities as a customers or learners and their actions and motivations by gauging their participation in high-engagement practices, discussed in the following section.

Student Involvement: A Theoretical Perspective

As higher education leaders consider the impacts of marketization on institutions, students' learning should be at the center of each discussion. There is an infinite number of testing tools to measure knowledge gained within disciplinary areas but there are fewer methods to measure learning progression for the population in general. Achievement goals and study skills both connect to college performance outcomes (Eagle & Brennan, 2007). In addition it has been found that achievement motivation is the strongest predictor of GPA (Eagle & Brennan, 2007). GPA, while a flawed predictor of learning, is a measure that can and has been used to measure student achievement (Eagle & Brennan, 2007). There is, however, a theory that proposes to measure the practices that have been linked to learning. Astin (1985) proposed the theory of student involvement, which "refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the

academic experience" (Astin, 1999, p. 1) as a measurable concept highly related to student learning. Within this theory, he proposed certain practices that denote high involvement: 1) devotes considerable energy to studying; 2) spends much time on campus; 3) participates actively in student organizations; and 4) interacts frequently with faculty and other students. He also clearly stated, "students learn by becoming involved" (1985, p. 133). Involvement has also been linked to many other outcomes including student persistence, satisfaction, continued relationship with the institution as alumni, and increased percentage of entering graduate school (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

In order to provide a framework for the role of involvement in learning, Astin (1985) proposed the I-E-O model of Input – Environment (process) – Output (I-E-O). This model considers the student before, during, and after higher education. The model of involvement positions responsibility for the output on the student and the institution. For this study involvement theory and the I-E-O model is used as a conceptual framework for research. In literature building from this framework, other researchers have identified that institutional policies also have significant effects on student involvement in learning (Pike & Kuh, 2005; Kuh, G. et all, 2001a; Kuh, 2001b; Pace, 1984). Such policies include not only academic areas such as class size but recruiting and orientation policies and practices as well.

Supporting the strength of this theoretical framework, others have completed research on students and characteristics that lead to other measures of success. Tinto (1975) introduced the idea of departure theory, which is connected with student retention. He stated that students who socially integrate within a campus community increase their commitment to the institution and are more likely to graduate. This commitment to the

institution is a feature of Astin's (1999) high involvement practices and bolsters the expectation that student success rates (in this case measured by staying in school and graduating) are related to specific practices and actions of students. While this research is not focused on retention, it is focused on student success, and graduation is one measurement for student success.

Student as Customer: Previous Research

In recent years there has been an increase in research published related to students' perception of themselves as the "customer" of higher education. The customer label has been a concern within the academy since the title of customer does not seem consistent with the learning environment (Bunce, Baird & Jones, 2016; Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017; Hossler & Kwon, 2015; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009). This research goes beyond the philosophical critiques of marketization and students' attitudes that lack empirical support such as Carlson and Fleisher's (2002) bold statement that "Customer-students expect to get good grades, independent of the quality of their work" (p. 1104). Examples of empirical research include Delucchi and Korgen's (2002) qualitative research with undergraduate sociology majors, but while their research does focus on students as customers, their population was limited in socioeconomic diversity which restricted the ability to propose relationships broadly. In addition the questions they used in interviews were, in the view of this researcher, leading and did not allow for participant expression but promoted binary discussions that supported interesting but weak findings. In 2005, Obermiller, Fleenor and Raven performed broader research proposing the paradigm of student as customer versus student as product of higher education. The questions were posed of both faculty and students with students preferring

the “customer” orientation and faculty preferring the “product” orientation. This research, though limited in scope, did not attempt to gather any data related to the usefulness of one conception over the other. It demonstrated only that there was a difference in preference by each group.

Only recently has research begun to look at the impact that a customer expectation of students has on their work and performance. Within the literature already presented it has been proposed that taking on a customer persona increases entitlement and leads to practices that are not conducive to learning. In 2016, Bunce, Baird, and Jones collected data in UK higher education institutions in an attempt to compare students’ academic performance and their perceptions of themselves as either customers or learners. Using two different survey instruments, the first that rated them along a continuum of either customer or learner in higher education and the second that measured their “grade goal” or expectation of earning a certain grade in a difficult course, the researchers found a negative relationship between students’ perceptions of themselves as a customer and their course grade expectation. While a grade expectation does not accurately predict learning, the study in one form linked student self-perception and learning. This research was a start, but could not be generalizable to US populations because of funding and education being very different in the UK than in the US.

Daniel Saunders (2014) provided some of the strongest data in understanding students’ perceptions as customers. His 2014 survey research built upon previous studies weakness to limit the leading nature of questions and assess first time freshman attitudes as they entered college. Contrary to popular opinion, his work did not reveal substantial “customer” attitudes within this group of 2,674 students that completed the entire list of

19 questions. This study is interesting in that it pushed back on the popular literature that assumes all students believe they are the "customer" in higher education. Using his data, he proposed that if there is a "customer" perspective in higher education, then it may become embedded over time within higher education.

The recent contradiction in data (Bunce, Baird, & Jones, 2016) leads researchers to more broadly understand this phenomena and refine assessment tools and methods to connect "customer" or "learner" expectations to learning outcomes or in this case the placeholder of "high-engagement learning practices." Thus far, there has not been research that has measured students on a spectrum between learner and consumer and the effect of that position on student learning over time. This study builds on the work of others and attempts to provide data to understand the impact on students as higher education enters the market. What are the effects of marketization on students and what place does marketization have within higher education and the goal of student learning?

Conclusion

There is a significant and growing body of literature offering opinions on the shaping of higher education culture and students. There is also a small number of empirical studies attempting to understand how students are affected, but very little research is being published on the effect that marketization has on students and learning. With that in mind, this researcher undertook the further study of this phenomena of marketization and its effect on students learning because it is a challenge to sift through opinion and fact on both sides of the philosophical divide of this issue. Is marketization essential to push higher education forward, or is it undermining the very nature of learning? The market will always propose market-based solutions to a problem, and

higher education will typically hold on to models and contexts from the past. However, a discussion of the student and the impact of marketization over time is essential to understanding the impacts on student learning that matter.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Many factors influence the perceptions of the student's role within higher education. It is the belief of the researcher that marketization's influence could be one of those influences. This chapter presents the methodology used to research possible relationships between students' perceptions and their demonstrated engagement in the learning process. The context of the research including institutional descriptions and research participants are presented. The data collection process and data analysis methods are discussed in preparation for the findings and analysis that follows in chapters four and five. The following sections outline the methodology used to gather quantitative information pertaining to the research question of students' expectations as customers or learners within higher education and the effect those expectations have on high-engagement learning practices (Astin, 1991). The descriptions of participant and instrument selection as well as data collection processes and analysis illustrate that the design and procedure support substantive data from an appropriate sample of a population.

General Perspective

There are perspectives both for and against marketization in higher education. The market and legislators promote marketization as a way to increase efficiencies, lower costs, and increase accountability (Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Those suspicious of marketization believe that a mental shift from higher education as learning to payment for a commodity changes the ability of faculty to teach and students to learn (Potts, 2005). As evidenced in the literature, the marketization debate lacks, but could benefit from empirical data focusing on the students as customers and how that affects their involvement in learning. Though organizational culture experts caution that each institution can and does exhibit its own unique learning atmosphere (Morgan, 2006), institutional uniqueness should not prevent a broad study of the marketization influences that shape how today's students interact in the learning process. Focusing on students' expectations as customers and how that affects student involvement in high-engagement practices provides actionable insights to assist higher education in student learning during marketization.

Significance for Research Theory and Practice

The belief of this researcher is that marketization trends within higher education are creating a shift in power from provider (higher education) to consumer (student) (Tomlinson, 2014). This study contributes to the literature in measuring students' attitudes as customers and their effect on student engagement through involvement theory (Astin, 1985), which impacts student learning. Outside of the research environment there are many powerful voices of criticism, but higher education could benefit from understanding the relationship between students as customer and student learning in a

quantitative way in order to take actions that benefit students and to focus educational practices to benefit students and their learning. This study endeavors to present empirical quantitative data measuring student role perception and high-engagement practices from all cohorts across all disciplines. The combined variables of student perception and participation in high-engagement practices have not been researched.

Restatement of the Problem

Marketization is a current force within the Western world and influences many aspects of society (Harvey, 2005; Lemke, 2001; Saunders, 2014b). Higher education is one of the areas that has been greatly influenced in recent years. This influence has been accelerated by economic factors of increased costs of higher education, reduced state and federal funding, and increased cultural and professional demands that students earn an advanced degree (Aschenbrener, 2016; Rizzo, 2006). Gather data on marketization's effects on students and the practices they enact while learning is important to understand the implications of marketization on students.

The operational definition of marketization throughout this research is the market-like actions adopted by higher education in order to respond to the challenges or opportunities faced. Prior to conducting this research, the researcher strongly believed that these market-like actions of institutions affect students and specifically students' expectations of their role within higher education. Specifically, this study focused on students' conception of themselves as the "customers" in higher education as one of the reactions by students to marketization. Using collected survey data, the researcher sought to understand whether students perceive themselves as "customers" and if so, how that

perception might affect their participation in high-engagement learning practices (Astin, 1991) within higher educational learning environments.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

The following primary and secondary research questions guided the study and are restated below:

Primary Research Question.

Q1: Does a student's perceptions that they are the customer in higher education affect the student's involvement in learning?

Secondary Research Questions.

Q1: Does a student's biological gender affect their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q2: Does a student's major affect their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q3: Does a student's academic classification affect their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q4: Does university athletic participation or non-participation affect student's their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q5: Does a student's living (either campus housing or off campus housing) and learning locations (online or in a physical classroom) affect their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q6: Does the percentage of student's tuition responsibility affect their perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Q7: Do the combined effects of these independent variables of biological gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation or non-participation, living location, learning location, and percentage of students' tuition responsibility predict a student's perceptions of their role and their involvement in learning?

Hypothesis

The literature surrounding marketization and student perception was influential in the directional hypothesis decisions made within the study. Using the proposed quantitative methodology, the following directional and nondirectional hypotheses were tested and are restated below.

Directional Hypothesis: There will be a negative relationship between students' responses as customers and involvement in high involvement activities.

Null Hypothesis. There is no relationship between students' responses as customers and involvement in high involvement activities.

Directional Hypothesis. There will be a positive relationship between the percent of tuition that students pay and their expression of student learning involvement.

Null Hypothesis. There is no relationship between the percent of tuition that students pay and their expression of student learning involvement.

Hypothesis. Demographic and participant-identified factors including biological gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation or non-participation, living location, learning location, and percent tuition payment will influence the level of expression of student learning involvement.

Null Hypothesis. Demographic and participant-identified factors including biological gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation or non-

participation, living location, learning location, and percent tuition payment will not influence the level of expression of student learning involvement.

Institutional Context

This study includes student responses from three different four-year universities in the United States. The first institution is a public research university in the midwestern United States. The second and third institutions are both private liberal arts. For the remainder of this research the universities will be referred to as "Public 1," "Private Liberal Arts 1," and "Private Liberal Arts 2." Public 1 has a student population greater than eighteen thousand undergraduate students on multiple campuses. Classified as a "Doctoral/Research University – Very High Research Activity" (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, n.d.), its undergraduate profile is "more selective" as well as "high transfer in," which means that scores for incoming students are within the 80th to 100th percentile of selectivity among baccalaureate institutions and at least twenty percent of entering students are transfers from other institutions.

Private Liberal Arts 1 has a total undergraduate enrollment of fifteen hundred students on two campus locations in the midwestern United States. It is classified as a "Masters University" without research activity of note (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, n.d.) and its undergraduate profile is "inclusive" and "high transfer in," which means it either does not report student standardized scores or their scores indicate that admissions is extended to a wide variety of students.

Private Liberal Arts 2 is located in the northeastern United States and has an undergraduate population of eleven hundred students. It is classified as a "Masters

University" without research activity of note (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, n.d.) and its undergraduate profile is "selective" and "low transfer in," which means the scores of entering new students are within the 40th to 80th percentile of baccalaureate institutions and fewer than twenty percent of new students are transfers from outside institutions (Indiana University for Postsecondary Research, n.d.). Private Liberal Arts 2 is included in the study to add geographic diversity to the sample and to provide greater depth to the findings. The ability to analyze and compare responses of all three institutions will hopefully allow for greater insight and generalization of the findings.

Participants

For this study, the researcher gathered data from three different four-year universities in the United States. Requests to collect data were submitted through Institutional Review Boards at all three institutions. Because of the need to provide empirical data to expand the literature, all cohorts of undergraduate students were surveyed, building on prior research that gathered data only from first-year students or students studying in only one discipline (Delucchi & Korgens, 2002; Saunders, 2014a). All participants were current degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled as full-time students at all institutions. The public university participants were within the university research pool for participants within the fall 2018 groupings. Private university student responses were collected from the entire undergraduate student population without regard for any classification other than what was previously outlined. Traditional and online undergraduate students, both live in-person and online, were both included in the pool of participants. Students were informed that the study was voluntary and were asked to

acknowledge their participation in research by an informed consent form that preceded the questionnaire.

