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CORRELATES OF ACCESS TO BUSINESS RESEARCH DATABASES

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Abstract

This study examines potential correlates of business research database access through academic libraries serving top business programs in the United States. Results indicate that greater access to research databases is related to enrollment in graduate business programs, but not to overall enrollment or status as a public or private institution.

Correlates of Access to Business Research Databases

INTRODUCTION

Electronic research databases continue to dominate and shape research practices in virtually all disciplines.¹ Even if these expensive electronic resources do not supplant print altogether, they will certainly continue to absorb a greater and greater share of the acquisitions budget of academic libraries. Nowhere is this more evident than in business research. Business researchers and practitioners have quickly grasped the value of access to, and control over, vast amounts of information.² As the number and size of business research databases continues to grow, however, academic libraries already dealing with alarming budgetary cutbacks are increasingly hard-pressed to provide adequate access to the research resources required by business researchers. Therefore it is critical, particularly in light of the current barren economic climate, to determine what factors may control the availability of business research databases through our academic libraries.

The purpose of this study is to test three hypotheses concerning the ability of academic libraries to supply their students with access to electronic business research databases. The first hypothesis is that private schools, perhaps due to sizable endowments, high tuitions, and greater student fees, could supply more business research databases than public schools. The second hypothesis is that schools with a large undergraduate population, thanks to the per-student fees and tuition, are able to afford more business research databases for their students. The third hypothesis is that schools with a larger enrollment in graduate business program will, due to the scholarly needs and pressures of their students and faculty, demand greater access to business research databases.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature surrounding electronic journals is predictably vast (see O'Hara for a detailed annotated bibliography and an excellent review of literature to 2007³) and continues unabated in such areas as migrating from print to electronic journals,⁴ insuring access to electronic journals over time,⁵ and a continuing examination of patterns in electronic journal usage.⁶ Several studies have moreover, reviewed or studied specific business research databases, such as Hahn's review of RMA's *eStatement Studies* database,⁷ Watkins's review of *Westlaw Business*,⁸ or Oulanov's study of *Business Source Premier*, in which students rated the database highly in terms of several criteria including efficiency, user effort, adaptability and retrieval features.⁹ Little research exists, however, on what drives access to electronic journals and databases. Caudle and Schmitz investigated Web access to electronic journals and databases among Association of Research Libraries (ARL), focusing on technical aspects of access such as linking, federated searches, and documentation.¹⁰ These researchers found little uniformity across ARL libraries, but did not investigate any possible reasons for the disparities.

METHODOLOGY

From November of 2008 through January of 2009, data were gathered on the number of electronic business research databases available through the academic libraries of top business schools. The colleges and universities chosen for inclusion in this study were those with the most highly rated business programs, as determined by leading national publications such as *Forbes*, *U.S. News & World Report*, and *Business Week*. These institutions, taken as a group, are generally acknowledged as leaders in the field of business education, strongly committed to providing the best research resources for their business students and faculty. If any of these schools do not provide access to a given resource we can safely assume, then, that it is not

because they underrate the importance of the business program. Having thus created a list of viable business schools, researchers then identified total enrollment in terms of both total undergraduate population and graduate enrollment in business programs,¹¹ as well as the status of each school as a private or public institution.¹² The complete list of institutions included in the study is shown in Appendix A.

Business research databases were counted using each library's online listing of available electronic databases and recorded on a master list. The master list of databases was created by combining the holdings of the six largest U.S. academic libraries as identified by the Association of Research Libraries.¹³ Additional databases were added if they appeared frequently in the collections of other schools. The final list consisted of 209 databases and may be viewed in Appendix B. Most of the databases and electronic resources on the list are paid services open only to authorized campus users, but a few free ones (such as Google Scholar) were included if popular. In general, individual journals and publications were not counted separately, but exceptions were made for those individual publications that appeared frequently on library business database lists (including such popular titles as the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Barron's*). Similarly, most of the resources included are clearly focused on the study of business, but any general research database that appeared frequently in library lists of business databases was added to the master list for this study. By this means the libraries themselves were able to dictate the master list of databases to be included in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Web sites of 116 top business programs were examined, and 114 of them offered some form of online access to the campus library. The average undergraduate enrollment at the schools selected was 15,565, while enrollment in graduate business programs averaged 630 (see

Table 1). Of the 114 schools that offered access to library lists of resources, 58 (50.9%) were private, while 56 (49.1%) were public—yielding, quite by accident, a very nearly equal representation of private and public institutions. The schools in our study provided their campuses with an average of 36.3 business research databases. The range was wide, from a minimum of 11 to a maximum of 100.

