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**ABSTRACT**

This study compares the characteristics and motivational factors influencing educational decisions of online vs. face-to-face learners. Using a survey of undergraduate marketing students from colleges in the Southeastern U.S., demographic, attitudinal and learning style differences are examined to determine the roles they play in student selection of online vs. traditional classroom modes of educational delivery. Alternative approaches to segmentation of the student market are explored, as are implications for marketing education.

Likert scales and open ended questions were used to determine student perspectives on various dimensions of online versus face-to-face courses. A cross section of students were surveyed including those taking or enrolled for a future semester in one or more online courses as well as those taking or enrolled for a future semester in traditional in-class courses. Students were queried regarding their perceptions of convenience in scheduling, flexibility, quality of learning, pacing, faculty contact, work commitments and family structure as related to taking online versus in-class courses.

Demographic measures were included to identify segments of learners in terms of needs and learning objectives. Differences between segments are examined as potential recommendations for developing learning environments that best meet the needs of students. These prescriptive recommendations are framed against the current changes and the new normal in higher education.

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