Design

The study was accomplished using quantitative analysis measuring the correlational relationships between the variables of students' customer perception and their reported participation in high-engagement practices. This method analyzed the primary research question and first hypothesis of a directional correlation relationship between students' perception as customers and the engagement practices that they exhibited. Correlational analysis methods and multiple regression analysis were performed to answer the remaining research questions. The current quantitative study was formulated based on the survey research approach (Creswell 2009). Within the survey research approach, a cross-sectional design was used to take a snapshot image of the perceptions and responses of students within a specific place at a specific point in time. The snapshot image is an approach that allows the data to reveal something specific within the context of the population (Ruel, Wagner & Gillespie, 2016). The possible limitations to using snapshot image will be discussed in a later section. Construction of the survey instrument relied on previously used questionnaires to develop three different question sets. One question set was used previously in its complete form; the second question set was taken from a larger list without modification; the third set, the demographics, was compiled to evaluate responses to the first two sets of questionnaires. Preexisting surveys were relied upon because of their validity and reliability. This reliability and validity was demonstrated through use in previous studies and statistical

analysis (Vogt et al., 2014). The following sections outline the design components and data collection details.

Model Equation

The model equation for the study is: NSSE HEP = f(SCOS, gender, classification, major, athletic participation, living location, learning location, percent of tuition responsibility). Using this model equation, the following equation is created for this study. NSSE HEP $=\beta_0 + \beta_1$SCOS + $\beta_2$gender + $\beta_3$major + β_4 classification + β_5 athletic participation + β_6 living location + $\beta_7$learning location + β_8 percent of tuition responsibility.

Variables and Codes

The following nine variables were used in the study.

1. Student Customer Orientation Score (SCOS) was an independent variable and a continuous variable. Individual responses were totaled for possible score ranges between 19 and 95. The total score was then divided by 19 for an average response score between 1 and 5. That average represented a Customer Orientation Score (COS). Saunders (2014a) proposed that since minor deviations in a Likert scale may not represent a meaningful expression or rejection of customer orientation, a focus should be placed on extreme response measures; thus a difference of +0.50 from the midpoint may represent meaningful levels of agreement or disagreement, as these scores are closer to either agreeing or disagreeing than the neutral midpoint of 3. With this in mind, a COS greater than 2.5 by any student or as a sample average does not strongly represent a student

customer orientation toward higher education with this instrument. Appendix A contains the questions for the Student Customer Perception Index.

2. Biological gender was an independent variable and was coded as a nominal variable with Female coded as "0," and Male coded as "1." The term "biological gender" was used specifically to create two nominal categories for analysis. As gender preference is not a component for analysis in this research, additional options for selection were not offered or requested. This language was used not to dismiss respondent choice, but to create a baseline for analysis.

3. Major was an independent variable and was coded as a nominal variable. This was left as an open-ended question for students to respond independently. In the data analyses, the researcher coded these within standardized majors. This was done in order to allow respondents the freedom to articulate their discipline of study in their own words. Coding of majors follows with Arts and Humanities "1," Business "2," Health and Medicine "3," Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies "4," Public and Social Sciences "5," Science, Math, and Technology "6," Social Sciences "7," Trades and Personal Services "8," Other "9." This list was selected from the website https://"bigfuture.collegeboard.org/majors-careers and was provided in the survey for participants' reference.

4. Academic classification was an independent variable and was a nominal variable with Freshman coded as "1," Sophomore coded as "2," Junior coded as "3," and Senior coded as "4."

5. Athletic participation was an independent variable and was coded as a nominal variable with Yes coded as "0," and No coded as "1."

6. Living location was an independent variable and was coded as a nominal variable with On Campus University Housing coded as "0," and Off-Campus Non-University Housing coded as "1."

7. Primary learning location was an independent variable and was coded as a nominal variable with Live in-person classroom coded as "0," and Online coded as "1."

8. Percent of tuition responsibility was an independent variable and was a continuous variable. Individual responses were open-ended but were within the range of 0 to 100 reflecting the respondents' estimation of the percentage of tuition that they are responsible for paying.

9. NSSE high-engagement practices score was the dependent variable for the study and was a continuous variable. Individual responses were totaled for possible score ranges between 0 and 60. That total score represents an approximation reflecting students' participation in high-engagement practices of learning as defined by Astin (1985) and Kuh and Pike (2005).

SPSS was utilized to analyze the dependent variable of NSSE HEP score and the independent variables of SCOS, gender, classification, major, athletic participation, living location, learning location, percentage of tuition responsibility. A Pearson Correlation was used to measure the strength of relationship between the variables and a Stepwise Multiple Regression was used to determine whether the independent variables (SCOS, gender, classification, major, athletic participation, living location, learning location,

percentage of tuition responsibility) are predictive of the dependent variable (NSSE HEP).

Data Collection Instruments

The survey contains three distinct questionnaires previously mentioned. The three surveys are a demographic survey, the Student Customer Orientation Survey (SCOS) and specific questions from the 2018 edition of the National Survey of Student Engagement (Kuh, 2001) survey. A detailed discussion of each follows.

The first series of questions collected demographic information from the participant, enabling a division of the cohorts for data analysis. These critical cross-sections include age, biological gender, anticipated graduation year, institution type (private or public), and major. The option to omit individual responses was provided; thus, those responses with omitted sections were analyzed in a separate category as applicable.

In addition to demographic questions posed to all participants, the surveys also included two additional survey instruments: The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2018) and the Student Customer Perception Index (Saunders, 2014). These items measured the most significant variables within the study, were previously developed, and were used with permission for this study. A list of these questions is provided in Appendix A in a format that the participant will see and in Appendix G with question categories and codes.

National Survey of Student Engagement

The NSSE was originally conceived in 1998 and supported by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trust. In its 2000 pilot, approximately 275 institutions participated and

responded to questions focused on establishing methods for assuring quality in higher education (NSSE, 2018). Throughout its evolution, the NSSE has been designed to directly query undergraduates about their educational experiences. The literature around student success has directed the question formulation to focus on faculty and peer practices that denote high quality undergraduate student outcomes. These outcomes from the student side include the high-engagement practices as outlined by Astin (1984) and Pike and Kuh (2005). The NSSE is a nationally acknowledged survey; the NSSE Institute licenses the NSSE questions and data benchmarks to institutions of all sizes and classifications. Typical administration takes place with only undergraduate students classified as either freshman or seniors. This administration schedule is utilized to reduce bias and respondent fatigue, and to increase relevance of responses.

In its current form the NSSE asks students to respond to questions in ten different categories that include quantitative reasoning, higher order learning, reflective and interactive learning, learning strategies, quality of interaction, supportive environment, collaborative learning, discussion with diverse others, student-faculty interaction, and effective teaching practices (NSSE, 2018). For this study, the researcher focused on the conceptual framework proposed for the study and the high-engagement practices identified by Astin (1984) as the dependent variable representing investment in learning. Consistent with that focus, questions from the following categories were selected and included in the NSSE portion of the instrument in this study: reflective and interactive learning, learning strategies, collaborative learning, and student-faculty interaction. This allowed the researcher to isolate the responses and more closely analyze the research question.

Some of the sample questions from the selected categories are included following this paragraph, with the full list presented in Appendix A in a participant format and Appendix G with codes and categories included.

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

1. Asked another student to help you understand course material? (Collaborative Learning)
2. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments? (Reflective & Integrative Learning)
3. Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class? (Student – Faculty Interaction)
4. Reviewed your notes after class? (Learning Strategies)

NSSE Validity and Reliability.

Because of the NSSE's repeated use and statistical analysis on each question, as well as the ten question categories, validity and reliability is measured often and provides high levels of credibility to the instrument's viability. NSSE provides validity scores by question and by category for all versions of the instrument. Although the researcher selected a representative sample of the questions from each category the deviation from the complete instrument is an identified limitation within the study. Each question category selected in the instrument is listed below with corresponding levels of Cronbach's α (NSSE 2018).

1. Reflective and interactive learning - Cronbach's α of 0.85 (first year) and 0.87 (senior)

2. Learning strategies - Cronbach's α of 0.76 (first year) and 0.77 (senior)

3. Collaborative learning - Cronbach's α of 0.82 (first year) and 0.82 (senior)

4. Student – faculty interaction - Cronbach's α of 0.82 (first year) and 0.84 (senior)

These data collected under repeated use in diverse populations demonstrate that the NSSE was a reliable instrument for study of student engagement.

Student Customer Perception Index

Daniel Saunders (2014) developed the Student Customer Perception Index (SCPI) in order to measure students' perceptions of their role as either customer or learner in the higher education context. His development of the 19-question instrument was guided by previous studies' weaknesses, and the need to limit the leading nature of questions and assess first-time freshman attitudes as they entered college (Saunders 2014a). The index has not been reused in published literature as of the date of current research, so validity and reliability is derived from the original study and data analysis of the questions.

The instrument establishes a continuum where responses are judged to exhibit either a learning perception or a customer perception. The researcher acknowledges that this is not a completely multidimensional view of these two characteristics, and that these concepts are not always mutually exclusive. It is possible for individuals to exhibit characteristics of learner and customer. This is a limitation of this instrument and is addressed with intention within the research findings and discussion chapters.

In reviewing the individual questions, the researcher identified five categorical groupings into which questions could be sorted. The categories identified are: higher education as commodity for purchase, higher education to serve career or financial goals, letter grade focus, ease of process, and student as customer. The researcher decided to

retain all questions in the original instrument because the categories aligned with the relevant components found in the literature regarding student perception as customer and the forces of marketization in higher education.

Some of the sample questions from the selected categories follow, with the full list presented in Appendix A in a participant format and Appendix G with codes and categories included.

1. I think of my college education as a product I am purchasing. (Higher Education as commodity for purchase)
2. If I could get a well-paying job without going to college, I would not be here. (Higher Education to serve career or financial goals)
3. As long as I complete all of my assignments I deserve a good grade in a course. (Letter grade focus)
4. Concerning [INSTITUION NAME], I think of myself primarily as a customer of the University. (Student as customer)
5. While at [INSTITUION NAME] I am going to try to take the easiest courses possible. (Ease of process)

Student Customer Perception Index Validity and Reliability.

With limited use, statistical validity is derived from the research of Saunders (2014). Without the ability to perform a complete pilot, individual items were measured for validity and reliability by setting the minimum coefficient α at .8 which was an artificially imposed standard to retain factors of each question. Based on this standard, the questions in each retained their validity when analysis was completed with the respondents' data. Although this was only the second study to be conducted using the

questions within the instrument, the process for question development and standards for analysis allow for the attribution of validity within this instrument.

Pilot

Although the NSSE and SCPI had been used previously, they had not been used together in a unified instrument. With that in mind two pilots at Private Liberal Arts 1 were completed to increase validity and reliability before the study took place. IRB approval was sought and granted by Private Liberal Arts 1 university prior to beginning the study. The first pilot was completed to test the questions modeled after the student high-engagement practices found in the NSSE. This was tested with a single cohort of seniors during their undergraduate graduation exit survey. The questions pertaining to student engagement were accompanied by questions unrelated to this research. The first pilot was mandatory for students who wanted to complete graduation requirements and earn their diplomas. Data was collected in the spring of 2018 and analyzed in the spring of 2019. The second pilot was performed with a limited number of students and two faculty members. They were asked to take the entire survey, including all three sections of questions, and respond to the list of prompts pertaining to question construction and ability and ease of response (adapted from Barnes, 2014a) that follow this paragraph. In addition, the pilot identified any technical issues with the survey before it was delivered within the study.

1. Did you find the items clear and easy to understand? If not, which items were confusing and how?
2. Did you feel comfortable answering all of the items? If no, why not and on which items?

3. What do you think of the length of the survey?
4. Did you find any additional errors in the survey instrument?
5. Did you have any other questions, comments, or feedback?

The two-pronged pilot of the study was conducted prior to data collection with the results being used to positively craft the data collection and analysis process. The first phase of the pilot was testing the proposed subset of questions from the NSSE instrument in a senior survey at one of the institutions being used for research. This process was used to test not only the order of the questions being used, but also the response scale that was a partial presentation of the typical NSSE format. The questions were included in a senior exit survey of the institution and the responses were analyzed for completeness and presentation of the data. The results of this portion of the pilot informed the final version of the instrument in one significant way. After the pilot, the main response was that there were too many questions presented. In response to this feedback, the entire instrument was reviewed and eventually reduced to its final form of twenty questions in total. This reduction was done to increase participants' responsiveness and reduce respondent fatigue. During the review process, the questions that remained were strategically selected to maintain equal representation from each of the major components of student involvement theory (Astin 1985) and to retain the tested validity of each NSSE section of the survey, thus preserving the integrity of collected data.

The second phase of the pilot was the creation and distribution of the proposed final version of the data collection instrument. This was sent out to faculty not connected to the research institution in order to gain their feedback. A questionnaire that accompanied the survey included questions listed in the pilot proposal. The qualitative

feedback received is included as Appendix H and additional adjustments were made prior to data collection. The second intentional result of this phase of piloting was the ability to test the survey and data collected by those who participated in the pilot. This resulted in a number of technical changes from a formatting and presentation perspective that streamlined the number of pages that participants viewed while completing the final survey: this in turn reduced the amount of time it took to advance through the instrument. Both pilots were used to substantially refine the presentation of the instrument prior to students responding to it during approved data collection parameters.

Procedures

Prior to contact with any of the cohort groupings, Institutional Research Board approval was granted through "public" university. Once that approval was given, both "private" universities were contacted requesting that the survey be administered on their campuses. Upon approval, their offices for institutional research were contacted for their review of the instruments and approach. The belief of the researcher was that partnership with these organizations would be critical to gain insight to their populations and to garner maximum response rates for the study. In each population the instruments were delivered, scored, and aggregated using an email request and Qualtics link that allowed for individual anonymity and convenient data collection. Participants did not know the name of any other students in the cohort pool, thus allowing the researcher to reduce treatment diffusion.