Hypothesis 1 held that underlying differences in funding between private and public institutions would have a significant effect on the number of business databases provided. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the availability of business research databases in public and private schools. There was no significant difference in the number of databases supplied by private schools ($\bar{X} = 37.3$, $SD = 16.9$) and public schools ($\bar{X} = 34.7$, $SD = 16.4$); $t(113) = 0.85$, $p > .05$. These results suggest that an institution's status as a private or public school does not have a significant effect on the availability of business research databases.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 held that enrollment would affect the number of business research databases provided. Perhaps campuses with a greater overall undergraduate enrollment, due to tuition and fees collected, would be able to supply more funding to their academic libraries. Or, perhaps greater enrollment in graduate business programs would relate to more pressure on the library to supply more detailed information for the advanced research needs of both the graduate students and their faculty mentors. A Pearson correlation analysis was carried out on the relationship between overall enrollment ($M = 15,565$, $SD = 10,677$) and the number of databases provided ($M = 36.0$, $SD = 16.6$), as well the relationship between business graduate program enrollment ($M = 630$, $SD = 583$) and the number of databases provided. At an alpha level of .05, the correlation between overall enrollment and number of databases provided was not statistically significant, $r = .14$, $p = .14$, while the correlation between graduate business program

enrollment and number of business research databases provided was statistically significant, $r = .33$, $p = .00$. This indicates that total campus undergraduate enrollment is not related to the number of business research databases provided, but enrollment in graduate business programs *is* related to the number of business research databases provided.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the current study was to test several hypotheses concerning the reasons higher education institutions provide greater or lesser access to business research databases. Results indicate that the ability of a campus library to supply business research databases is not related to the overall size of the campus, or to the status of the campus as a private or public institution. This outcome may help lay to rest the belief that big campuses or private institutions collectively possess extraordinary wealth used to provide their students and faculty with educational resources out of all proportion to their academic needs. The evidence does, however, provide support for the supposition that a greater enrollment in graduate business programs can drive the supply of specialized business research databases. This seems a highly encouraging finding—it indicates that the resources supplied by our academic libraries are controlled by the scholarly needs of their academic communities. The more advanced needs of business graduate students and graduate-level faculty appear, in other words, to be the motivating factors in the acquisition of more advanced scholarly resources.

The results of this study support the conclusion that academic libraries are moving in the right direction as they acquire electronic research databases to serve business programs. The supply of electronic business resources, while costly, does relate significantly to the scholarly needs of business students and researchers. Such findings cannot erase the enormous financial pressures faced by academic libraries as they struggle to supply adequate electronic business

resources with only skeletal budgets. They do, however, provide evidence that hard-won academic library funds are being allocated in an appropriate, targeted manner. This, in turn, may help to assure those in charge of allocating library budgets that assets yielded to academic libraries are, on the whole, being used efficiently to further the academic missions of our higher education institutions.

Further research is needed to expand our understanding of the dynamics of access to electronic resources. Do changes in funding to the institution, for example, relate directly to changes in access to research materials, or is the relationship mediated by such factors as size of the institution, or the number of terminal degree programs? It would also be helpful to examine the effect of alternative methods of acquiring academic materials (e.g., open access and “pay-per-view” systems) on the availability of materials to students and faculty—in both short and long terms. The financial challenges facing academic libraries will always be with us, but a deeper knowledge of the forces that affect access to academic research materials can only help us deal with them more effectively.

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Table 1
Average Size of Programs
(Size of program in terms of Full-Time Enrollment)

	Undergraduate (Total)	Graduate Business
Total number of schools	114	116
Schools with no business program	2	0
Mean FTE	15,565	630
Median FTE	13,854	489
Minimum FTE	1,785	27
Maximum FTE	53,298	3,291

Appendix A

Schools Included in Study (listed alphabetically)

