Statement of Academic Purpose

After thorough self-evaluation, I have decided to pursue my Masters in the field of data science. The decision comes inherently with the skill sets possessed by me combined with my experience and knowledge. There are a number of such instances relating to my decision throughout my life but I will briefly illustrate a few.

Starting from my birth, as a kid I came from a family consisting of people with management background. Every time, when my grandfather or my father returned home with a report, I wondered what the purpose of the report was with big amounts written all over it. So one day, I asked my grandfather of why reports have numbers in them and he told me that "Everything in this world, is collated and quantified. Everything works on facts and Numbers are facts". That’s where my love for numbers started.

Gradually till I reached my college years, my interest in numbers and data were further ignited as depicted by my excellence in corresponding subjects. During this period, I had created a solid interest in patterns and finding information from raw data.

During my junior year of college, studying subjects like engineering mathematics, computer programming, data structures, my interest got further polished and I had realized the limitless implication of data on business decisions and product modelling. This interest culminated in a college venture called as mybookshelf.co.in started by me. I developed a platform for easy trade of books for college students. With almost 500 users and ~2000 books up for trade, I deduced a number of ways on how to improve the performance of my website. I also created algorithms on suggesting the books that a user might be interested in. Eventually, I donated my website to my juniors for maintenance. Fortunately, I also got a chance to use my skills at an enterprise level when I got an opportunity to work as an intern in a top MNC. My work resulted in an extension of my internship by a period of 1 month and was also topped off with a pre-placement offer.

When I reached my senior year of college, my understanding of database management and computer networks escalated tremendously. This resulted in building a home automation system as my final year project. The end result was an Android-based application that enabled users to control lights, fans, house door etc. via Wi-Fi connectivity. Considering the use case and effectiveness, the project received one of the top grades in the whole batch.

By this time, I was certain about procuring a job in a data focused organization. Over the last ~2 years at Mediaocean, my role has been around development of one of their core products called Ignitia which works on the bill-pay side in the advertising domain. My responsibilities included development of functional features as well as the technical side of the product. During this period, I had opportunities to learn many state-of-the-art industry platforms like Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure, and also participate in multiple hackathons. Due to my impressive work, I was selected in the team of five to represent Mediaocean in the global hackathon conducted by Vista. The hackathon was based on Artificial intelligence and Machine learning. We had made a predictive model using python to determine the risk involved in billing a client based on ~60,000 invoices.

To further develop my skills and strengthen my desire to become a data scientist, I have enrolled for a ten-course specialization in data science offered by John Hopkins University on Coursera. The course consists of topics like learning R-Programming, understanding Machine learning, Data mining. The creators of the course are Professor Brain Caffo (PhD), Jeff Leek (PhD) and Roger D. Peng (PhD). While I learn all the technical aspects from Coursera, I have started contributing to the community for data scientists at Kaggle.com by working on projects offered on their site.

The data science program offered by New York University is one of the best programs in the world. The collaborative and immensely modern surroundings will help me further develop my skills and achieve my career goals. I intent to learn the advanced concepts of data science and also step up my analytical skills to become an expert in the field. Post the completion of my Masters, I intend to start my own research center which would aim at providing cost effective service to smaller businesses to help them make better decisions and sustain in this fast paced industry.