Prior to taking the survey, students were presented with an email request to participate in the study and a link to proceed to the online instrument (Appendix E). Upon accessing the instrument, students were presented with a cover letter and informed

consent statement that is included as Appendix B. Students were asked to click "agree" or "do not agree" to a consent statement. If they "agreed" they were permitted to complete the survey. If they did not, they were directed to a message thanking them for their time. Upon confirming the statement of consent, students then read the instructions for the survey instrument. The instructions are presented in complete form as Appendix C.

In an attempt to increase the study participation rate, a small incentive was offered for those who completed the study. A description of the incentive was provided in the email text that went to students during participation recruitment (Appendix E). The surveys were completed online and did not collect or request any identifying information. Only Primary Investigators (PI) and the Office of Institutional Research had access to the data.

The surveys were kept in the password-protected account of the PI, and the data to be used in subsequent analyses were downloaded only to the password-protected computer of the PI. Only the PI had access to the completed survey data. Given that this was an online survey, the only records linking the participating individual and his or her data were a consent document and IP address.

Data Collection and Analysis

To collect data, the researcher utilized one unified survey that combined the three sets of questions previously discussed. Each survey was administered through Qualtrics and distributed within the research pools of each university, or the method of publicity and survey distribution that the university allowed to solicit research participants. Although there were three distinct sets of questions, they were administered in a single

context in the order of demographics questions first, then student high-engagement practices questions, and customer perception index questions last.

After data were collected, they were analyzed using correlational research and regression methods through IBM's SPSS program. While the researcher acknowledges that correlation in no way assumes causation, this method of analysis did allow for description of relationships between the variables of student perception and reported student practices. With that in mind, the researcher used Pearson's product moment correlation and stepwise regression to test the hypothesis and directional relationships within the variables. While correlational methods are somewhat easy to justify in this case, stepwise regression was utilized to predict which variables contribute more to the variance in dependent variables in the step (Kiess, 2002). Equations used for each analysis method are included and discussed in the following paragraphs.

Pearson's product movement correlation (Pearson's *r*) was used as the primary method of analysis for the full equation including all independent variables: NSSE HEP $=\beta_0 + \beta_1$SCOS + $\beta_2$gender + $\beta_3$major + β_4 classification + β_5 athletic participation + β_6 living location + $\beta_7$learning location + β_8 percentage of tuition responsibility. This was performed in order to understand existence, strength, and direction of correlation between the independent and dependent variables as a whole.

Stepwise regression was used at the second level of analysis because of the model's ability to analyze a large number of independent variables. This process both adds and removes variable predictors one at a time in order to understand their unique impact on the equations result and strength. There are two methods most often used for this process. Backwards elimination begins with all variables in the equation and removes

one at a time; conversely, forward selection starts with one variable and adds to the model. This study utilized forward selection, which is appropriate for the first round of analysis with the many variables in a model with a dominant independent variable (SCOS). The equation for the first and subsequent steps using forward selection of independent variables are presented below:

1. NSSE HEP = $\beta_0 + \beta_1$SCOS
2. NSSE HEP =$\beta_0 + \beta_1$SCOS + $\beta_2$gender
3. NSSE HEP =$\beta_0 + \beta_1$SCOS + $\beta_2$gender + $\beta_3$major + β_4 classification
4. NSSE HEP =$\beta_0 + \beta_1$SCOS + $\beta_2$gender + $\beta_3$major + β_4 classification + β_5 athletic participation
5. NSSE HEP =$\beta_0 + \beta_1$SCOS + $\beta_2$gender + $\beta_3$major + β_4 classification + β_5 athletic participation + β_6 living location + $\beta_7$learning location
6. NSSE HEP =$\beta_0 + \beta_1$SCOS + $\beta_2$gender + $\beta_3$major + β_4 classification + β_5 athletic participation + β_6 living location + + $\beta_7$learning location + β_8 percentage of tuition responsibility

Limitations and Delimitations

There are a number of limitations and delimitations within the current study. Research limitations are those influences that the researcher cannot control (Joyner, Rouse & Glatthorn, 2013). NSSE instrument use, time, and self-reporting bias are three limitations identified in this study. The first limitation in the study is related to the NSSE instrument, one of the three instruments used in data collection. The NSSE instrument measures student-reported involvement in high-engagement practices that are connected to students learning (Astin, 1985). Although many researchers have built their

understanding of student engagement on the high-involvement practices identified by Astin (1985), newer research is beginning to lead researchers to question minor aspects of these practices, including the centrality of residential experience and interaction (Mayhew et al, 2016). The researcher also decided to select a representative set of questions from the full NSSE instrument. Although this was done strategically to reduce response fatigue, it may affect the precise transfer of validity and reliability of the instrument because of modification from its original form.

An additional limitation of the study is the use of convenience sampling and survey research in that these methods measure only one point in time, rather than showing change over time such as is the case in longitudinal studies. Finally, because the study uses survey methodology, participant self-reporting bias is a limitation. To address this limitation, attention has been given to the instruments used and the order in which they are presented. This is an attempt to mitigate the possibility of creating bias or somehow leading a student toward an "ideal" answer that would skew their responses. Although the order of presentation was designed to mitigate self-reporting bias, this must be identified as a limitation of the study.

In contrast to limitations, which are out of the control of the researcher, delimitations are decisions made by the researcher that create boundaries and limit the scope of the research findings. Four categories of delimitations are present in this study: methodology selection, sample population, sampling decision, and online instrument delivery. The first delimitation is the use of quantitative methodology to understand whether there is a relationship between the variables of student perception and their participation in high-engagement learning practices. Although the researcher believes this

was the appropriate method for this study, this selection limits depth and detail claims that can be made from qualitative research methods. Second, respondents selected for the sample group were limited to full-time undergraduate populations of the universities participating in the study. The findings are not generalizable to students in graduate or non-traditional higher educational settings. In addition, the results of this study are not fully generalizable to other four-year institutions because they are derived from only three universities (one public and two private liberal arts).

Another selection delimiting the study is the choice of convenience sampling, which limits generalizability because there is not complete assurance that the entire population is represented in the data. In this study, the respondent population was compared to national trends in undergraduate enrollment and identified in the data to qualify the findings. Finally, the use of an online survey instrument brings its own set of limitations. The time required for completion, technology access, security, high dropout rates, lack of researcher response, and distraction are significant drawbacks with this method of data collection (Fricker & Schonlau, 2002; Reips, 2002).

Ethical Standards

In order to confirm to the ethical standards of research, participation in the current study was voluntary. While voluntary participation is ethically important, it can limit generalizability of the findings (Babbie, 1998). The completion of this survey was voluntary; the students had to open the email they received and there was no grade attached to its completion (other than credit offered for students responding through a SONA system). Respondents also were allowed to discontinue the survey at any point and were given the option to request that their data were not used in the results if, after

completion, they made the decision to remove their data from the pool. In this study, no harm was inflicted to the recipients and anonymity was promised and protected by limiting the access to the data files and using identifying numbers assigned to responses when the researcher discussed the data with others. Participants received proof that the research was approved by the Institutional Review Boards at these universities prior to completion of the survey. All procedures required, including disclosure statements and contact information, were provided as required by the Institutional Review Boards of each university in the study.

Conclusion

The goal of this dissertation research was to learn whether there is a demonstrated customer perception among students at the participating universities, and whether that customer perception affects the academic engagement practices of students. The study tested not only the existence of this self-conception, but also allowed the researcher to gain insight into its presence in students in different academic classification, fields of study, extracurricular participation, living situations, and methods of instruction. This information assists the researcher in pushing forward the understanding of marketization's impact on students and the external factors that affect the perception of their role in the learning process as identified by scholars (Astin, 1985, 1991; Pike & Kuh, 2005).

Chapter Four presents the results of data collection and analysis. Chapter Five presents a discussion of the results including an examination of the findings, implications of the findings, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to discover if there is a relationship between the independent variable of a student's positionality as customer or learner (Saunders, 2014) and the dependent variable of student engagement (Astin, 1985). The a priori directional hypothesis was a negative relationship between the independent variable of student perception as a customer, and participation in high-engagement practices as reported by participants. This primary hypothesis was based on the convergence of theory in the literature proposing a dichotomy of "customer attitudes" (Saunders, 2014a) and learning associated behavior (Astin, 1985, 1991; Pike & Kuh, 2005). A second directional hypothesis assumed a positive relationship between the amount of tuition that students were responsible to pay and their expression of participation in high-engagement practices. This hypothesis assumed that the more students were responsible for paying, the more they would report participating in high-engagement practices as identified by the NSSE (NSSE, 2018). A third hypothesis proposed that participant demographic factors including gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation, living location, learning location and percent of tuition responsibility would influence the level of expression of student learning involvement (Astin, 1985). A number of significant

findings were identified by testing the hypotheses and research questions.

A positive correlation was found between Students' Customer Orientation Score (SCOS) and involvement in high involvement activities (NSSE). No statistically significant relationship was identified between the amount students pay and their expression of student learning involvement; however, demographic and participant identified factors were found to affect the level of self-reported participation in high-engagement learning practices.

To determine the nature and strength of these relationships, correlational analysis and linear regression was conducted. The process of analysis for the group as a whole and the subset of demographic analysis, description of participants in each group, and the assumptions met with the correlation and stepwise regression analysis of relationship and strength are described. This chapter presents the results of the data collection and analysis.

Description of the Sample

Data collection began in January of 2019 and continued until the end of March 2019. Each institution required different participant recruitment methods that were documented in the methodology section of this study. After data collection was complete, the process of data analysis began; the first step was to eliminate all participants who did not meet the following criteria: they either did not consent to continue the study after they had entered the survey (34) or they did not complete the NSSE and SCOS sections of the survey (142). In total, 176 responses were eliminated from the collected data.

After elimination, the sample consisted of 672 participants: 438 female students (65.2%), 234 male students (34.8%). Of the total number of students the following data were revealed:

1. 104 (15.5%) participated in intercollegiate athletics and 568 (84.5%) did not
2. 399 (59.4%) lived on campus and 273 (40.6%) commuted to campus
3. 653 (97.2%) took the majority of their classes in person and 18 (2.7%) took the majority of their classes online
4. 213 (31.7%) reported their academic classification as freshman, 157 (23.4%) reported that they were sophomores, 150 (22.3%) reported as juniors, and 151 (22.5%) reported as seniors.
5. Participants majors were reported as: 89 (13.2%) reported their major as Arts and Humanities, 123 (18.3%) as Business, 87 (12.9%) reported as Health and Medicine, 13 (1.9%) were Multi-Interdisciplinary studies majors, 15 (2.2%) were Public and Social Services, 179 (26.6%) were Science, Math and Technology majors, 61 (9.1%) were Social Science majors and 105 (15.6%) reported their major as "Other."

Due to the length and detail of information a detailed list is provided as Appendix I rather than a table within the chapter.

Research Questions

Primary Research Question: Student Perception and High-engagement Practices

The following primary research question was addressed in this investigation: Does a student's perception that he/she is the customer in higher education affect the student's involvement in learning? Prior to performing correlation computations on these

variables, the researcher examined the scatterplot included as Figure 4.1; it was suggestive of a weak bivariate linear relationship between the two variables. Regarding the underlying distribution of scores on both measures, the standardized skewness coefficients (i.e., the skewness value divided by the standard error of skewness) and the standardized kurtosis coefficients (i.e., the kurtosis value divided by the standard error of kurtosis) were calculated and yielded values that were within the range of normality (i.e., +/- 3, Onwuegbuzie & Daniel, 2002). Table 4.1 provides the values of these standard coefficients. Because all four coefficients were reflective of normally distributed data, a Pearson's product-movement correlation coefficient was calculated. The researcher decided that because normality was affirmed at the outset of analysis, it would not be addressed on a case by case basis throughout the remaining secondary research questions and tests.

To determine whether a statistically significant relationship was present between students' perception that they are the customer in higher education and the students' involvement in learning, a Pearson's *r* was calculated. The findings were statistically significant, $r(672) = .170$, $p < .001$, indicating a weak positive relationship between student customer perception and student's involvement in learning. Using Cohen's (1988) values, this *r* was reflective of a small positive relationship.