College or University	Location	Business School
American University	Washington, DC	Kogod School of Business
Arizona State University	Tempe, AZ	W. P. Carey School of Business
Babson College	Wellesley, MA	F. W. Olin Grad. School of Business
Baylor University	Waco, TX	Hamkamer School of Business
Belmont University	Nashville, TN	College of Business Admin
Bentley University	Waltham, MA	McCallum Grad. School of Business
Binghamton University	Vestal, NY	BU School of Management
Boston College	Boston, MA	Carroll School of Management
Boston University	Boston, MA	Boston University School of Mgmt
Brandeis University	Waltham, MA	Brandeis Int'l Business School
Brigham Young University	Provo, UT	Marriott School of Management
Bryant College	Smithfield, RI	BC College of Business
Buffalo University	Buffalo, NY	BU School of Management
Carnegie Mellon University	Pittsburgh, PA	Tepper School of Business
Case Western Reserve University	Cleveland, OH	Weatherhead School of Management
Clemson University	Clemson, SC	CU College of Business
College of New Jersey	Ewing, NJ	College of NJ School of Business
College of William & Mary	Williamsburg, VA	Mason School of Business
Colorado State University	Fort Collins, CO	CSU College of Business
Columbia University	New York, NY	Columbia Business School
Cornell University	Ithaca, NY	S.C. Johnson Grad. School of Mgmt
Dartmouth College	Hanover, NH	Tuck School of Business
Drexel University	Philadelphia, PA	LeBow College of Business
Duke University	Durham, NC	Fuqua School of Business
Emory University	Atlanta, GA	Goizueta Business School
Florida State University	Tallahassee, FL	FSU College of Business
Fordham University	New York, NY	Fordham Graduate School of Business
George Washington University	Washington, D.C.	Geo. Washington School of Business
Georgetown University	Washington, D.C.	McDonough School of Business
Georgia Institute of Technology	Atlanta, Georgia	GIT College of Mgmt
Harvard University	Cambridge, MA	Harvard Business School
Howard University	Washington, D.C.	Howard Univ. School of Business
Hult Int'l Business School	Cambridge, MA	Hult International Business School
Illinois State University	Normal, IL	ISU College of Business
Iowa State University	Ames, IO	ISU College of Business
Indiana University	Bloomington, IN	Kelley School of Business
James Madison University	Harrisonburg, VA	JMU College of Business

College or University	Location	Business School
Lehigh University	Bethlehem, PA	College of Business and Economics
Loyola College	Baltimore, MD	Sellinger School of Bus & Mgmt
Loyola University	Chicago, IL	LU School of Business
Louisiana State University	Baton Rouge, LA	E.J. Ourso College of Business
Marquette University	Milwaukee, WI	College of Business Admin
Mass. Institute of Technology	Cambridge, MA	Sloan School of Management
Miami University	Miami, OH	Farmer School of Business
Michigan State University	East Lansing, MI	Eli Broad College of Business
New York University	New York, NY	Stern School of Business
North Carolina State	Raleigh, NC	Jenkins Grad School of Management
Northern Illinois University	DeKalb, IL	NIU College of Business
Northeastern University	Boston, MA	NEU Graduate School of Business
Northwestern University	Evanston, IL	Kellogg School of Management
Ohio State University	Columbus, OH	Fisher College of Business
Penn State University	University Park, PA	Smeal College of Business
Pepperdine University	Malibu, CA	Graziadio School of Bus. and Mgmt
Purdue University	W. Lafayette, IN	Krannert School of Management
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	Troy, NY	Lally School of Mgmt & Technology
Rochester Institute of Technology	Rochester, NY	Saunders College of Business
Rice University	Houston, TX	Jones Grad. School of Management
Rollins College	Winter Park, FL	Crummer Grad. School of Business
Rutgers University	Newark, NJ	Rutgers Business School
Santa Clara University	Santa Clara, CA	Leavey School of Business
Seton Hall University	South Orange, NJ	Stillman School of Business
Southern Methodist University	University Park, TX	Cox School of Business
Stanford University	Palo Alto, CA	Stanford Graduate School of Business
Temple University	Philadelphia, PA	Fox School of Business
Texas A&M University	College Station, TX	Mays Business School
Texas Christian University	Fort Worth, TX	Neeley School of Business
Thunderbird Sch. of Glo. Mgmt	Glendale, AZ	Garvin School of Intl Management
Tulane University	New Orleans, LA	A.B. Freeman School of Business
University at Buffalo (SUNY)	Buffalo, NY	UB School of Management
University of Alabama	Tuscaloosa, AL	Culverhouse Col. Comm. & Bus. Adm
University of Arizona	Tucson, AZ	Eller College of Management
University of Arkansas	Fayetteville, AR	Walton College of Business
Univ. of California, Berkeley	Berkeley, CA	Haas School of Business
University of California, Davis	Davis, CA	UC Davis Graduate School of Mgmt
University of California, Irvine	Irvine, CA	Merage School of Business
University of California, L.A.	Los Angeles, CA	UCLA Anderson School of Mgmt
University of Chicago	Chicago, IL	Univ of Chicago Grad School of Bus.

