Subject: Case submission titled “STRATEGIC CONSUMER CHOICE: A COLLEGE STUDENT’S DILEMMA” to Journal of Critical Incidents (JCI)

Dear Editor:

We are submitting above titled manuscript (Critical Incident and Teaching Notes) for potential publication in the Journal of Critical Incidents. Draft was originally submitted to 35th Annual Summer Case Writers Workshop in 2013 under title “Contemporary Price Comparison Using ANOVA”. Upon their recommendation we split the case into two critical incidents and resubmitted them to MBAA International 2014 Conference. Following are the comments received from the scribe (original scanned copy attached) and our responses to their comments.

Comments on Critical Incident:

1. *Does Peter drive? Include early in CI. Impacts cost. (Recommended)*

Yes, Peter does drive. We have explicitly included this in the second paragraph of critical incident.

1. *University and city do not need to be disguised. (Recommended)*

We would prefer to disguise university name and city in order to protect student identity. We have included the names of retail stores as recommended by summer workshop reviewers.

1. *More personalized hook. Exp. Peter is running out of money. (Required)*

We have rewritten introduction section to create a more personalized hook.

1. *APA format tile for table. (Required)*

We have formatted table according to papers published in JCI. We will be happy to revise if any further changes are required.

1. *Active tense. (Required)*

Original draft submitted to workshop was in active tense. However, we were asked to write and resubmit critical incident in past tense. At MBAA Conference it was recommended that we should write it in Active tense. We have decided not to incorporate this comment but rather wait for Editor’s take on this decision. We will be happy to rewrite case in whichever tense is required.

Comments on Teaching Notes:

1. *Course application-undergraduate level. (Recommended)*

This critical incident is developed based on a project done for a graduate statistical level course. Students who conducted the project and students who attended their presentation provided positive feedback. We believe students, whether graduate or undergraduate, can learn significantly from this critical incident. Finally, course instructors can make appropriate decision whether this incident is suitable to introduce in their class.

1. *Could include statistical techniques or include statistical techniques in CI. (Recommended)*

This critical incident was submitted as a case at summer workshop. Reviewers felt that referring to ANOVA limited its applicability only to statistics courses. They asked us to develop alternative approach to answer questions with ANOVA. One of reviewers at conference felt that without mentioning ANOVA in the incident student may not figure out that this techniques should be used. In some instances this may be true but instructors can guide students to use ANOVA or at least provide some hints.

1. *Tighten/shorten up overview. (Required)*

We shortened the overview from one page to one-half page.

1. *Table 1—is “Total Item” a better title? (Required)*

We changed the Table 1 title to “Retail Store Ranking Based on Prices”

1. *Table 2—5 check table titles + headings. (Required)*

Done.

1. *Table 3—could be used a different significant rates. (Required)*

We have not mentioned any significance in the TN. Normally, for business applications, a significance rate between 1% and 10 % is used with 5% most commonly used. We have mentioned *p values* for all our results in the table. In all our results, significant variables are significant at less than 1% and insignificant variables are insignificant at more than 10%. So the results are valid for any significance level.

1. *TN and CI mention statistical techniques. Then for grad level. (Required)*

Answers to questions 6 and 7 explains why we believe this case can be introduced at graduate level without referring to ANOVA in CI or TN. We will be happy to introduce ANOVA in CI or change the level based on editorial decision.

In addition to these responses, I am also attaching comments from the scribe received at the workshop and our responses submitted for the conference below. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to submit this Critical Incident for consideration by your journal.

With warm regards,

Authors

Dear Conference Editor:

We have submitted case titled “CONTEMPORARY PRICE COMPARISONS USING ANOVA” to *SCR 2013 Summer Case Writer’s Workshop*. One of my co-authors attended the workshop. During workshop it was suggested that case should be split into two critical incidences and submit it to Chicago Annual Meeting (March 2014) and based on conference feedback we should submit it to *Journal of Critical Incidences*. Following their recommendation I am submitting the first critical incident titled “STRATEGIC CONSUMER CHOICE: A COLLEGE STUDENT’S DILEMMA” for upcoming *March 2014 Annual Meeting in Chicago*. You will find 5 files – cover letter, critical incident, teaching notes, this memorandum letter and scribe’s notes — attached with this submission.

In this letter below I have included the *comments we received from workshop (scribe’s notes) in italics* and my responses to those comments. We have tried our best to accommodate all received comments and will appreciate any further opportunity after this conference to revise and submit it to journal.

Comments on Case

1. *Did not know about the Anova technique before read the case, do students have sufficient background in order to utilize the technique? Maybe too narrow, broaden scope so not limited Anova. Put anova as an option for analysis in the teaching note.*

We modified the scope of this case. As you can see from objectives and recommended courses in teaching notes, in addition to statistics this incident is suitable to include in operations management, marketing research, strategic decision making, and buyer behavior courses. In addition to already existing price data, we have added many other factors such as store hours, time and distances to store, unique stores features (ethnic foods) to make decision process multi-dimensional rather than purely focusing on statistical numbers.

ANOVA which was primary focus of technique before is now one of method to answer questions. In the teaching notes we have suggested multiple data analysis techniques to answer question and instructors should encourage students to come up with their own numerical analysis. Thus we have provided flexibility to instructors to introduce this case with or without prior knowledge of ANOVA. But we do expect students to have basic knowledge of statics such as calculating mean and differences.