Figure 4.1
NSSE, SCOS Correlation Scatterplot

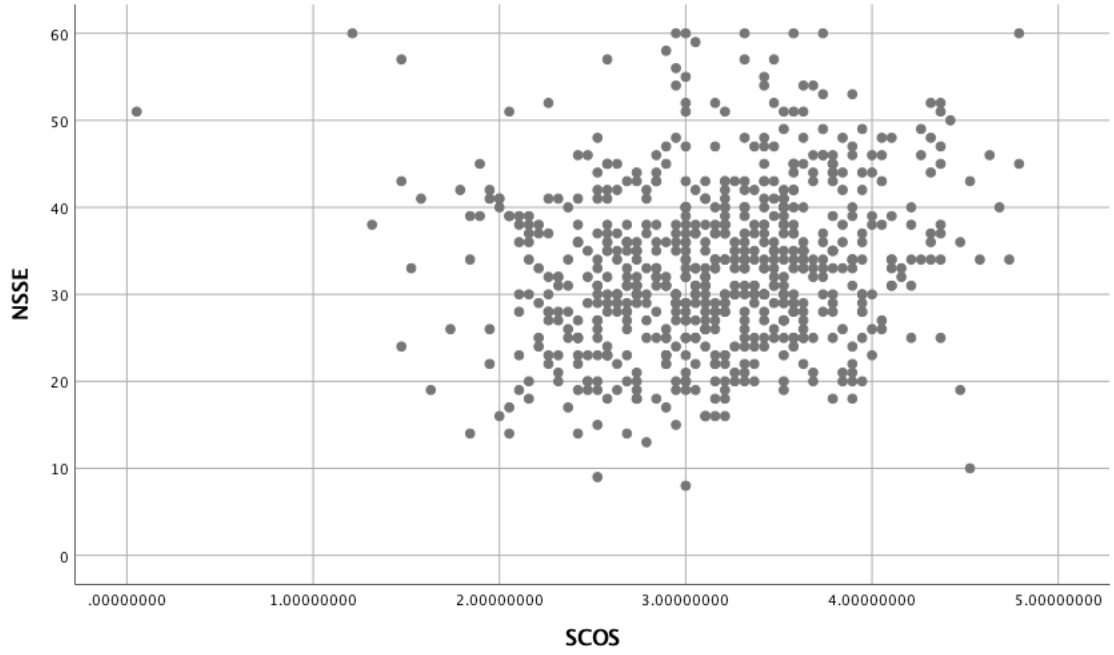

Table 4.1
Total Population Correlation (NSSE and SCOS)

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	*Std. Deviation*	N
NSSE	34.17	9.392	672
SCOS	3.143	0.630	672

Correlations

		NSSE	SCOS
NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.170**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0
	N	672	672
SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.170**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
	N	672	672

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Secondary Research Questions

Secondary research questions were formulated using the demographic categories reported by each participant. These questions analyzed the differences within demographic response categories. The statistical analysis and results for each question included the subsets of Gender, Major, Academic Classification, Living Location, Learning Location, Percent Tuition Responsibility, and the combined effects of these variables are discussed individually below.

Gender.

The first offshoot from the primary research question of understanding students' customer perceptions and their level of involvement in learning was the division and analysis of responses by gender classifications. To determine whether a statistically significant relationship was present between participant's perception that they are the customer in higher education and their involvement in learning, a Pearson's *r* was calculated for each gender subset. Female respondent's data were statistically significant, $r(428) = .187$, $p < .01$, indicating a weak positive relationship between student customer perception and student's involvement in learning. While this was a weak relationship it was stronger that the total sample relationship. Male respondent's data were also statistically significant, $r(234) = .132$, $p < .05$. supporting a slightly weaker relationship than was present in the female subset. Data relate to the analysis by reported gender are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2
Correlation by Gender (NSSE and SCOS)

Descriptive Statistics

Biological Gender	Mean	*Std. Deviation*	N

(gender)				
Female	NSSE	34.820	9.437	438
	SCOS	3.154	0.642	438
Male	NSSE	32.950	9.202	234
	SCOS	3.122	0.610	234

Correlations

Biological Gender (gender)			NSSE	SCOS
Female	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.187**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0
		N	438	438
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.187**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
		N	438	438
Male	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.132*
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.044
		N	234	234
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.132*	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.044	
		N	234	234

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Major.

Student's major was the second descriptive independent variable reported by research participants. To determine whether a statistically significant relationship was present in different majors, a Pearson's *r* was calculated for each major. Of the nine options provided, only eight categories received at least one response (this is reflected in the data tables). Of the majors that received responses, two had statistically significant correlation results of student customer perception and student's involvement in learning. Arts and Humanities majors demonstrated a statistically significant result, $r(89) = .256$, $p < .05$. as did Science Math and Technology, $r(179) = .169$, $p < .05$. The entire data set with participants grouped by major is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3
Correlation by Major (NSSE and SCOS)

Descriptive Statistics

Major		Mean	*Std. Deviation*	N
Arts and Humanities	NSSE	35.660	11.257	89
	SCOS	3.157	0.706	89
Business	NSSE	31.680	9.915	123
	SCOS	2.892	0.571	123
Health and Medicine	NSSE	33.390	7.268	87
	SCOS	3.185	0.554	87
Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies	NSSE	40.380	10.821	13
	SCOS	3.518	0.644	13
Public and Social Services	NSSE	33.930	8.730	15

	SCOS	2.849	0.570	15
Science, Math, and Technology	NSSE	34.020	8.967	179
	SCOS	3.246	0.599	179
Social Sciences	NSSE	36.360	9.322	61
	SCOS	3.285	0.596	61
Other	NSSE	34.690	8.580	105
	SCOS	3.127	0.677	105

Correlations

Major			NSSE	SCOS
Arts and Humanities	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.256*
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.016
		N	89	89
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.256*	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.016	
		N	89	89
Business	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.082
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.368
		N	123	123
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	0.082	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.368	

		N	123	123
Health and Medicine	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.194
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.071
		N	87	87
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	0.194	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.071	
		N	87	87
Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.348
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.244
		N	13	13
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	0.348	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.244	
		N	13	13
Public and Social Services	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.342
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.213
		N	15	15
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	-0.342	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.213	
		N	15	15
Science, Math, and Technology	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.169*
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.024
		N	179	179

	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.169*	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.024	
		N	179	179
Social Sciences	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.137
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.293
		N	61	61
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	0.137	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.293	
		N	61	61
Other	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.061
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.54
		N	105	105
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	0.061	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.54	
		N	105	105

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Academic Classification.

Academic classification was another descriptive independent variable requested within the participant survey. This variable was included to compare differences in the present study and to create baseline data for future research. The analysis method of Pearson's *r* was used to test statistical significance between groups. The entire data set related to academic classification is presented in Table 4.4. Within the four categories of freshman, sophomore, junior and senior only the subsets of junior and senior academic

classifications produced statistically significant results. Both junior ($r(150) = .295$, $p < .01$) and senior ($r(151) = .177$, $p < .05$) classification subsets presented positive correlation results that support a weak relationship between the variables.

Table 4.4
Correlation by Academic Classification (NSSE and SCOS)

Descriptive Statistics

Academic Classification		Mean	*Std. Deviation*	N
.	NSSE	31.000	.	1
	SCOS	2.737	.	1
Freshman	NSSE	33.980	9.028	213
	SCOS	2.968	0.634	213
Sophomore	NSSE	33.790	9.326	157
	SCOS	3.189	0.585	157
Junior	NSSE	34.350	9.967	150
	SCOS	3.223	0.640	150
Senior	NSSE	34.660	9.470	151
	SCOS	3.264	0.616	151

Correlations

Academic Classification			NSSE	SCOS
.	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	.a	.a
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.
		N	1	1
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.a	.a
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	
		N	1	1

Freshman	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.076
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.272
		N	213	213
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	0.076	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.272	
		N	213	213
Sophomore	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.154
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.054
		N	157	157
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	0.154	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.054	
		N	157	157
Junior	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.295**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0
		N	150	150
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.295**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
		N	150	150
Senior	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.177*
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.03
		N	151	151
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.177*	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.03	
		N	151	151

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

.a *Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.*

Athletic Participation.

The role of athletic participation was a subset of the primary research question and was analyzed in the present study. Pearson's *r* was used to determine whether a statistically significant relationship was found between SCOS and NSSE scores in responses of athletic participant and non-participant groupings. Analysis revealed that athletic participant's responses did not result in a statistically significant result, $r(104) = .120$, $p > .05$. A statistically significant result was found for non-athletic participants, $r(568) = .197$, $p < .01$. There was a weak but statistically significant positive correlation between non-athletic participation and the perceptions of students and their engagement practices in higher education. Data from the athletic participants and non-participants analysis are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5
Correlation by Athletic Participation-non participation (NSSE and SCOS)

Descriptive Statistics

Do you participate in intercollegiate athletics?		Mean	*Std. Deviation*	N
Yes	NSSE	36.46	10.194	104
	SCOS	2.9798	0.6720	104
No	NSSE	33.75	9.185	568
	SCOS	3.173	0.619	568

Correlations

Do you participate in intercollegiate athletics?			NSSE	SCOS
Yes	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.12
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.225
		N	104	104
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	0.12	1

		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.225	
		N	104	104
No	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.197**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0
		N	568	568
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.197**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
		N	568	568

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Living Location.

The influence of where participants lived on NSSE and SCOS variables was also of interest to the researcher. After grouping the participants based on their response for their living location as either on campus or commuter, a Pearson's *r* score was calculated. For both groups a statistically significant relationship was identified. Those that lived on campus had a positive relationship $r(399) = .141$, $p < .01$, but those that commuted exhibited a slightly stronger relationship between the variables $r(273) = .214$, $p < .01$. The 59.4% of participants that reported living on campus is larger than the population of students that live on campus nationally. This difference in sample versus national populations is an area that prompts additional questions and is suggested as an area of additional investigation for future research. Data from the living location analyses are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6
Correlation by Living Location (NSSE and SCOS)

Descriptive Statistics

Do you live on campus or commute?	Mean	*Std. Deviation*	N

Campus	NSSE	34.06	9.568	399
	SCOS	3.108	0.644	399
Commute	NSSE	34.33	9.143	273
	SCOS	3.194	0.607	273

Correlations

Do you live on campus or commute?			NSSE	SCOS
Campus	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.141**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.005
		N	399	399
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.141**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	
		N	399	399
Commute	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.214**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0
		N	273	273
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.214**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
		N	273	273

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Learning Location.

In addition to the location where students lived, the location where students learned was also an area of investigation in the present study. To classify the participants, they were asked where they experienced most of their classes and were given the choice of "in person" or "online." Those two groups were divided into the two classifications, and Pearson's *r* was used once again to calculate a possible relationship. Those that took classes in person represented the significant majority and exhibited a statistically significant correlation relationship, $r(653) = .165$, $p < .01$. The value indicated a weak but positive correlation between students' perceptions and their engagement in high-

engagement learning practices. Participants that reported the majority of their courses were taken online did not exhibit a statistically significant relationship. Data for learning location analysis are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7
Correlation by Learning Location (NSSE and SCOS)

Descriptive Statistics

Do you take the majority of your courses in class or online?		Mean	*Std. Deviation*	N
.	NSSE	37	.	1
	SCOS	2.842	.	1
Live In Person Class	NSSE	34.19	9.403	653
	SCOS	3.141	0.628	653
Online	NSSE	33.06	9.415	18
	SCOS	3.211	0.739	18

Correlations

Do you take the majority of your courses in class or online?			NSSE	SCOS
.	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	.a	.a
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.
		N	1	1
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.a	.a
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	
		N	1	1
Live In Person Class	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	.165**

		Sig. (2-tailed)		0
		N	653	653
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	.165**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
		N	653	653
Online	NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.337
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.171
		N	18	18
	SCOS	Pearson Correlation	0.337	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.171	
		N	18	18

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
.a *Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.*

Percent of Tuition Responsibility.

The final demographic participant information question asked participants what percentage of their tuition they were responsible for paying. A secondary research question sought to discover if there was a relationship between the participants' self-reported percentage of tuition payment responsibility, and either their role perception or their reported involvement in high-engagement learning practices. To provide clarity in the analysis, Pearson's *r* calculations were performed measuring tuition responsibility against the SCOS and NSSE scores separately. There was no statistically significant relationship found between tuition responsibility and SCOS ($r(622) = .-058$, $p > .01$), or tuition responsibility and participation in high-engagement learning practices ($r(622) = .070$, $p > .01$). Complete data related to both analyses with tuition responsibility percentage are presented in Tables 4.8 and 4.9.

Table 4.8
Correlation by Tuition Percentage (NSSE)

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	*Std. Deviation*	N
NSSE	34.17	9.392	672
% of total cost	48.616	32.728	622

Correlations

		NSSE	% of total cost
NSSE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.07
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.082
	N	672	622
% of total cost	Pearson Correlation	0.07	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.082	
	N	622	622

Table 4.9
Correlation by Tuition Percentage (SCOS)

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	*Std. Deviation*	N
% of total cost	48.616	32.728	622
SCOS	3.143	0.630	672

Correlations

		% of total cost	SCOS
% of total cost	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.058
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.151
	N	622	622
SCOS	Pearson Correlation	-0.058	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.151	
	N	622	672

Combined effects of independent variables.

Due to the large number of demographic variables present in the study, the final secondary research question asked if the combined effects of the independent variables of biological gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation or non-participation, living location, learning location and percent tuition payment responsibly predict student perception of their role and their reported involvement in learning. In the third chapter on methodology, stepwise multiple regression was proposed as the tool for analysis, but after data collection, an adjustment in this analysis method was necessary.

First, to facilitate maximum participant response and clarity in data collection, a mix of categorical and continuous variables were used. For example, in the question related to gender, female was coded as "0" and male was coded as "1". Stepwise multiple regression, while an appropriate method for use in answering this research question, does not accommodate accurately for the mix of continuous and categorical variables in the model. To rely on the output from the statistical analysis, linear regression using the enter method was used, rather than the stepwise method. The enter method is used if a researcher is building a model and wants all of the variables to be given equal importance. The model does not make an assumption or hypothesize that any one variable is more or less important than the other. Because this framework is consistent with the research question, this method variation was implemented. Finally, to truly reflect the intent of the research question, the model was run separately for NSSE scores and SCOS scores. The results are presented in Tables 4.10 and 4.11. This created clarity in the output and strengthened the specificity of data to each variable.

After running the linear regression using the enter input system, the adjusted *r*-squared, and beta weights were used to identify whether there was a relationship between independent variables and separated dependent variables of student perception and student involvement. Using *r*-squared values, the analysis revealed that independent variables had a 4.6% overall impact on the student perception value and 2.1% impact on the student engagement value. These values were supported by statistically significant findings in both models. Both of these values were weak and demonstrated that the independent variables had a slight effect on the dependent variables. Beta weights for the entire data set are listed below in Tables 4.10 and 4.11.

