

INCORPORATING TRANSFORMATIVE CONSUMER RESEARCH INTO THE CONSUMER BEHAVIOR COURSE EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a justification and an implementation plan for the incorporation of transformative consumer research (consumer research whose mission is to improve people's welfare) in the undergraduate consumer behavior course experience. In short, TCR addresses the avoidance of negative consumer outcomes and realization of positive consumer outcomes, and thus fits into an overall social responsibility theme in marketing education. First, the TCR literature is reviewed, with an emphasis on demonstrating the relevance of TCR to the overall domain of consumer behavior education. Second, an implementation plan is outlined. The first step in implementation is

determining the topical relevance across the consumer behavior course (e.g., motivational conflicts between harmful and beneficial consumer choices; reference group pressure resulting in negative outcomes, etc.). The second step in implementation is the development of specific learning experiences that incorporate TCR themes. These can range from informal topical discussions to TCR-themed mini-cases to semester-long research-based course projects. Finally, the importance of students' developing marketing-based solutions to the challenges raised by TCR issues in order to "close the loop" is discussed.