Child Care Prices Political Analysis

Summary of Analysis

      This analysis focused on the challenges Washington families face with their child care costs, especially compared to South Dakota (ranked 1st in the nation for child care price to income ratio).

Findings:

- Washington ranks 12th in the nation for median household income
  - Showcasing the potential Washington has to support families.
- Washington ranks the lowest in the nation for child care price to income ratio
  - Showcasing the extreme burden of child care for Washington families
- Child care costs in Washington have large spikes and a higher rate of increase compared to South Dakota's (ranked 1st) steady and slower growth.
  - Showcasing the unsteady nature of child care prices in Washington
- Washington has had a large steady increase in population size over the years.
  - This large flux into the state likely leads to an increased demand for child care services.

Assumptions

      In this analysis I assumed consistent data collection methods across all states. In addition I assumed that the household income data accurately reflects affordability, however there may be other cost of living factors that may influence the affordability. I also assumed that the large population growth in Washington would directly influence the demand for child care services.

Items that still need clarification

      A further analysis into the breakdown of child care costs in urban, suburban and rural areas in Washington would help pinpoint if there is a better pointed strategy that can help bring change to this issue. More information into the already provided subsidies and tax breaks can also pinpoint better areas to focus action. Finally better understanding the causes of the large spikes in Washington will give a thorough background into the factors at play, and can help direct action.

Direction of Story

      For this project I wanted to take on the story of a politician running for the 2028 Washington Governor position. I decided that the large price of child care costs that has landed Washington to be ranked last in the nation for childcare affordability would be a great running position. Focusing on this issue as well as comparing Washington to South Dakota was a way to have the analysis focus on state level issues. Using this analysis I created an action plan that the politician can take to address these concerns when they are in office.

Target Audience

      My target audience for this analysis was potential voters, I wanted my media to reach out to new voters as well as people who are unfamiliar with this issue. I focused on this specific

issue and the problems that come with it hoping to connect with voters that have families or are connected to this issue.

Mediums Included and Why
        I included an instagram post, a tik tok video and a campaign email. I decided to choose an instagram post as social media is often a tool that is used for political campaigns to gain a following. I created a hashtag as well to make the content easy to share and more engaging on the social media platform. I also decided to go with a tik tok video for similar reasons to reach a large audience of potential voters. I chose this platform specifically to reach out to young voters as this is a popular platform for young adults, as well as the family content creators and those following that side of tik tok. Finally I decided on a campaign email, this one was a great opportunity to give a deeper insight into the analysis as those that receive this email would already be familiar with the campaign. This allowed for a more professional setting for more thorough analysis.

Design Decisions
        For the social media posts I decided to choose a red white and blue color scheme to give a patriotic feel to the campaign. I started each with a professionally laid out campaign cover that mentioned being a candidate for Washington Governor and had a slogan line that highlighted the issue of affordable child care. I also decided to include hashtags in the posts to help gather attention and engagement. These utilized dark blue lettering on a light blue background, this was to keep with a calming feel as well as the patriotic feel. My hope was to not make the visualizations jarring causing the viewer to feel overwhelmed and then become disconnected with the post. I used equal spacing and minimal white space to keep with a well put together appearance. For the email I decided to have it laid out in sections that would make the email easy to read as well as easy to find specific information. The Black text on a white background was used as this is a standard layout for an email and I wanted this email to have a professional look, if I had used many colors in this specific media it could have come off as disjointed.

Ethical Considerations
What changes were made to the data?
- For this analysis the main changes made were to group the dataset. These steps were clearly documented through the analysis.

Are there any legal or regulatory guidelines for your data or project?
- No personally identifiable information was used, this helped ensure that privacy concerns were addressed.

What risks could be created based on the transformations or how the visualizations are presented?
- There are potential risks including misrepresentation, bias and context loss. Through simplifying the data I may have led to misinterpretations potentially missing other underlying patterns. Filtering the data may have also introduced bias by excluding

certain subsets. Finally the visualizations may lack context that would be needed to better understand the visualization and draw conclusions.

Did you make any assumptions in cleaning/transforming or when presenting the data? Did you filter any data without labeling or clearly identifying that the data was not included?
- Assumptions were made regarding collection consistency of data, data filtering was used to focus on key factors with clearly notated steps. All transformations were noted to keep transparency.

How was your data sourced/verified for credibility?
- This data is a publicly provided government dataset, it is noted on the US Department of Labor website that this "is the most comprehensive federal source of childcare prices at the country level".

Was your data acquired in an ethical way?
- This data was acquired in an ethical way as this was retrieved from a publicly available dataset on the US department of labor website.

How would you mitigate any of the ethical implications you have identified?
- I was sure to have all transformations, assumptions and filtering documented. I also accompanied all of the visualizations with explanations to help avoid misinterpretation.

Lessons Learned

What would you do differently next time?
- I learned very quickly that using social media posts as a media choice would be more difficult than expected. It was difficult to showcase the analysis in these settings in a clear and precise way. Next time I would consider other forms of media that would be able to better showcase the full analysis.

What did you enjoy the most?
- I really enjoyed making the campaign email. I found it flowed much easier for me than the social media posts, and best showcased the analysis in a full display.