Table 4.10
Linear Regression of independent variables (NSSE)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics	
					R Square Change	F Change
1	.178a	0.032	0.021	9.207	0.032	2.872

a Predictors: (Constant), Percentage of the total cost of my education. Do you participate in intercollegiate athletics? Do you take the majority of your courses in class or online? Biological Gender (gender), Academic Classification, Major. Do you live on campus or commute?

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	*Sig.*
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	34.746	1.452		23.931	0
	Gender	-2.082	0.779	-0.107	-2.671	0.008

	Classification	0.274	0.363	0.034	0.756	0.45
	Major	0.244	0.138	0.072	1.777	0.076
	Athletics	-2.919	1.05	-0.112	-2.78	0.006
	Living Location	-0.032	0.854	-0.002	-0.038	0.97
	Learning Location	-1.294	2.296	-0.023	-0.564	0.573
	% tuition	0.014	0.012	0.049	1.214	0.225

a Dependent Variable: NSSE

Table 4.11

Linear Regression of independent variables (SCOS)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics	
					R Square Change	F Change
1	.239a	0.057	0.046	0.613668936	0.057	5.305

a Predictors: (Constant), Percentage of the total cost of my education. Do you participate in intercollegiate athletics? Do you take the majority of your courses in class or online? Biological Gender (gender), Academic Classification, Major. Do you live on campus or commute?

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.748	0.097		28.395	0
	Gender	-0.025	0.052	-0.019	-0.481	0.631
	Classification	0.096	0.024	0.175	3.954	0
	Major	0.023	0.009	0.099	2.489	0.013
	Athletics	0.161	0.07	0.091	2.295	0.022
	Living Location	0	0.057	0	-0.007	0.995

Learning Location	-0.029	0.153	-0.007	-0.188	0.851
% tuition	-0.002	0.001	-0.083	-2.08	0.038

a Dependent Variable: SCOS

Analysis of Hypotheses

Directional Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis predicted there would be a negative relationship between participants' responses as customer and their involvement in high-engagement learning practices. Student customer perception was measured using the Student Customer Perception Index (SCPI) initially designed by Saunders (2014a) to measure students' perception of their role as either customer or learner in the higher education context. In the question set used from Saunders (2014), the range of scores are 1 through 5. A score of 1 is aligned with a customer perception in higher education. As the score increases towards 5, it moves away from the customer perception. Using Saunders' previous data, the midpoint of 2.5 plus or minus .5 is not classified as a customer or non-customer perception.

A Pearson's *r* correlation was conducted, and a weak positive relationship was found between student customer perception and high-engagement learning practices, $r(672) = .170$, $p < .001$. This calculation supports the rationale that as a participant's SCOS score increased (moved away from the customer perception) their engagement score increased. This statistically significant finding supports the hypothesis that as students have more customer centered approach (lower SCOS score) their involvement would be lower. The directional hypothesis was statistically supported.

Directional Hypothesis II

Directional Hypothesis II stated that the amount students pay would be positively associated with their expression of involvement in high-engagement learning practices as defined by their total NSSE score. A Pearson's *r* was conducted and a significant relationship between tuition responsibility and involvement in high-engagement learning practices ($r(622) = .070$, $p > .05$) was not found. The second hypothesis that the amount students pay would be positively associated with their expression of student learning involvement as defined by their responses to the NSSE, was not supported because there was not a statistically significant relationship present.

Hypothesis III

Hypothesis III stated that demographic and participant identified factors-including biological gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation or non-participation, living location, learning location and percent tuition payment-would influence the level of expression of student learning involvement. Linear regression analysis was used, and a statistically significant relationship was found in both cases. Thus, Hypothesis III was supported because a weak but significant relationship was present.

Summary

The purpose of the present study was to determine if a statistical relationship exists between students' customer perception levels and their level of involvement in high-engagement learning practices. This chapter presented the data collected from three unique higher education institutions. In addition to a description of the sample population, statistical findings related to the primary and secondary research questions

and a discussion of research hypothesis were presented in this chapter. As a result of the analysis, a positive statistically significant relationship was discovered between the primary dependent variable of student involvement in high-engagement practices (NSSE) and the primary independent variable of student customer perception levels (SCOS). Secondary research question data were also presented with accompanying data tables. In conclusion the statistical data were applied to the three hypothesis proposed in the study. The outcome of the discussion was the statistical confirmation of the first and third hypotheses. Chapter five will present a discussion of these results including an examination of the findings, implications of the findings, limitations within the study and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Higher education is influenced by and influences the society in which it resides. Marketization is one of the outside forces that influences the actions and reactions of higher education. As market-like actions and thinking become part of higher education, it is important to leaders within higher education to understand the implication for students. In this chapter the results of the present study to understand marketization's impact on students are presented and discussed. The chapter begins with a restatement of the research problem, research purpose and review of the methodology. After these foundational elements, the summary of the results is presented followed by discussion of the findings and the chapter conclusion.

Problem Statement

Beginning with the 1944 GI Bill, the US federal government began moving funding from institutions to individual students. This movement began the shift toward funding student choice; thus, student influence increased in the higher education recruiting process (1944 GI Bill; 1968 Higher Education Act; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009). Some scholars propose that this shift influenced the beginning of marketization in higher education and fostered an expectation within students that they

are the customers (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009). This market narrative is further exhibited in the critique that as student cost and debt continue to rise, the ability of higher education to educate students has declined (Arum & Roksa, 2011). Because the current literature focuses on marketization's positive or negative effects on operation and revenue generation, higher education leaders may not fully understand marketization's effect on student's perception and learning.

Purpose Statement

This study explored individual student's responses for evidence of students' customer perception in higher education as a whole (Saunders, 2014a). The study also aimed to gain data on the relationship between customer perception and students' participation in high-engagement learning practices (Astin, 1985) to better understand how students perceive themselves within higher education and to look for a potential relationship with their learning behavior. After data analysis was completed, the relationship between these two factors demonstrated a statistically significant positive relationship that supported the original research hypothesis that as students expressed higher levels of customer perceptions, their level of engagement would decrease.

Review of the Methodology

To address the research questions empirically, quantitative survey research was used to gather and analyze participant data. The population sample consisted of undergraduate students from three different universities within the United States who were asked to respond to an online survey. The three-part survey consisted of a short list of demographic questions, the Student Customer Perception Index developed and used by Saunders (2014a), and the National Survey of Student Engagement (National Survey of

Student Engagement, 2018). At the conclusion of data collection, the responses were compiled, and correlational analysis and linear regression were used to test for statistically significant relationships. The findings from that analysis were presented in Chapter Four and are highlighted and discussed in detail in the following sections of this chapter.

Summary of Results

The analysis process clearly revealed three distinct categories, or lenses from which to view the data. The first lens views the correlational relationship between the two variables of student customer perception and student involvement in high-engagement practices. These two variables were the focus of the primary research questions and were also used when participant groups were divided for analysis. The second lens focuses on only the findings related to the dependent variable of student participation in high-engagement learning practices among categories of the sample. Focusing on this variable alone, within and between groups, brought to light a number of additional relevant findings of student involvement and engagement within the sample population. The third and final lens focuses on student customer perception measured by the Student Customer Orientation Score (SCOS) in the entire population, and then between categorical groupings. The following sections present the results through these three lenses. This triad of lenses is then used to build the discussion section that follows the three lens categories.

Correlation between Student Customer Perception and Student Involvement in High-Engagement Learning Practices

The primary hypothesis for this study was that students who perceived themselves more as the customer in higher education would exhibit less of the involvement practices associated with learning. Using correlational analysis of these two variables, the present study statistically supported a weak relationship in the hypothesis but did not reveal an overwhelming customer perception in students. The participant data related to student perception builds on previous research (Bunce, Baird & Jones, 2016; Delucchi & Korgen, 2002; Obermiller, Fleenor & Raven, 2005; Saunders, 2014) but adds the engagement data correlation to the discussion. Using the total sample population, the data provided evidence that students' perceptions as a customer and learning engagement activities were weakly correlated. This is important and adds to both student perception and student involvement literature. As the correlation data were further analyzed using the secondary research questions, areas such as gender, academic classification, athletic participation, living location, and percent of tuition responsibility provided additional findings within subgroups.

Gender.

Gender was the first area where unique correlation insights were identified. Both gender groups presented significant correlational findings, with females exhibiting a slightly higher correlational relationship than males. This information is interesting to note as the data suggest that increases in either variable will increase the other for both genders, but increases in one of the variables for females more highly affected the other than for males.

Academic Classification.

Correlation was evaluated within academic classifications. Of the four cohorts, junior and senior students demonstrated statistically significant correlation results for the primary variables of student customer perception and student engagement. Juniors also exhibited the highest correlational score of any categorical grouping of participants.

Athletic Participation.

The division of athletic and non-athletic participants was an additional category used for data analysis. Of the two groups, non-athletic participants revealed a significant high correlation result between the main variables of student customer perception and engagement. Non-athletic participants outpacing athletes in correlation value and significance strength.

Living Location.

Living location was divided into two categories, and both residential and commuter students exhibited positive and significant correlation results. Of the two groups, commuter students had the higher correlational value, meaning that there was a stronger connection between their perceptions and their engagement practices.

Percent of Tuition Responsibility.

Bunce, Baird and Jones (2016) propose a connection between higher levels of tuition responsibility and a customer orientation and lower academic performance. Their research informed the second hypothesis which sought to discover if there was a relationship between the participants' self-reported percentage of tuition payment responsibility, and either their role perception or their reported involvement in high-

engagement learning practices. The data analysis did not identity a relationship between tuition responsibility and a customer perception ($r(622) = .-058$, $p > .01$), or tuition responsibility and participation in high-engagement learning practices ($r(622) = .070$, $p > .01$). This is a finding that does not support the researcher's a priori hypothesis and previous research. Additional research on the variable of student tuition responsibility may result in a nuanced understanding of tuition responsibility and customer perception and student engagement.

Student Involvement in High-engagement Learning Practices

The second lens viewed only the NSSE scores as a representation of student involvement in learning practices. The results, when reviewed and divided into subgroups, provided insights into the practices of students. The areas of academic classification, major, athletic participation, and learning location contained data that stood out related to the reported engagement activities of students. The overall mean of all student data was a score of 34.17 out of a possible total of 60, indicating that on average students responded between "sometimes" and "often" for all engagement questions.

Academic Classification.

An interesting trend was observed during analysis of participants responses by academic classification. Research supports the position that as students persist further in higher education, they become more involved and create deeper connections because of time and affinity (Astin 1985). In addition, attrition historically takes place, removing students who do not meet minimum academic patterns and thresholds. Analysis of the NSSE data in the study across academic cohorts supported this trend with increasing

engagement scores for each year in higher education. Overall, the total difference was minimal, with a slight .68 range between freshmen and senior NSSE scores. This was a much smaller change over time than expected.

Major.

Differences between majors also presented a data pattern related to student high-engagement learning practices. The highest engagement scores were within the three majors of Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies, Social Sciences and Arts and Humanities, with 40.38, 36.36, and 35.66 respectively. In contrast, Business majors reported the lowest scores of any major or subcategory measures in the study at 31.68.

Athletic participation.

Dividing the participant sample between athletic participants and non-athletic participants revealed another unique result. Although athletes were a smaller sample with only 104 participants, they exhibited a higher engagement score than non-athletes. Although this data point may be overwhelmed by the smaller percentage of participants, it is an interesting statistic about engagement represented in this sample.

Learning Location.

Learning location provided another insight into students' involvement in the learning environment. These data do confirm that students who experience the majority of their courses online are less engaged in high-engagement practices than are students who learn primarily in a physical classroom. Interestingly, however, there was not a large difference between the two reported averages: 33.06 for online learners and 34.19 for in class learners. This difference was anticipated to be larger, prior to data collection and analysis.

Combined Variable Effects.

Analyzing the combined effects of independent variables on student involvement in high-engagement practices, the result was statistically significant and identified two independent variables that were also statistically significant and impacted the NSSE score to the greatest degree. A student's athletic participation or non-participation was the most impactful predictor of the dependent variable, with a -2.919 change in the total NSSE score from participant to non-participant, meaning that if a student did not participate in athletics the score went down on average 2.919 points. This may be attributed to the social and programmatic connection they have with a team in an athletic program. The second significant finding was in the differences in gender; this was also the second most influential variable in the total NSSE score. The difference between female and male participants affected the NSSE score on average 2.082 points, which means that male participants on average had a NSSE response score 2.082 points lower than female participants.

Student Customer Perception

The third lens used to evaluate the data focused only on the student customer perception score (SCOS). This was measured by adding the values assigned to the responses in the SCPI instrument and averaging them for all 19 responses. The results, when reviewed as a whole and divided into subgroups, provided insight to the customer perceptions of students. The areas of academic classification, major, and athletic participation contained unique student perception data. The overall mean of all student data was a score of 3.14 out of a possible total of 5. A value of 1 was strongly customer biased and 5 was the opposite of a customer bias.

Academic classification.

In previous studies that measured student customer perception (Bunce, Baird & Jones, 2016; Delucchi & Korgen, 2002; Obermiller, Fleenor & Raven, 2005; Saunders, 2014), there were no data from all academic classifications. This study included academic classification to observe customer perception across the undergraduate progress spectrum. Collected data demonstrated a small increase in the customer perception score throughout the undergraduate experience, which suggests that students move away from a customer perception over time.

Major.

