National Childcare Prices

Dexter Schincke

Bellevue University

National Childcare Prices

For this milestone, I am focused on creating three different mediums to effectively communicate the story of rising childcare costs and how they impact various groups across the U.S. I am deciding between an interactive dashboard, a video, and a PowerPoint presentation to reach my target audience, which includes policymakers, childcare providers, and family support advocates. Each medium will break down the data in ways that are accessible and detailed enough to engage the audience in meaningful ways. Below is the plan for each medium and some sample visualizations I will incorporate to tell this story.

The first medium is an interactive dashboard that is tailored for policymakers and childcare providers. They need to dig into the data, so the dashboard will allow them to explore childcare costs across different states and counties over time. To help them find meaningful trends, users will be able to filter the data by household income, race, and employment rates. An essential visual will be a heatmap that shows the correlation between unemployment rates, poverty rates, and MHI. This visual allows users to quickly see how economic factors like unemployment and poverty relate to income levels, providing insights that can drive decisions about policy interventions and resource allocations. These dynamic visuals will make it easier for stakeholders to explore the data interactively and develop informed strategies.

* Line Graph: Tracks Median Household Income (MHI) over time by county. Users can filter by state and county to view how income has changed across years. This graph will help visualize economic disparities that affect childcare affordability.
* Bar Chart: Compares childcare costs by state for a specific year, giving users a snapshot of how costs vary regionally.
* Heatmap: Shows correlations between unemployment, poverty rates, and MHI, giving a high-level view of how economic conditions influence childcare costs. Users can select specific demographic filters to explore these relationships.
* Filter Options: Allow users to drill down by demographic factors like race, gender, and employment status, offering a tailored experience that adapts to their data exploration needs.

A screenshot of a graph

Description automatically generated

Next, I will design an infographic aimed at reaching a broad audience, including parents, advocacy groups, and policymakers who need a snapshot of the key findings. The infographic will simplify complex data into visually engaging formats, making it easy for anyone to grasp the critical issues. It will feature an overview of childcare costs across different states, using icons and figures to represent the impact of costs on various demographic groups. I will also include a bar chart that highlights the Female Labor Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) and how it correlates with childcare costs. This visual will show how childcare costs can influence women’s ability to participate in the workforce, which is especially crucial for policymakers and advocates focused on labor trends. The infographic will use clear, bold visuals to summarize these findings and will include a call to action, urging viewers to consider how childcare affordability impacts family economics and social equity. One of the key visuals in the dashboard will be a line graph showing Median Household Income (MHI) over time. A graph with a line going up

Description automatically generated

* Title Section: "The Rising Costs of Childcare in the U.S."
* Overview: A brief introduction that highlights how childcare costs have increased and the demographic groups most affected.
* Bar Chart: Shows the Female Labor Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) over time in key states, correlating it with rising childcare costs. This will illustrate how childcare costs affect women’s ability to participate in the workforce.
* Icons & Figures: Simple visuals that represent key data points, such as the percentage of household income spent on childcare across different states. These icons will provide a quick visual representation of the burden of childcare costs.
* Call to Action: A short summary encouraging viewers to advocate for more affordable childcare options and policies that support working families.

Finally, I will be creating a PowerPoint presentation for policymakers and decision-makers. This will be used in formal meetings or briefings to guide them through a clear and structured narrative about the rising costs of childcare, the disparities between regions, and how these costs affect different demographic groups. One of the slides will include the heatmap, which shows the correlation between unemployment, poverty rates, and income. This visual will highlight areas where economic conditions may be making childcare unaffordable, particularly for low-income families. This graph tracks how income changes in different regions and helps users identify economic disparities affecting childcare affordability. The presentation will also feature a bar graph that compares Median Household Income across different states, providing a clear picture of regional disparities. Each slide in the presentation will guide the audience through the data step by step, making it easy to follow along while emphasizing key takeaways. The final slide will include a clear call to action, urging policymakers to consider reforms that could make childcare more affordable and accessible for families who need it most. A graph of a number of states

Description automatically generated

* Slide 1: Title Slide – "Childcare Costs in the U.S.: Trends, Challenges, and Solutions."
* Slide 2: Introduction – A brief overview of the project, objectives, and key research questions.
* Slide 3: Key Findings – Summary of childcare cost trends across the U.S., using a simple bar chart to highlight regional disparities.
* Slide 4: Labor Force Participation – A bar chart showing the Female Labor Force Participation Rate and its correlation with childcare costs, emphasizing how rising costs are linked to workforce participation, especially among women.
* Slide 5: Regional Disparities – A heatmap that shows correlations between unemployment, poverty rates, and MHI, helping visualize the economic factors influencing childcare affordability.
* Slide 6: Impact on Low-Income Families – A detailed analysis of how childcare costs disproportionately impact low-income households, using data tables or bar charts to present this information clearly.
* Slide 7: Call to Action – Recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders, including potential policy solutions that can make childcare more affordable for families.

By using these three mediums, I am confident that I will be able to communicate the critical issue of rising childcare costs to the right audience in a way that is both engaging and actionable. The interactive dashboard allows for deep exploration, the video makes the data relatable and easy to grasp for a general audience, and the PowerPoint provides a structured and formal way to present findings to decision-makers. Together, these mediums will create a strong foundation for advocating for more affordable childcare solutions in the U.S.