

### **Book Review**

**K.A.P. Siddhisena, Introduction to Data Analysis, 2017 November, 192 pp, ISBN: 978-955-38548-0-3, SLRs 400.00.**

The book titled “**Introduction to Data Analysis**” published in Sinhala language, provides a clear comprehension of methods and techniques of the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. For this purpose, the author of the book, Professor K.A.P. Siddhisena, has correctly pointed out that it is vital to have an authentic knowledge on the use and misuse of data, differences of types of data, methods of data collection, and to learn cleaning, editing, coding, or in general, processing of primary data, and appraise the secondary data within quantitative and qualitative data perspectives, prior to analysis of data being carried out. In the above context, this is an impressive and important book for researchers (specially, in demography and other socio-economic areas), academics, students and administrative managers administrators who handle both quantitative and/or qualitative data for research, higher studies and decision making for efficient management.

The book is simple and analytical in the range of its scholarship. The author has shown his vast experience and knowledge gained in conducting research and field surveys on demography and other allied socio-economic fields through handling and managing primary and secondary data, and quantitative and qualitative data by citing appropriate examples to explain theoretical facts and figures. Thus, he has used applied statistics and user-friendly software package such as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to illustrate how the data processing and analysis could be carried out smoothly and in an elegant way.

The book consists of eight Chapters presented in logical sequence, underpinning definition, and differentiation of data and information to processing and analysis of data. In Chapter 1, the author lucidly defines and also differentiates the data and information, and the basis of data analysis. Chapter 2 discusses the importance in understanding the use and misuse of data which is immensely useful for empirical research and efficient decision-making. Data analysis depends on the types of data, and thus Chapter 3 is exclusively devoted to identifying and understanding the differences between types of data, such as quantitative versus qualitative data, primary versus secondary data, and continuous versus discrete data etc. The sources of data and various methods of data collection with their pros and cons are substantively discussed in Chapter 4, whilst Chapter 5 presents how to process the collected data by making consistent checkup, editing, coding, classification and imputation of raw data by using SPSS package. Undoubtedly, it is of paramount importance to explain such data processing procedures before starting primary data analysis. Nevertheless, it is also important to discuss how to manipulate secondary data in exploring the methods of appraisal of secondary data, which is lacking in this Chapter. Chapter 6 explores the analytical methods and techniques for quantitative and qualitative data analysis by

illustrating appropriate examples. In order to simplify some calculations for quantitative data analysis at univariate, bivariate and multivariate level, the SPSS applications are illustrated. It is worthwhile to note that the nature of variables and types of data which are employed to explore quantitative data are summarized in table format and therefore even new comers for data analysis could learn the correct multivariate and econometric techniques based on the nature of dependent and independent variables. The various methods of data presentation with examples are described in Chapter 7, whilst based on data analysis and presentation of data, the methods for report writing are elaborated in Chapter 8.

The bottom line is, this is a well written and valuable book. The author has contributed numerous methods and materials of data, data collection and analysis, in a simple way so that even a novice interested in carrying out quantitative as well as qualitative data analysis can understand. However, it would have been useful to discuss hypothesis testing, which is also imperative in data analysis processes, and indicate more illustrations from SPSS, which could have been included in the Data Analysis Chapter.

Despite the above noted minor comments, this book is certainly a good resource and can be strongly recommended for researchers, academics and students who handle both quantitative and/or qualitative data for their research and higher studies.

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7<sup>th</sup> May 2018.