Using the lens of academic major to categorize customer perception data, there were findings that demonstrated varying degrees of student customer perception. Once again, Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies exhibited the highest SCOS mean of all the majors, meaning that these students exhibited perceptions farthest away from the customer perception than any other major in the study (3.518 as compared to the sample mean of 3.143). The lowest mean score of all majors was exhibited by business majors with a 2.892 score. This score was also the closest to customer perception in the entire study. This accompanied their low NSSE mean, which further supports the overall SCOS/NSSE correlational relationship discussed earlier.

Athletic participation.

Those who participated in athletics exhibited a lower customer perception score than the non-participants. Their mean score of 2.980 was one of the lowest subcategory scores of the study, which positions them slightly more toward the customer perception than the total sample average and non-athletic participants average.

Combined Variable Effects.

Using the linear regression model to analyze the combined effects of all independent variables to student customer perception resulted in identification of two statistically significant independent variables that impacted the perception score the most. A student's athletic participation or non-participation was the most impactful predictor in the dependent variable, with a .161 change in the total perception score from participant to non-participant. This means that if a student did not participate in athletics, the score went up on average .161 points. Academic classification between participants was the second most influential in the student perception score. The difference between academic classification of participants affected the perception score on average .096 points. This means that as a student moved one year further in their academic progress, their perception score increased .096 per year further away from customer perception.

Discussion

The study findings are discussed in the following four sections: discussion summary, practical implications, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research. Each of these sections integrates findings from the three lenses presented in the summary section of this chapter: the overall correlational lens, NSSE lens and the SCOS lens. These sections reference the results of the study and how they interact with and contribute to the literature and prior research surrounding the present study.

Discussion Summary

The most unique finding from the overall study is the weak positive correlation found between student perception of themselves as a customer within higher education and student involvement in high-engagement learning practices. Saunders (2014) and

Bunce, Baird, and Jones (2016) conducted research on student perception with opposing outcomes of student customer perception. This study contributes additional data related to student customer perception which aligns with Saunders' (2014) findings and adds the subset of NSSE responses to present information on both student perception and practice.

This study presents a picture that within the sample population, student perception weakly correlates with student practices. In the overall sample, as well as nineteen of the twenty secondary analyses of the data, there was at least a weak but positive correlation between the two main variables of student customer perception (SCOS) and student action (NSSE). This provides early data connecting the two areas of perception and practices of students. Utilizing the I-E-O model or the Input–Environment–Output model (Astin 1991), these data can be used to present an additional nuance to understand aspects of the students mindset or "Input" at entrance and different stages of higher education. Although these data do not prove causation, they support evidence of a connection between students' perceptions as a customer and their practices.

This understanding of a possible connection between student perception and practice furthers the discussion of student customer perception beyond a binary good or bad feature of students as many have proposed (Carlson & Fleishers, 2002; Molesworth, Nixon, & Scullion, 2009), so that it can be included as an "Input" factor to be understood and engaged within the higher education environment as Astin (1991) would frame higher education. Using an "Input" mindset, the data provide early insights to the specific areas of gender, academic classification, and living location while in higher education, subsets within the highest correlational values within subgroups within the study.

For example, analyzing data by gender demonstrates that female students had a slightly stronger correlational value than did males (female $r(428) = .187$, $p < .01$, male $r(234) = .132$, $p < .05$). This correlational value means that for every difference in perception, there was a stronger correlation to the difference in high-engagement learning practices. These data may lead researchers and practitioners to understand perception to be important for both groups but are even stronger in implication for female students when wanting them to engage in high-engagement learning practices within higher education.

Practical Implications

The findings within the present study present practical implications for certain areas of undergraduate higher education. The sample for this study supports the claim of a small relationship between student customer perception and student's engagement in high-engagement learning practices. The study may suggest that the further a student moves away from the customer perception, the more they will report participating in high-engagement learning practices. Viewing the results of data analysis alongside the relevant literature, the following paragraphs propose three implications for practice within higher education: the purposeful acknowledgement of student customer perception, the opportunity for intentional incorporation of student perception and practice, and the integration of student perception within higher education's culture. Each of these implications is discussed within the sections that follow.

Purposeful Acknowledgement of Student Customer Perception.

The first practical use of this study is to acknowledge that there is a weak but evident move toward a customer expectation by many undergraduate students. Saunders'

2014 research identified an average SCOS score of 3.314, with a sample size of over two thousand freshman students. When the data from 2014 are compared to the freshman participants in this study, who had an average score of 2.968, this group shows a slight movement toward a customer perception. The overall sample average of all participants in the present study was 3.143; although this is not a confirmed costumer bias as represented by Saunders (2014a), it shows a more customer centric mean than was represented in the original study. Comparison of these studies suggests a possible trend toward customer perception among freshman students. This movement presents a reason to understand and address the perception that students bring with them into higher education.

The literature supports the view that faculty are reluctant to accept a customer student expectation (Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Much of this literature utilizes language that assumes a negative value of students who perceive themselves as customers. However, the present study provides preliminary data that students in fact do not have a strong customer perception with a total sample SCOS mean of 3.143, which is above the midpoint and acceptable range Saunders set for the customer verses learner paradigm.

The present study provides insights that there are, however, areas where students hold a customer perception as the SCOS individual item analysis data supports. Appendix K (COS Question Response Frequency Table) demonstrates there were three questions that scored lower than the 2.5 midpoint: questions 1, 8, and 18. Question One reads, “I think of my college education as a product I am purchasing,” and the mean score was 2.36. Question Eight reads, “My professors should round up my final course grade one or

two points if I am close to the next letter grade," with a mean score of 2.30. Question Eighteen, "The financial returns on my education are not very important to me," was reverse scored, but after adjustment the mean score was 2.40. Of all questions on the COS instrument, these three scored the closest to the customer perception perspective. The difference in the mean response provides deeper insights to aspects of student perceptions.

SCPI Question One asked students about their thoughts about higher education as a good for purchase (Obermiller, Fleenor, & Raven, 2005) and revealed student perceptions that higher education, for any number of reasons, is viewed by students as a purchased good. Nuance in this perspective is supported by Saunders' (2014) research that there are in fact many areas of higher education that provide services similar to those that can be purchased (food, lodging, book sales, payment centers). SCPI Question Eighteen asked about financial returns of higher education, and while it was asked in a reverse way, after being rescored, it demonstrated that on the average the sample population expected return on an investment of time and money. Questions one and eighteen provide early evidence of marketization perceptions that higher education is a private, purchasable good and not a public personal investment as described by Slaughter and Rhoades (2004).

The researcher submits that acknowledging and incorporating this perception is important for leaders within higher education because of the correlational data connecting perception to high-engagement learning practices. Instead of disregarding this data because of perceived frustrations, Astin's (1991) I-E-O model is useful to understanding the student perceptions that accompany them within the higher education environment.

The perceptions they bring with them are a component of the "Input" they represent when entering higher education.

This shift will require a movement from resisting dialog about student customer perception toward embracing these discussions to aid students in the learning process. Utilizing data within this study along with an I-E-O understanding may invite faculty to ask how they might use the perceptions students bring with them to encourage high-engagement practices and success. Specific examples of this shift are provided in the following discussion section. Practical actions stemming from this correlational finding would enable higher education institutions not only to teach those who know how to be learners, but also lead students who do not yet operate as such to become learners.

Intentional Incorporation of Student Perception and Practice.

An additional area of practical insight stems from presentation of the data that suggests customer expectation and high-engagement learning practices are positively correlated, but only weakly so. Understanding that there may be a connection can influence the way that higher education understands, communicates with, and challenges students. Embracing this connection between expectation and action, practitioners can utilize the framework of motivation theory.

Within the complex field of human motivation, Hennessey (2015) highlighted two forms of motivation for individual action: intrinsic and extrinsic. The literature surrounding higher education and student perception from the faculty perspective in the past has valued only intrinsic motivation and resisted extrinsic motivation such as increasing earning ability and earning a degree to attain a promotion (Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017; Carlson & Fleishers, 2002; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009). The

research in this study presents student perception data that demonstrates the existence of extrinsic motivation in certain cases. As previously mentioned, this includes the response to the COS questionnaire about higher education being a product students were purchasing, with a mean score that demonstrated more than half of the population agreed with that statement. In the existence of this reality, faculty and administration can utilize this motivation by students, albeit extrinsic, to direct students into practices of learning.

Somech (2002) and Aittola (1995) supported the premise that students in higher education exhibit changes in motivation over time, and this data may be one additional reinforcement to support a transition in motivation over time. Although the present study did not track individual students throughout their education, it provides data that may propose movement away from a customer perception during an academic progression in higher education. This is illustrated by the movement away from the customer perception between learning cohorts over time as measured by the SCOS.

Using this data, faculty members could utilize students' desire for a degree to help them develop a desire for learning–helping to move them from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation. For example, a faculty member can design course requirements that necessitate students' engagement in high-engagement practices such as writing multiple drafts of a paper or talking with faculty outside of the classroom. These are methods academic leaders can utilize student extrinsic motivation for a certain grade, or completion of a course, by requiring high-engagement learning practices to be measured and required for course completion or grade attainment, therefore using extrinsic motivators to direct students to deep learning practices.

Integration of Student Perception Within Higher Education's Culture

Another implication for practice is applying what is known about the relationship and evolution of student perception and involvement throughout a student's time in higher education. The data from this study present a picture of academic cohorts that move away from customer perception over time and increase their reported participation in high-engagement learning practices as they progress each year. Understanding this change from multiple angles can inform expectation and environment in the culture of student recruitment, student social and dorm life, academic program development and implementation, athletic participation, campus commuter support outreach, and online learning programs.

Using this data from an admissions perspective, communication methods can be used to frame student expectations, such as promoting the difference between success and practices that lead to success. Understanding that freshman in both this study and Saunders' (2014a) earlier work arrived with some customer perception, the recruiting process is one of the areas that would be most important as they are prepare to enter higher education. In addition, rather than reporting only that graduates get good jobs after graduation, which primarily addresses extrinsic motivators (Hennessey et al., 2015), admissions material can highlight an institution's commitment to facilitating the faculty relationships, peer engagement, and writing labs that help students develop writing skills valuable in the vocational settings and graduate programs.

From the perspective of a department chair or an academic dean, this data could lead to the design of a curriculum that focuses on the development of high-engagement practices in students, rather than focusing solely on the correct sequence of courses. This

may include program requirements such as one semester of service learning, a guided internship, or a collaborative research project with faculty, all of which are tied to high student involvement and deep learning (Astin, 1991; Pike & Kuh, 2005).

Limitations

The generalizability of the present study is limited due to a number of factors. The greatest limitation was the response rate in total, which was below ten percent of the entire student population. The Private Liberal Arts 2 institution yielded only twenty-two usable responses of thirteen hundred undergraduate students. Because institutional type and size was not an original research question, division of sample data by institution was not presented or discussed as a unique subset for analysis. Given these limitations, it must be noted that these findings would be strengthened with higher response rates. The ten-percent response rate also raises the question as to whether the students who responded are those who are already engaged in high engagement practices.

Of the ten-percent respondents, 59.4% of them lived on campus at the time that they responded to the survey. As discussed in Chapter Four, this is a much higher percentage of students living on campus than the national average. This also raises the question as to whether students who live on campus are more likely to participate in high engagement practices simply due to proximity.

The study was limited further due to the use of cross-sectional online research data collection methods. Although the dispersion across academic classifications was equal, it was not representative of the population dispersion at each university, which favors underclassmen. As it relates to the survey itself, the decision to use a representative subset of the NSSE instrument, as discussed in Chapter Three, is also a

limitation. Although done to help reduce respondent fatigue and increase response rate, it is possible that this changes the validity and reliability of the instrument.

The mix of categorical and continuous independent variables is another limitation within the study. This feature was convenient for dividing groups for correlation, but reduced the application of the linear regression analysis of the independent variables against the dependent variables. Finally, the correlational values discovered through data analysis, while positive and statistically significant in a number of categories, support a weak correlational relationship between the two variables. Although great care has been given throughout the study to articulate the nuances that can be supported by these values, it is an area that limits the broad generalizability of the findings.

Suggestions for Future Research

The researcher is eager to see this area researched further, as the limitations listed above provide ample areas to strengthen and deepen scholarly understanding of marketization. This study discovered a weak positive correlation relationship between student perception and high-engagement practices and provided sample and subgroup data for students' perception, NSSE, and correlation relationships between these factors. The hypotheses were tested, and significant findings related to a positive directional relationship and the strength of demographic factors were discovered. There are, however, additional questions that arise from the current study regarding these two variables and subgroups.

The data set used for the present study was limited in that it was gathered at a certain number of institutions within a specific period of time. While this is a drawback of most research, future study could expand on this model by replicating the study on

additional campuses using focused groups of participants and additional methods of data collection. Expanding to additional campuses with additional geographic dispersion would provide additional data for analysis and might increase the strength of these findings. Focusing on certain populations of students, for example, differences between athletes and non-athletes or on campus students and commuters, would create even deeper analysis opportunities to understand and serve students better. Specifically regarding student housing, future research could aim to gather representation near the national average of students living on-campus, which is lower than the sample within this study. This would also allow researchers to dig deeper into any differences in student living location as it pertains to the high engagement practices measured by the NSSE. Finally, additional methods of data collection including mixed methods or qualitative research could add depth and multiple perspectives to the quantitative analysis presented in the study.

In addition, future research could collect data over time, tracking a cohort through their educational journey to look for change over time within the same population. Longitudinal research such as this would allow an understanding of the changes in student perception and student reported high-engagement practices within group data instead of looking at single groups at one period of time. This study was able to compare academic classifications to each other but did not track students through the process. This type of research throughout the educational journey of a cohort could make possible even deeper analysis of student perception and high-engagement practice connections.