College or University	Location	Business School
University of Colorado, Boulder	Boulder, CO	Leeds School of Business
University of Connecticut	Hartford, CT	UC School of Business
University of Delaware	Newark, DE	Lerner College of Business & Econ
University of Denver	Denver, CO	Daniels College of Business
University of Florida	Gainesville, FL	Warrington College of Business
University of Georgia	Athens, GA	Terry College of Business
University of Houston	Houston, TX	Bauer College of Business
University of Illinois	Champaign, ILL	UIUC College of Business
University of Iowa	Iowa City, IO	Tippie College of Business
University of Kentucky	Lexington, KY	Gatton College of Business & Econ
University of Louisville	Louisville, KY	UL College of Business
University of MD, College Park	College Park, MD	Robert H. Smith School of Business
University of MA, Amherst	Amherst, MA	Isenberg School of Management
University of Miami	Coral Gables, FL	UM School of Business Admin
University of Michigan	Ann Arbor, MI	Ross School of Business
University of MN, Twin Cities	Minneapolis, MI	Carlson School of Management
University of Missouri	Columbia, MO	Trulaske College of Business
University of NC, Chapel Hill	Chapel Hill, NC	Kenan-Flagler Business School
University of Notre Dame	Notre Dame, IN	Mendoza College of Business
University of Oregon	Eugene, OR	Lundquist College of Business
University of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, PA	Wharton School
University of Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh, PA	Katz School of Business
University of Richmond	Richmond, VA	Robins School of Business
University of Rochester	Rochester, NY	Simon School of Business
University of San Diego	San Diego, CA	USD School of Business Admin
University of South Carolina	Columbia, SC	Moore School of Business
University of Southern California	Los Angeles, CA	Marshall School of Business
University of Tennessee	Knoxville, TN	UT College of Business Admin
University of Texas, Austin	Austin, TX	McCombs School of Business
University of Texas, Dallas	Dallas, TX	UT Dallas School of Management
University of Utah	Salt Lake City, UT	Eccles School of Business
University of Virginia	Charlottesville, VA	Darden Grad School of Bus Admin
University of Washington	Seattle, WA	Foster School of Business
University of WI, Madison	Madison, WI	UW School of Business
Vanderbilt University	Nashville, TN	Owen Grad School of Management
Villanova University	Villanova, PA	Villanova School of Business
Wake Forest University	Winston-Salem, NC	Babcock Grad School of Management
Washington University	St. Louis, MO	Olin School of Business
Yale University	New Haven, CT	Yale School of Management

Appendix B

Databases Included in Study (listed alphabetically)

Research Database	Research Database
1 ABI/Inform (ProQuest)	46 Corporate Affiliations (LexisNexis)
2 Academic OneFile (Gale)	47 Corporate ResourceNet (EBSCO)
3 Academic Search (EBSCO)	48 CorpTech
4 Access World News (NewsBank)	49 CountryData (PRS Group)
5 Accounting & Tax (ProQuest)	50 Country Watch
6 Ad\$Spender	51 CQ Researcher (CQ Press)
7 AICPA Accounting & Auditing Lit.	52 Credo Reference
8 Amadeus (Bureau Van Dijk)	53 CRSP
9 American Accounting Association	54 CSMAR (Chinese financial data)
10 American Firms in Foreign Countries	55 Current Index to Statistics
11 Asian Business	56 Datastream (Thomson)
12 Asian Wall Street Journal	57 Deal Pipeline
13 Associations Unlimited (Gale)	58 DemographicsNow
14 Auction Block	59 Digital Dissertations (ProQuest)
15 Audit Analytics	60 Direction of Trade Statistics (IMF)
16 Bal of Payments Statistics (IMF)	61 Dissertation Abstracts
17 Bank Scope	62 EconLibrary.com
18 Bankruptcy Insider (deal.com)	63 EconLit
19 Bankruptcy Law 360	64 Economagic
20 Barron's	65 Economatica
21 Best's Insurance Reports	66 Economia y Negocias
22 Blackwell Reference Online	67 Economist Intel. Unit
23 Bloomberg	68 eMarketer
24 BNA Tax Management Portfolios	69 Emerald (various)
25 BNA (various)	70 Encyclopedia of Associations
26 BoardEx	71 Entrepreneurship Research Portal
27 Business & Co. Resource Ctr (Gale)	72 Europa World
28 Business & Industry Database (Gale)	73 Execucomp
29 Business Insights	74 Expanded Academic ASAP (Gale)
30 Business Monitor Online	75 Factiva
31 Business NewsBank	76 FAITS (Faulkner Adv for Info Tech St.)
32 Business Periodicals Index	77 First Call Historical Database
33 Business Plans Handbooks	78 First Research
34 Business Source (EBSCO)	79 First Search (OCLC)
35 Cabell's Directory	80 Food Institute
36 Capital IQ (S & P)	81 Foreign Firms Oper in U.S.
37 CCH Accounting Research Manager	82 Forrester Research
38 CCH Tax Research Network	83 Foundation Directory
39 CCH (various other)	84 Frost & Sullivan
40 China Data Online	85 Galante's Venture Cap Pri. Equity Dir.
41 Choices (Simmons)	86 Gale (Various)
42 ClimateWire	87 Gartner Online Info. Resources
43 Compact Disclosure	88 General Business File ASAP (Gale)
44 Compustat (S & P)	89 Global Development Fin (GDF Online)
45 Conference Board	90 Global Financial Data

