**Research Program Overview**

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John Vandivier

**I. Overview**

This 2-page document summarizes research completed this semester and next steps planned for completion of dissertation work and for journal publication.

The research reviewed for this program is organized into a collection of projects. Each project is composed of data files, code, and plain-language analysis. Plain-language analysis is presented in a 2-pager format. 2-pagers describe what was done, why it was done, and what was found. 3-pagers contain planned future work and additional notes for a final paper. 4-pagers are working academic papers.

This paper is organized into 3 sections. The first section provides an overview of the program. The second section lists current research projects and their related artifacts. Dependencies between some projects are noted. The third section describes planned next steps.

**II. Outline of Existing Research[[1]](#footnote-1)**

Current research analyzes the relationship between alternative education and labor outcomes, public disposition towards online learning, adoption bottlenecks, and the ability or inability of alternative education to substitute for traditional learning.

Each numbered item in the list below is a project. The lettered items nested within the project include related artifacts and a short description.

1. SurveyMonkey Baseline Attitudinal Survey
   1. This research identified whether individuals tasked with hiring and firing decisions within firms were particularly optimistic or pessimistic about online learning. It secondarily examined the general population on the same question.
   2. 2-pager-survey-monkey-1-off.docx
2. Udacity Scrape
   1. This research involved extracting data from public profiles on the online learning platform Udacity. Profile data included employment status. The effect of online learning on employment was estimated, and the user employment rate was compared to general employment.
   2. Projects 3-7 are supplementary to this study.
   3. 2-pager-udacity-scrape.docx
   4. 4-pager-udacity-scrape.docx
3. Udacity GitHub Augmentation
   1. Portfolios simultaneously operate as credentials and as outputs of productivity. GitHub portfolios were compared against Udacity learning data to see whether theoretical relations were observed.
   2. 2-pager-udacity-github.docx
   3. 3-pager-udacity-github.docx
4. Udacity LinkedIn Augmentation
   1. This study replicated analysis of the effect of alternative education on employment outcomes, using measures of employment derived from LinkedIn data rather than Udacity profile data.
   2. 2-pager-udacity-linkedin.docx
5. Udacity Kairos Augmentation
   1. Kairos is an image-based machine classifier for ethnicity, gender, age, and some other factors. This research integrated Kairos data with data scraped from Udacity user to improve findings.
   2. 2-pager-udacity-kairos.docx
6. Classifier Variance Analysis by LinkedIn Data
   1. This research measures comparative ethnic classifier accuracy by comparing self-reported ethnicity to machine estimates generated from LinkedIn profile data.
   2. 2-pager-udacity-classifiers-linkedin.docx
7. Classifier Variance Analysis by Self-Report
   1. This research measures ethnic classifier accuracy by asking respondents to use a classifier and asking them about their level of agreement with the classifier estimate.
   2. 2-pager-udacity-classifiers-survey.docx
   3. 3-pager-udacity-classifiers.docx

**III. Next Steps**

1. Run the attitudinal study several times over the next year or longer to generate panel data.
2. Classifier variance analysis on variances created by using different versions of a name. For example, first-name-only, with or without initials, and with or without capitalization. This work can be combined with projects 6 and 7 to form a standalone paper.
3. Present working research to working dissertation committee to acceptability of the topic and identify areas for revision.
4. With committee, identify which, if any, projects are suitable for an academic paper apart from dissertation work.
5. Once current work related to scraping learning platforms and surveying individuals about learning platforms is settled, engage Dr. Robert Axtell regarding an agent based analysis for a second component of the dissertation.
6. Determine whether the two components discussed in III.3 are sufficient content for the dissertation, or whether a third topic is needed. If a third topic is needed, decide that topic.
7. Identify a third committee member. Interesting members include:
   1. Tabarrok or Cowen, because they may provide access to MRUniversity, an online education platform.
   2. Storr, because he oversaw a directed reading on Political Economy of Education Policy, brings an Austrian point of view, and was recommended to me by David Schmidtz.
   3. Many other possibilities, including someone from the education, psychology, or business departments.

1. Research is generally open and accessible at <https://github.com/Vandivier/data-science-practice/tree/master/stata/udacity-exploratory-analysis> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)