A final suggestion for future research would be to concentrate on a growing subset of the higher education population-those students who learn primarily online. The

amount of money invested in online learning by individuals, universities, companies, and state and federal governments is significant, and only continues to increase. Understanding online students' perceptions and their activity around the learning environment is important, not only for individual students to complete their course of study, but also for internal and external stakeholders to understand, support, and direct their successful progress toward completion. This sample represented a limited number of participants in this category; additional research is needed to understand perceptions and practices in this area.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings of the present study regarding the relationship between students' reported customer perception in higher education and their reported high-engagement learning practices. The responses by the sample population led to a statistically significant but weak positive relationship between student perception and reported high-engagement learning practices.

The hypothesized relationship between variables was discussed, identifying contributions to the literature and support for previous findings related to student customer perception (Saunders 2014a, 2014b). Finally, the practical and theoretical implications were presented, as were additional questions for future research.

The hypothesized relationship between student perception and student practices was found to be significant. The purpose of this study was to discover if there is a relationship between the independent variable of a student's positionality as customer or learner (Saunders, 2014a) and the dependent variable of student engagement (Astin, 1985). This relationship was further developed by the analysis of data when divided by

subgroups of the population included as the independent variables of gender, major, academic classification, athletic participation, living and learning environments, and percentage of student tuition responsibility. The hypothesized relationship between student tuition responsibility and expression of involvement in high-engagement practices was not found to be significant.

The present study contributes to the understanding of student customer perception and high-engagement practices by contributing to previous research in both areas. The study adds to the literature in both areas by providing data across academic classifications, majors, athletic participation, and living and learning environments. Additional inquiry is needed to refine data collection and cohort tracking methods of the research and create a broader picture of student perception and engagement in higher education. Higher education remains a priority in most developing countries and every insight is necessary to understand students' perceptions and actions to lead them to learning, completion, and success.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Participant Instrument

Part 1- Demographic

1. Biological Gender (gender)
2. Academic Progress Classification (Drop Down) (classification)
3. Major (dropdown) (major)
4. Do you participate in intercollegiate athletics? (Yes or No) (athletic participation)
5. Do you live on campus or commute? (living location)
6. Do you take the majority of your courses in class or online? (learning location)
7. I feel that I pay __ percentage of the total cost of my education. (allows respondent to enter a between 0 and 100) (% of tuition responsibility)

Part 2- NSSE High-Engagement Practices (NSSE HEP)

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

1. Asked questions or contributed to course discussion in other ways? – (various)
2. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in? – (various)
3. Come to class without completing readings or assignments? (reverse scored)

4. Asked another student to help you understand course material? – (Collaborative Learning)
5. Explained course material to one or more students? – (Collaborative Learning)
6. Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students? – (Collaborative Learning)
7. Worked with other students on course projects or assignments? – (Collaborative Learning)
8. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)
9. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)
10. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)
11. Examined the strengths or weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue? – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)
12. Learned something that changes the way you understand an issue or concept? – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)
13. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge? – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)
14. Talked about career plans with a faculty member – (Student – Faculty Interaction)
15. Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.) – (Student – Faculty Interaction)

16. Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class – (Student – Faculty Interaction)
17. Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member – (Student – Faculty Interaction)
18. Reviewed your notes after class – (Learning Strategies)
19. Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials – (Learning Strategies)
20. Been challenged in your courses to do your best work? – (various)

Part 3 - Student Customer Perception Index questions (SCPI) (Saunders 2014)

1. I think of my college education as a product I am purchasing.
2. I only want to learn things in my courses that will help me in my future career.
3. If I could get a well-paying job without going to college, I would not be here.
4. As long as I complete all of my assignments I deserve a good grade in a course.
5. Concerning [INSTITUTION NAME], I think of myself primarily as a customer of the University.
6. For me, it is more important to get a good grade in a course than it is to learn the material.
7. It is more important for me to have a high paying career than one I really like.
8. My professors should round up my final course grade one or two points if I am close to the next letter grade.
9. Developing my critical thinking skills is only important if it helps me with my career.
10. I will only major in something that will help me earn a lot of money.
11. While at [INSTITUTION NAME] I am going to try to take the easiest courses

possible.

12. If I cannot get a good job after I graduate, I should be able to have some of my tuition and fees refunded.

13. Because I will have paid to attend [INSTITUTION NAME], the University will owe me a degree.

14. If I cannot earn a lot of money after I graduate, I will have wasted my time at [INSTITUTION NAME].

15. The main purpose of my college education should be maximizing my ability to earn money.

16. For the most part, education is something I receive, not something I create.

17. It is part of my professors' job to make sure I pass my courses.

18. The financial returns on my education are not very important to me. (reverse coded)

19. For me, college is more of a place to get training for a specific career than to gain a general education. (Data not provided on "They do not buy it" article)

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

Welcome to the research study!
We are interested in understanding student perceptions and practices in higher education. You will be presented with information relevant to perceptions and practices around the classroom and asked to answer some questions about it. Your responses will be kept completely confidential.

Thank you for taking part in this research. We really appreciate it.

Title: Marketizations effect on students in Higher Education: Do they think they are the customer, and does it affect high-engagement learning practices?

Investigators: Brent LaVigne and Steve Wanger PhD

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to discover possible relationships between student's perception of their role and their actions in their academic life.

What to Expect: This research study is administered online. Participation in this research will involve completion of a questionnaire with three (3) sections: demographic questions, questions about your perceptions and expectations as a student, and questions related to activity related to your academic life. You may skip any questions. You will be expected to complete the questionnaire only once. The questionnaire should take no more than 20 minutes to complete.

Risks: There are no risks associated with this project greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits: There are no direct benefits to you. However, you may gain an appreciation and understanding of how research is conducted.

Compensation: There is no compensation for participation in this study, though at the end of the survey you can opt in to an anonymous drawing for five $20 Amazon gift cards.

Your Rights and Confidentiality: Your participation in this research is voluntary. There is no penalty for refusal to participate, and you are free to withdraw your consent and participation in this project at any time. If at the end of the survey you opt in to the anonymous drawing your responses to the survey and your registration for the drawing

will be disconnected from each other.

Confidentiality: Your participation in this research is anonymous. The survey does not collect information that would identify you. Internet communications can be insecure, and this potentially limits confidentiality protections; however, once data are received by the researcher, data will be stored on a password protected computer in a locked office that only researchers and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to.

Contacts: Should you desire to discuss your participation in the study and/or request information about the results of the study, you may contact any of the researchers at the following addresses and phone numbers:

Brent LaVigne, Principal Investigator
Oklahoma State University
Doctoral Student, Higher Education & Student Affairs
309 Willard Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078
brent.lavigne@okstate.edu
405-491-6639

Stephen Wanger, PhD
Oklahoma State University
Associate Professor, Higher Education & Student Affairs
309 Willard Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078
steve.wanger@okstate.edu
405-744-3982

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact the IRB Office at 223 Scott Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu

If you choose to participate: Please, click "Yes I Consent". By clicking "Yes I Consent", you are indicating that you freely and voluntarily agree to participate in this study and you also acknowledge that you are at least 18 years of age.

It is recommended that you print a copy of this consent page for your records before you begin the study by clicking below.

APPENDIX C

Research participant instructions

Your participation in this study is voluntary and your responses will remain anonymous. The survey should take between 10 and 20 minutes. You may skip any question or quit at any time. No information that specifically identifies you will be collected. Thank you in advance for your honesty about your experiences and perceptions.

The questionnaire consists of three series of questions. The first series includes demographic questions. For these questions there is either space provided for you to type in your responses or options given for you to select the one that describes your answer best. The second series of questions asks you respond to prompts asking you how often you take part in certain activities. The response options provided are “Very Often”, “Often”, “Sometimes” and “Never”. The final series of questions proposes statements and asks you to select whether you agree or do not agree with the statements provided. The options include “Agree strongly”, “Agree somewhat”, “Neither agree nor disagree”, “Disagree somewhat” and “Disagree strongly” Be sure to read all the statements carefully before selecting your response.

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX D

Institutional Review Board Approval

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Application Number:	ED-18-165
Proposal Title:	MARKETIZATIONS EFFECT ON STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: DO THEY THINK THEY ARE THE CUSTOMER AND DOES IT AFFECT HIGH IMPACT LEARNING PRACTICES?
Principal Investigator:	Brent Lavigne
Co-Investigator(s):	
Faculty Adviser:	Steve Wanger
Project Coordinator:	
Research Assistant(s):	

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Study Review Level:	Exempt
Modification Approval Date:	03/06/2019

The modification of the IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46. The original expiration date of the protocol has not changed.

Modifications Approved:
Modifications Approved: add a welcome statement to the top of the form as it appears first in the Qualtrics survey and to amend the direction at the bottom on how to consent.

The final versions of any recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are available for download from IRBManager. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved.
2. Submit a status report to the IRB when requested
3. Promptly report to the IRB any harm experienced by a participant that is both unanticipated and related per IRB policy.
4. Maintain accurate and complete study records for evaluation by the OSU IRB and, if applicable, inspection by regulatory agencies and/or the study sponsor.
5. Notify the IRB office when your research project is complete or when you are no longer affiliated with Oklahoma State University.

Sincerely,

Oklahoma State University IRB
223 Scott Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078
Website: https://irb.okstate.edu/
Ph: 405-744-3377 | Fax: 405-744-4335| irb@okstate.edu

APPENDIX E

Recruitment E-mail and Follow-up E-mail

Dear [Recipient Name]:

My name is Brent LaVigne, and I am a doctoral student in the Higher Education Policy and Administration program at Oklahoma State University. I am writing you to request your participation in my doctoral research study focusing on the relationships between students perception of their role and their actions in their academic life. This study is specific to those completing a four year undergraduate degree.

As a recognition of your time I will randomly be giving away five $20 amazon gift cards to those that complete the survey and opt in at its conclusion.

The survey associated with my study is completely anonymous. Your participation is also voluntary, so you can opt out at any time, and should take only approximately 20 minutes.

To access the survey please *click here*. If the survey does not open automatically, please copy and paste the following link to your internet browser's address bar:

Link here

Thank you for your participation and assistance with this project! Your input is invaluable.

Questions about this survey? Email: brent.lavigne@okstate.edu. Thank you for your time!

Brent LaVigne

Follow-up Email:

Dear [Recipient Name]:

My name is Brent LaVigne, and I am a doctoral student in the Higher Education Policy and Administration program at Oklahoma State University. I am writing you to request your participation in my doctoral research study focusing on the relationships between students perception of their role and their actions in their academic life. This study is specific to those completing a four year undergraduate degree.

As a recognition of your time I will randomly be giving away five $20 amazon gift cards to those that complete the survey and opt in at its conclusion.

If you have not already participated in the study (if you have already, thank you!), I would appreciate your input.

To access the survey please *click here*. If the survey does not open automatically, please copy and paste the following link to your internet browser's address bar:

Link here

Thank you for your participation and assistance with this project! Your input is invaluable.

Questions about this survey? Email: brent.lavigne@okstate.edu. Thank you for your time.

Brent LaVigne

APPENDIX F

College of Education, Health, and Aviation Sona System – IRB Compensation Paragraph

Participants will earn course credit for their participation. Many introductory and lower-level College of Education and other courses offer students a small amount of course credit (usually less than 5% of their grade) for participation in the research process. Whether for required credit or extra credit, each course must offer alternatives to research participation for earning credit. For example, in Educational Psychology courses students have the opportunity to earn five "units" of research experience. This requirement may be fulfilled in one of four ways:

1) serving as a human participant in current research project(s),
2) attending special research events,
3) researching and writing 4 page papers on designated research topics, or
4) co-creating relevant educational experience with their instructor.

Each hour of participation in a research project as a participant is generally regarded as satisfying one "unit" of the requirement, students completing a half hour will receive 0.5 unit.

Students participating in this study will earn _1/2_ units of credits as this study will take approximately _30_ minutes to complete.

APPENDIX G

Instrument Codes and Classification

Part 1- Demographic

1. Biological Gender (gender)

2. Academic Progress Classification (Drop Down) (classification)

3. Major (dropdown) (major)

4. Do you participate in intercollegiate athletics? (Yes or No) (athletic participation)

5. Do you live on campus or commute? (living location)

6. Do you take the majority of your courses in class or online? (learning location)

7. I feel that I pay __ percentage of the total cost of my education. (allows respondent to enter a between 0 and 100) (% of tuition responsibility)

Part 2- NSSE High-Engagement Practices (NSSE HEP)

For all questions respondents are given four options to select from. Very Often, Often, Sometimes, and Never.

Individual scores are assigned for each response as follows: Very Often (3), Often (2), Sometimes (1), and Never (0). This scoring is utilized for all questions except for #3, which is reverse scored and has the following values applied. Very Often (0), Often (1), Sometimes (2), and Never (3). The category of question as identified by the NSSE research team has been included for reference after the end of each question. Individual responses were totaled for possible score ranges between 0 and 60. That total score represents an approximation reflecting students participation in high-engagement practices of learning as defined by Astin (1984), Pike and Kuh (2005).

