

### Description of Research

I am currently in my fifth year at the University of Scranton, graduating with my MBA this semester. Since my first day on campus, the Weinberg Memorial Library (WML) has been both a resource and a refuge. As an undergraduate commuter student, I spent countless hours there studying between classes, using the computers and printers, or working on group projects in the study rooms. Between the time I spent at the WML and my part-time job at a local library, I felt more at home with the stacks than in my actual house.

Despite my lifelong affinity for the library, it wasn't until my fourth year at Scranton that I began to more fully understand and appreciate the resources available to me. At this time, a lot changed in my life: I started a master's program, got a position as a graduate assistant, and, most notably, decided that I wanted to pursue an academic career. From this point forward, I was immersed in a research culture where I assisted faculty with their projects and began independent studies of my own. Before then, my main research tool had been Google. However, with assistance from library staff, I started to explore the vast offerings of the WML.

Business knowledge is constantly updating, I consequently used physical resources like books and microfilm/microfiche less often than the digital collections and software available in the library. Nonetheless, I use these resources comprehensively and often. I find myself on ProQuest or EBSCO almost every single day and frequently preach their benefits to my classmates and professors. I have done extensive literature reviews on topics like e-commerce, online education quality, and social justice in global markets. Features like ProQuest's "My Research" are tremendous as they allow me to easily save and organize resources for the numerous projects I am always juggling. Moreover, interlibrary loan has been a lifesaver, providing me with everything from obscure articles to textbooks from faraway institutions. In addition to the tools available directly from the library's interface, I love that the WML is integrated with Google Scholar, which makes it even easier to access library resources. Beyond digital collections, the software available on library computers has been critical for my research projects. Statistical analysis tools like SPSS, Minitab, and eViews, are expensive and difficult to acquire. Having reliable access at the library has made completing many projects infinitely less stressful.

While I understand this is a contest to assess research from one specific assignment, it is difficult for me to isolate my experience. I have worked on countless projects over the past few years, each one further enriching my skill set. It seems that every time I use the library, I find a new or more efficient way to locate information. Regardless, the paper I am submitting is an electronic commerce study I have been working on for the past two semesters. For this project, I made extensive use of digital collections (especially ProQuest and EBSCO) and statistical analysis software on library computers. This paper examines the relationship between online retailer traits (reputation, usability, security, delivery, and customer support) and the demographics of their consumers (age, gender, and prior experience). I had the privilege of presenting the findings at the annual meeting of the Western Decision Sciences Institute in April with my advisor and mentor, Dr. Rose Sebastianelli. This paper was included in the conference proceedings and constitutes the first publication of my academic career.

The abundance of physical and electronic resources offered, coupled with the expertise and helpfulness of library faculty and staff, has not just enriched my time at Scranton, but also given me a strong foundation upon which to build my future. Even with my limited experience, I am beginning to understand the struggles of a research career. I have developed a great respect for all research professionals, but particularly those working in library and information sciences. Unlike my academic path, where I will likely spend my life exploring a very narrow corner of a specific discipline, librarians cultivate an enormous breadth of information to make it available to all researchers. I am genuinely grateful for the skills I have acquired using the Weinberg Memorial Library and I have no doubt they will be invaluable to me as I begin my doctoral studies this fall.