About Synergia

• Synergia foundation is an Indian based independent and strategic think tank whose purpose is to augment decision making at a policy level while enriching individual discourse and public dialogue.
• Mission: To help create a better world with fact-based research, productive dialogue, and impactful interventions.
• Synergia publishes research backed insights which cover a variety of areas including business, cybersecurity, elections, counter terrorism, geopolitics, and environment.

Role & Weekly Tasks

My main duty as a research assistant is to conduct research and write publications highlighting research findings and recommendations.

My weekly tasks include:
• Writing topic briefs on three current topics. These briefs are to highlight why the topics are important, how they will serve the targeted audience, how they are currently playing out, and early assessments.
• Conducting in-depth research on the chosen topics. The research mostly spans secondary data retrieved from government reports, research companies, and the news.
• Writing rough drafts on selected topics and submitting for review.
• Reviewing final drafts and submitting them for uploading.

Experience Gained

My co-op was originally meant to be in India, but due to the pandemic it had to be remote, so this limited my experience. However, I learned a lot and gained new experiences which I believe will help me in both my professional and private life.

The biggest things I gained from this co-op are:
• Improved time and self management. Working remotely taught me how to prioritize my daily tasks in a way that enabled me to fulfill my work and home duties.
• Professional communication. Constant rapport with my supervisors through emails and zoom taught me how to effectively communicate my ideas in a professional way.

So far, I have written 7 articles. The articles I have worked on include:

i. Renewable Energy - Ready, steady, reset, go!
ii. The Age of Pandemic Tourism
iii. Covid-19 and the Gender Divide - The longer the virus stays, the wider the divide
iv. Northeast India - Coping with the Pandemic
v. Millennials Shape New Business Culture
vi. Fintech
vii. Pandemic Induced Consumer Behavior

Writing these articles are among the most challenging and rewarding things I have done in my life. I improved my skill in:

• Data Extraction: Identifying reputable data sources and determining legitimate data.
• Data analysis using excel.
• Writing: This co-op taught me how to write professional research articles that carried the main points of the research in a concise manner.

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Co-op Role: Research Assistant
MSc Economics, 2021
Global co-op - India

Relation to Academics

• Applied Development (ECON 5291)

In this class, I learned about economic, political, and social factors that limit economic growth in developing countries. While conducting research for the articles, I recognized some of the topics discussed in class and it served as a foundational knowledge for me while writing. The most helpful topics were: the natural resource curse, capital flows, growth theory, and financial integration.

• Applied Econometrics (ECON 5140)

This course helped me with regards to data analysis. Much of my research/writing involved extracting, analyzing, and explaining data, and the statistical understanding gained from this course helped me do just that.

Plans

Going forward, I plan to improve my data analysis skills using Python and Stata. I also plan to delve further into data science, I find that this will help me in extracting, analyzing, and interpreting data.

In addition, I plan to take more coursework on Applied Econometric, particularly the Workshop in Applied Econometrics (ECON 7240) or Applied Econometrics 2 (ECON 7740).

In the nearest future, after graduation, I plan to delve further into research in developmental economics. By researching and writing on diverse topics during my co-op, I discovered that I have a stronger interest in developmental economics, and I plan to pursue it extensively.

Reference

Synergia Foundation. (n.d.). About Us. Retrieved from synergiafoundation.org:
https://www.synergiafoundation.org/our-story