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

1. Asked questions or contributed to course discussion in other ways? – (various)

2. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in? – (various)

3. Come to class without completing readings or assignments? (reverse scored)

4. Asked another student to help you understand course material? – (Collaborative Learning)

5. Explained course material to one or more students? – (Collaborative Learning)

6. Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students? – (Collaborative Learning)

7. Worked with other students on course projects or assignments? – (Collaborative Learning)

8. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments? – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)

9. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues? – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)

10. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments? – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)

11. Examined the strengths or weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue? – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)

12. Learned something that changes the way you understand an issue or concept? – (Reflective & Integrative Learning

13. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge? – (Reflective & Integrative Learning)

14. Talked about career plans with a faculty member? – (Student – Faculty Interaction)

15. Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)? – (Student – Faculty Interaction)

16. Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class? – (Student – Faculty Interaction)

17. Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member? – (Student – Faculty Interaction)

18. Reviewed your notes after class? – (Learning Strategies)

19. Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials? – (Learning Strategies)

20. Been challenged in your courses to do your best work? – (various)

Part 3 - Student Customer Perception Index questions (SCPI) (Saunders 2014)

For all questions respondents are given five options to choose from. Agree strongly, Agree somewhat, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree somewhat, Disagree strongly.

Individual scores are assigned for each response as follows: Agree strongly (1), Agree somewhat (2), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Disagree somewhat (4), Disagree strongly (5). This scoring is utilized for all questions except for #18, which is reverse scored and has the following values applied. Agree strongly (5), Agree somewhat (4), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Disagree somewhat (2), Disagree strongly (1).

Individual responses are totaled for possible score ranges between 19 and 95. The total score is then divided by 19 for an average response score, which is between 1 and 5. That average represents a Customer Orientation Score (COS) which is used for. Saunders (2014) proposed that as minor deviations in a Likert scale may not represent meaningful expressions or rejection of customer orientation a focus should be placed on extreme response measures, thus a difference of +0.50 from the midpoint may represent meaningful levels of agreement or disagreement, as these scores are closer to either agreeing or disagreeing than the neutral midpoint of 3. With this in mind a COS greater than 2.5 by any student or as a sample average does not strongly represent a student customer orientation towards higher education with this instrument.

1. I think of my college education as a product I am purchasing. (Higher Education as commodity for purchase)

2. I only want to learn things in my courses that will help me in my future career. (Higher education to serve career or financial goals)

3. If I could get a well-paying job without going to college, I would not be here. (Higher education to serve career or financial goals)

4. As long as I complete all of my assignments I deserve a good grade in a course. (Letter grade focus)

5. Concerning [INSTITUTION NAME], I think of myself primarily as a customer of the University. (Student as customer)

6. For me, it is more important to get a good grade in a course than it is to learn the material. (Letter grade focus)

7. It is more important for me to have a high paying career than one I really like. (Higher education to serve career or financial goals)

8. My professors should round up my final course grade one or two points if I am close to the next letter grade. (Letter grade focus)

9. Developing my critical thinking skills is only important if it helps me with my career. (Higher education to serve career or financial goals)

10. I will only major in something that will help me earn a lot of money. (Higher education to serve career or financial goals)

11. While at [INSTITUTION NAME] I am going to try to take the easiest courses possible. (Ease of process)

12. If I cannot get a good job after I graduate, I should be able to have some of my tuition and fees refunded. (Higher education to serve career or financial goals)

13. Because I will have paid to attend [INSTITUTION NAME], the University will owe me a degree. (Higher Education as commodity for purchase)

14. If I cannot earn a lot of money after I graduate, I will have wasted my time at [INSTITUTION NAME]. (Higher education to serve career or financial goals)

15. The main purpose of my college education should be maximizing my ability to earn money. (Higher education to serve career or financial goals)

16. For the most part, education is something I receive, not something I create. (Higher Education as commodity for purchase)

17. It is part of my professors' job to make sure I pass my courses. (Letter grade focus)

18. The financial returns on my education are not very important to me. (reverse coded) (Higher education to serve career or financial goals)

19. For me, college is more of a place to get training for a specific career than to gain a general education. (Data not provided on "They do not buy it" article) (Higher education to serve career or financial goals)

APPENDIX H

Pilot Feedback

Did you find the items clear and easy to understand? If not, which items were confusing and how?	Did you feel comfortable answering all of the items? If not, why not and on which items?	What do you think of the length of the survey?	Did you find any additional errors in the survey instrument?	Did you have any other questions, comments, or feedback?
Yes	Yes	Just right		I don't think you need that secondary info page after the consent form. Just post the instructions ahead of each section. For gender, does biological sex really matter? I think a simple "male, female, a different label (explain below), prefer not to answer" would suffice. If you are using this at any school other than INSTITUTION NAME RADACTE, you will need to change the last section to so INSTITUTION NAME REDACTED is not specifically called out.
clear and easy to understand, yes.	yes, I felt comfortable	Just right	typo - solicitiation "student's" in the Purpose section;	I thought that the that the commodification questions were pretty one-sided for 3/4 of the way down and drove the idea of college is for money (or not depending on one's approach) persistently. I wondered if the a set of other questions or ones that draw on distinct opposites (or even some liars scale questions) questions might break things up a little. I'm thinking about noting other claimed values such as college is for learning how to relate to others more effectively, build networks of acquaintances and friends that may or may not benefit me financially later in life, develop wisdom for living the good life, etc scattered throughout might be considered and provide people with a different way to see things in the midst of the questionnaire. That could change results somewhat.
#20 duplicates language in a manner the rest do not in that section.	Questions were fine.	Just right		The length is fine though I wonder if the change in response style was intentional. I liked the second one better but could make the argument that they benefit from being different for attention maintenance purposes.
Yes, the questions were clear.	I felt comfortable but have a hard time with answers of degrees, i.e., somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly agree, strongly	Just right	It worked smoothly and was actually a lot shorter than I had expected.	I'll be interested to see how many students think of themselves as consumers.

APPENDIX I

Participant Data Summary Table

		NSSE Mean	NSSE Std Deviation	SCOS Mean	SCOS Std Deviation	Pearsons r	*Sig*	N	% of the population
Overall		34.17	9.392	3.143	0.630	.170**	0	672	100%
Gender	Female	34.82	9.437	3.154	0.642	.187**	0	438	65.179%
	Male	32.95	9.202	3.122	0.610	.132*	0.044	234	34.821%
Academic Classification	Freshman	33.98	9.028	2.968	0.634	0.076	0.272	213	31.696%
	Sophmore	33.79	9.326	3.189	0.585	0.154	0.054	157	23.363%
	Junior	34.35	9.967	3.223	0.640	.295**	0	150	22.321%
	Senior	34.66	9.47	3.264	0.616	.177*	0.03	151	22.470%
Major	Arts and Humanities	35.66	11.257	3.157	0.706	.256*	0.016	89	13.244%
	Business	31.68	9.915	2.892	0.571	0.082	0.368	123	18.304%
	Health and Medicine	33.39	7.268	3.185	0.554	0.194	0.071	87	12.946%
	Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies	40.38	10.821	3.518	0.644	0.348	0.244	13	1.935%
	Public and Social Services	33.93	8.73	2.849	0.570	-0.342	0.213	15	2.232%
	Science, Math, and Technology	34.02	8.967	3.246	0.599	.169*	0.024	179	26.637%
	Social Sciences	36.36	9.322	3.285	0.596	0.137	0.293	61	9.077%
	Other	34.69	8.58	3.127	0.677	0.061	0.54	105	15.625%
Athletics Participation	Yes	36.46	10.194	2.980	0.672	0.12	0.225	104	15.476%
	No	33.75	9.185	3.173	0.619	.197**	0	568	84.524%
Living	Campus	34.06	9.568	3.108	0.644	.141**	0.005	273	40.625%
	Off Campus	34.33	9.143	3.194	0.607	.214**	0	399	59.375%
Take classes	In person	34.19	9.403	3.141	0.628	.165**	0	653	97.173%
	Online	33.06	9.415	3.211	0.739	0.337	0.171	18	2.679%
% of tuition responsibility	NSSE	34.17	9.392			0.07	0.082	622	100%
mean 48.61%	SCOS			3.143	0.630	-0.058	0.151	622	100%

APPENDIX J

NSSE Question Response Frequency Table

Question	Very Often		Often		Sometimes		Never		Total
1. Asked questions or contributed to course discussion in other ways?	27.98%	195	32.57%	227	35.29%	246	4.16%	29	697
2. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in?	14.37%	100	21.12%	147	37.36%	260	27.16%	189	696
3. Come to class without completing readings or assignments?	8.61%	60	16.93%	118	52.94%	369	21.52%	150	697
4. Asked another student to help you understand course material?	19.68%	137	37.50%	261	34.91%	243	7.90%	55	696
5. Explained course material to one or more students?	22.59%	157	42.30%	294	32.09%	223	3.02%	21	695
6. Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students?	22.56%	157	32.18%	224	33.33%	232	11.93%	83	696
7. Worked with other students on course projects or assignments?	27.91%	194	39.71%	276	27.34%	190	5.04%	35	695
8. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments?	26.07%	182	40.54%	283	29.94%	209	3.44%	24	698
9. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues?	23.23%	161	30.45%	211	38.10%	264	8.23%	57	693
10. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments?	19.11%	133	33.48%	233	36.64%	255	10.78%	75	696
11. Examined the strengths or weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue?	22.53%	157	43.90%	306	27.40%	191	6.17%	43	697
12. Learned something that changes the way you understand an issue or concept?	22.27%	155	48.28%	336	28.74%	200	0.72%	5	696
13. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge?	34.77%	242	46.26%	322	18.39%	128	0.57%	4	696
14. Talked about career plans with a faculty member?	21.12%	147	32.61%	227	35.49%	247	10.78%	75	696
15. Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)?	11.48%	80	21.38%	149	32.28%	225	34.86%	243	697
16. Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class?	11.32%	79	26.36%	184	40.54%	283	21.78%	152	698
17. Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member?	14.04%	98	26.36%	184	40.11%	280	19.48%	136	698
18. Reviewed your notes after class?	22.66%	157	36.94%	256	32.03%	222	8.37%	58	693
19. Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials?	18.42%	128	36.26%	252	35.25%	245	10.07%	70	695
20. Been challenged in your courses to do your best work?	43.90%	306	41.32%	288	13.06%	91	1.72%	12	697

APPENDIX K

COS Question Response Frequency Table

Question	Disagree strongly		Disagree somewhat		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree somewhat		Agree strongly		Total	Mean
1. I think of my college education as a product I am purchasing.	5.65%	38	14.73%	99	12.50%	84	44.64%	300	22.47%	151	672	2.36
2. I only want to learn things in my courses that will help me in my future career.	7.00%	47	21.01%	141	12.67%	85	34.72%	233	24.59%	165	671	2.51
3. If I could get a well-paying job without going to college, I would not be here.	18.68%	125	27.65%	185	17.04%	114	21.38%	143	15.25%	102	669	3.13
4. As long as I complete all of my assignments I deserve a good grade in a course.	11.62%	78	29.36%	197	20.86%	140	29.21%	196	8.94%	60	671	3.06
5. Concerning INSTITUTION NAME, I think of myself primarily as a customer of the University.	9.55%	64	22.84%	153	21.34%	143	32.39%	217	13.88%	93	670	2.82
6. For me, it is more important to get a good grade in a course than it is to learn the material.	11.64%	78	23.13%	155	23.13%	155	32.54%	218	9.55%	64	670	2.95
7. It is more important for me to have a high paying career than one I really like.	34.38%	230	32.59%	218	16.44%	110	12.86%	86	3.74%	25	669	3.81
8. My professors should round up my final course grade one or two points if I am close to the next letter grade.	4.33%	29	11.34%	76	23.88%	160	30.90%	207	29.55%	198	670	2.30
9. Developing my critical thinking skills is only important if it helps me with my career.	27.14%	181	32.08%	214	16.19%	108	16.04%	107	8.55%	57	667	3.53
10. I will only major in something that will help me earn a lot of money.	33.03%	221	32.44%	217	14.80%	99	15.25%	102	4.48%	30	669	3.74
11. While at INSTITUTION NAME I am going to try to take the easiest courses possible.	34.72%	233	33.08%	222	18.93%	127	10.28%	69	2.98%	20	671	3.86
12. If I cannot get a good job after I graduate, I should be able to have some of my tuition and fees refunded.	29.75%	199	24.51%	164	21.82%	146	14.95%	100	8.97%	60	669	3.51
13. Because I will have paid to attend INSTITUTION NAME, the University will owe me a degree.	31.79%	213	28.96%	194	20.00%	134	12.84%	86	6.42%	43	670	3.67
14. If I cannot earn a lot of money after I graduate, I will have wasted my time at INSTITUTION NAME.	33.98%	227	29.34%	196	16.47%	110	16.62%	111	3.59%	24	668	3.74
15. The main purpose of my college education should be maximizing my ability to earn money.	24.59%	165	31.15%	209	17.29%	116	21.46%	144	5.51%	37	671	3.48
16. For the most part, education is something I receive, not something I create.	11.19%	75	29.70%	199	28.66%	192	24.18%	162	6.27%	42	670	3.15
17. It is part of my professors job to make sure I pass my courses.	17.91%	120	25.52%	171	19.55%	131	30.30%	203	6.72%	45	670	3.18
18. The financial returns on my education are not very important to me.	19.40%	130	38.51%	258	27.01%	181	13.13%	88	1.94%	13	670	2.40
19. For me, college is more of a place to get training for a specific career than to gain a general education.	6.72%	45	19.85%	133	23.43%	157	38.21%	256	11.79%	79	670	2.71

VITA

Brent LaVigne

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: MARKETIZATIONS EFFECT ON STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: DO THEY THINK THEY ARE THE CUSTOMER AND DOES IT AFFECT HIGH-ENGAGEMENT LEARNING PRACTICES?

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