1. *\*Take anova out of title and critical incident.*

Done. Critical incident is titled “STRATEGIC CONSUMER CHOICE: A COLLEGE STUDENT’S DILEMMA”

1. *\*Written as story problems and not as critical incident. Need to build in the story and the hook. Consider the story being a student or professor who on a budget and wants to figure out where to shop.*

Done. We have introduced character a newly arrived international student Peter, in this critical incident. Peter is extremely busy with coursework and is facing monetary challenges. He is trying to cut down on living expenses mainly grocery bills by deciding where to shop.

1. *\*I thought the grocery store example was more robust than the textbook example. It presented more variance in the food prices to not give away the answer. There are actually two stories here that should be separated into two critical incidents.*

Done. Originally submitted case is spitted into two critical incidences.

1. *Also use the real store names, as the data is publicly available. Consider adding the year the data was collected.*

We have added names of real stores. This has made critical incident more interesting as students can bring their experiences while analyzing case. Instructors should encourage students to visit store websites if they have never been that store.

Data was collected in 2012. As incident is based on story of a real student (name changed in case) year is not included to preserve anonymity. However if the editor insists, we can add the year.

1. *For the one critical incident, present raw data and then the case should be which book store should they buy their books from? Teaching questions could then utilize SPSS/Anova.*

This question refers to second critical incident which is based on textbook selection.

1. *\*May also want to include explanation in teaching note on the different statistical methods and different options for how to solve the issue/problem. Add introduction to anova into the teaching note.*

Done. Please refer to second paragraph of *Question1* answer in this letter. Also in the answer to question written in teaching notes I have explained what is purpose of ANOVA and where this techniques is useful. I have also added couple of statistics books for reference to ANOVA technique.

1. *\*Consider adding marketing research, management information systems to the list of courses.*

Done. Please refer to first paragraph of *Question1* answer in this letter.

1. *\*Need to format case and teaching note according to guidelines and example from pre-conference workshop.*

Done. Let us know if any other changes that need to be made.

1. *\*Need past tense throughout the incident.*

Done wherever it is appropriate.

1. *Need conclusion (ending hook) that reflects the new hook (i.e., story)*

We have added interesting conclusion where newly arrived international student Peter with all his financial constrains and time limitations searching for suitable grocery shopping options.

Comments on teaching notes

1. *Add question—which technique to use and why? What are the options for analysis and which one is best to use? Then go into Anova as particular analysis. Could build up from simple statistical analysis to the complex.*

We have suggested multiple data analysis techniques to answer question asked in the incident. Techniques range from simple requiring basic knowledge of ranking, differences and means to more complex involving ANOVA. We are asking instructors to encourage students to come up with their own numerical analysis method. As recommended, we have provided flexibility to instructors to introduce this case with or without prior knowledge of ANOVA. .

1. *How could you analyze or compare prices? How price elastic are you? Questions on price versus convenience? What decision criteria could someone use to decide on a grocery story? Add more than just skill based questions. Some of these should be in additional issues, not necessarily in the teaching note objectives/questions. For example, put information on distance to the stores in additional issues and state that is something else that an instructor could do for the analysis. Hours of operation would also be treated this way.*

We modified the scope of this case. Character of Peter, recently arrived international student, who is facing monetary, constrains and time limitations, is introduced. In addition to already existing price data, we have added many other factors such as store hours, time and distances to store, unique stores features (ethnic foods) to make decision process multi-dimensional rather than purely focusing on statistical numbers. Questions and objectives are modified accordingly. This incident is now suitable to introduce in many other courses apart from statistics.

1. *Can make questions about the rankings and have them do the ranking analysis.*

Done. In the previous version of case students were provided with ranking table and were asked to find cheaper grocery shopping options based on table. In addition we have asked them to perform more complex analysis using ANOVA. In this incident we are suggesting instructors to ask them to find best shopping options based on any data analysis. If this case is introduced in courses other than statistics or without prior knowledge of statistics, students can perform ranking analysis and provide their recommendation. In statistics courses or in courses where students had prior knowledge of statistic they can perform ANOVA. Both these approaches and solution is provided in teaching notes.

1. *In teaching note, you asked about the difference between branded and loose items? Illustrates how students can do two way Anova. Use the word “bulk” instead of “loose items.” May need to define what bulk means.*

Done. Word ‘bulk’ is used instead of ‘loose items’. Since we have broaden the scope of incident to introduce in non-statistical courses we are not referring ANOVA or any particular statistical techniques in case. Instead we are encouraging instructors to let students come up with various possibilities of data analysis. We have provided the instructors multiple solution approaches (with or without ANOVA) as well as references to know more about ANOVA technique. Instructor should share or provide students with references (chapter on ANOVA) as deemed necessary based on course.

1. *Paragraph description and citation for where to find more information on the technique of Anova.*

While writing answers to question in teaching notes I have provided information about purpose and usefulness of ANOVA technique. At the end of teaching notes additional references to learn more about ANOVA are provided.

We have tried our best to answer all comments received during workshop. We truly appreciate feedback received which has made this incident more interesting and adaptable to many different courses. We are looking forward for any further feedback during or after conference to submit it for potential journal publication.

Thank you.

Author