Research Database		Research Database	
91	Global Insight	140	Moody's Default Risk Service
92	Global Mkt Info Database (GMID)	141	Morningstar (various)
93	Google Scholar	142	NBER Working Papers
94	GuideStar	143	Nelson's Dir of Investment Managers
95	Health Business Full Text (EBSCO)	144	New York Times
96	Hein Online	145	New York Times Historical
97	Hispanic Business 500 Directory	146	Newsletters ASAP (Gale)
98	Historical Annual Reports (ProQuest)	147	OneSource
99	Hoover's (D&B)	148	OptionMetrics Ivy DB
100	Hospitality & Tourism Comp (EBSCO)	149	Orbis
101	IAOR (Intl Abstracts in Oper Research)	150	Osiris
102	I/B/E/S (Thomson)	151	Oxford (various)
103	IBIS World	152	PACAP (Japan)
104	Icarus (D&B)	153	PAIS
105	IndiaStat	154	Passport Reference and Markets
106	Info Sci-Online (IGI Global)	155	Periodicals Archive Online
107	Informa PubsOnLine	156	Plunkett Research
108	InfoTech Trends	157	PolicyFile
109	InfoTrac	158	Political Risk Services
110	IngentaConnect (Ingenta)	159	Polling the Nation Online
111	Inspec	160	ProductScan Online
112	Inst. For Study of Security Mkts (ISSM)	161	ProQuest (other, various)
113	Institutional Investor Journals	162	PsycARTICLES
114	Institutional Investor.com	163	PsycINFO
115	Intl Directory of Company Histories	164	RDS Business Reference Suite (Gale)
116	International Financial Statistics (IMF)	165	Readers' Guide Retrospective
117	Investext Plus (Gale)	166	Red Books
118	ISI Emerging Markets (Compustat)	167	Reference USA
119	ISIS (insurance companies)	168	Regional Business News (EBSCO)
120	Islamic Finance Info. Service (IFIS)	169	Research Insight (Compustat)
121	JSTOR	170	RGE Monitor
122	Jupiter Research	171	RIA Checkpoint
123	Key Business Ratios (D&B)	172	Risk Abstracts
124	Lehman Live	173	SAGE (various)
125	LexisNexis Academic	174	Science Direct (Elsevier)
126	LexisNexis Statistical	175	Scopus
127	Making of the Modern World	176	SDC Platinum (Thomson Reuters)
128	Mgmt and Organization Studies (SAGE)	177	Securities Mosaic
129	Market Indicators and Forecasts	178	Simply Map
130	MarketLine Business Information Center	179	Small Business Resource Ctr (Gale)
131	MarketResearch.com (academic)	180	Soc. Science Research Network (SSRN)
132	MasterFile Premier (EBSCO)	181	Sociological Abstracts (CSA)
133	Materials Business File (MBF)	182	Socrates (social & environmental perf)
134	MediaMark	183	SourceOECD
135	Mergent	184	Spectrum Stock Ownership Databases
136	MergerArbAlert (Deal.com)	185	Sports Business Research Network
137	Mergers and Acquisitions	186	Springer (various)
138	Million Dollar Database (D&B)	187	SRDS
139	Mintel Reports	188	Standard & Poor's (Various)

Research Database

189	Statistical Abstract of the U.S.
190	STAT-USA
191	TableBase (RDS)
192	Thomas (various)
193	Thomson (various)
194	Value Line Investment Survey
195	Vault Online Career Library
196	VC Deal
197	Voting Analytics Data
198	Wall Street Journal
199	Wall Street Journal Historical
200	Ward's Bus. Dir. (Pub. & Private Cos.)
201	Web of Knowledge
202	Web of Science
203	Westlaw Campus Research
204	Wilson (various)
205	World Competitiveness Online (IMD)
206	World Dev Indicators Online (WDI)
207	WorldCat
208	WRDS (Wharton Research Data Service)
209	Zephyr

