

Choosing Data Analysis and Presentation Techniques

My research question is, "How can small companies use Blue Ocean technique to produce competitive advantages that allow them to effectively compete against big business?" The study design I chose was a mixed method design. The data analysis that will be used with the quantitative part of the study will include descriptive statistics, which will identify central tendencies in the data and trends in the data. Then a mean difference analysis (t-test analysis) will be used with an alpha of .05. The mean difference analysis will be used to test hypothesis 1 and 2 by indicating if a difference exists between Red Ocean business models and Blue Ocean business models. The results from this part of the analysis will be used to establish if Blue Ocean business models can produce performance advantages over Red Ocean business models. The second part of the study will be qualitative. It will involve interviewing business owners about the competitive advantages they have been able develop. A mean difference analysis will again be used to determine if Blue Ocean business models do produce more competitive advantages than Red Ocean business models. This information will first verify that competitive advantages are offered by Blue Ocean business models. The second part of the analysis will be a contextual analysis. The results from this assessment will be used to identify the specific types of competitive advantages that are possible to develop in a Blue Ocean Market.

The results from my data analyses will be illustrated in several different ways. For the quantitative portion of the study, graphs and charts will be used to illustrate frequency trends. Conversely, for the qualitative portion of the study, tables will be used to

illustrate contextual themes organized by category. This information will then be graphed in a pivot chart to show frequency trends in the themes.

I expect to encounter a number of challenges by adopting the above data analysis approach. The first challenge is that it will take a considerable amount of time to complete both a qualitative and quantitative analysis of data. It will be like conducting two studies instead of one. However, both qualitative and quantitative data are needed to really understand my topic and to answer my research question effectively. The second challenge that I will face is completing the statistical analyses. The t-test in particular takes a considerable amount of time to complete, and I will need to complete three different t-tests. The descriptive statistics should not be too difficult to complete, because I can just use Excel formulas to calculate them. However, it will take time to enter the data and to set up the formulas to produce Mean, Median, Mode, and Standard Deviation results. The third challenge that I expect to face is completing a contextual analysis. This type of analysis requires identifying themes, categorizing them, and inferring their significance. This is much more labor intensive than simply completing a mathematical formula to analysis raw numerical data.

Overall, I think that I have a good model to use for my study. It is comprehensive and it will provide a lot of information to use to test my stated hypotheses and research question. My concern, however, is that I think I may be putting in too much effort. Since my research question is, "How can small companies use Blue Ocean technique to produce competitive advantages that allow them to effectively compete against big

business?", it may be sufficient to just utilize the qualitative portion of my study. This is where I need guidance, as I tend to do more work than is necessary. I also am concerned that my research question may not be the right one to use for my study design. If I keep the mixed method approach, should I change the research question to reflect the objective of both the qualitative and quantitative portions of the study?