

SEACREST TEACHING FELLOWSHIP RESEARCH UPDATE

June 23, 2023

Memo to Seacrest Teaching Fellowship Committee

RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question of my Seacrest Fellowship is:

What is the impact of studying Nebraska brands (as opposed to out-of-state companies) on student learning (using “engagement” as a proxy), and what are the best strategies to activate that learning?

RESEARCH STATUS

Over the past 12 months, I (along with my research partner Dr. Kasey Linde) have completed the following work:

1. Received IRB approval for the study;
2. Designed a pre-test and research study to investigate the impact of studying Nebraska brands on student engagement.

Our study pits a Nebraska restaurant brand (Runza) against a fictionalized non-Nebraskan restaurant brand (Saska).

The *pre-test* captured data including the “Nebraskaness” of the two brands as well as individual student’s interest levels around studying each of the brands.

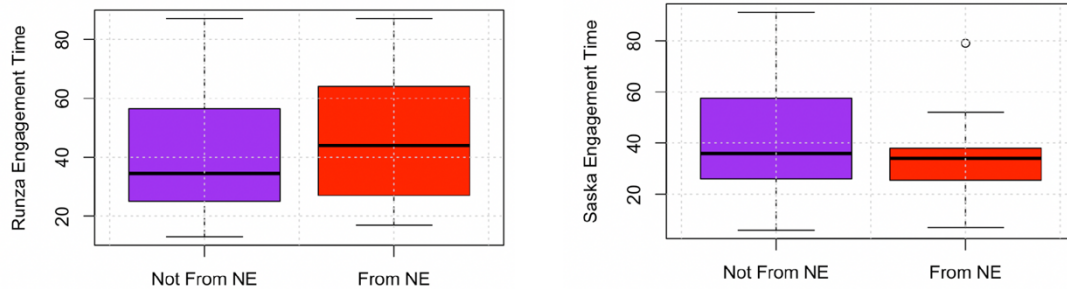
In the *actual research study*, students were randomly provided with either a Runza case study (see attachment) or a Saska case study (see attachment). Each student was instructed to read the assigned case on the software Perusall. While reading the case, students were also instructed to annotate on the readings, engage with other students on an online thread, and respond to questions on the case. Beyond questions that were graded, several other dependent variables (which serve as proxies for student engagement) including duration spent reading the document, number of words in student comments, and “liking” of other class-mate comments were captured.

All data was collected from my MRKT 341 marketing course. The assignment was worth 5% of each student's course evaluation.

In total 134 completed responses have been made available for analysis.

3. Performed an "eyeball analysis" of the results and organized the data for statistical analysis.

The early eyeball results have been promising. For example, the pre-test shows a substantial interest difference between the two cases (ie students were more interested in studying Runza than Saska). Eye-balling of the data also suggests that engagement is higher on Runza, particularly for those who identify as Nebraskan.



The data has been organized for deeper analysis. Some new fields (e.g. student cumulative GPA, year in college, ethnicity) have been imported from secondary sources to add more dimensions and context to the analysis.

NEXT STEPS:

Analysis of Data

We have begun working with Prof Emeritus David Keck, who is helping to shape the analysis using the data. The immediate steps for analysis are:

1. Bring the data into a statistical package for exploratory data analysis (descriptive statistics);
2. Examine clusters of characteristics within a group vs between groups (anova).
3. Looking at the data to see what might be applicable for linear regression or logistic regression analysis.

Additional Data Collection

Based on the findings, I would anticipate additional data collection in an upcoming semester. This will be to increase sample size. Also, part of the research question involves investigating the research question: what the are best strategies to activate the learning? This will involve a new approach.

Sharing the Findings

If the findings bear out as the early results indicate, the aim would be to share the results- along with their implications for teaching- with the other Seacrest Fellows and UNL faculty through the Teaching and Learning Center. In addition, sharing the findings via a journal publication (e.g. Journal of Education for Business) would also be a goal.