



Contents

Manisha Karia 1
 Structure of papers 3
 Pie charts 5
 Conferences 9
 Research outputs 10

Featured researcher: Manisha Karia



While there are a number of factors that influence an entrepreneur's performance, I examined the impact of entrepreneurs' personality characteristics and self-efficacy on their behaviours in the context of information overload. Like business managers, entrepreneurs are also information-dependent at various stages of the entrepreneurship process, from opportunity-seeking through to starting a business venture, and also sustaining it. Despite the problems associated with information overload on human performance, research on how information overload impacts entrepreneurship is scarce and, to the best of my knowledge, has not been empirically tested. This study

attempts to address this critical issue. The results showed evidence of relationships between the constructs proposed in the model, which enhances our understanding of the antecedents of entrepreneurial behaviours.

The study highlighted:

- that personality characteristics and entrepreneurial self-efficacy were related to some of the entrepreneurial behavioural activities
- the need for examining specific dimensions that exist within the broad entrepreneurial constructs
- that information overload does challenge entrepreneurs and affects their self-efficacy and their ability to undertake some entrepreneurial activities
- the need for training programmes for specific self-efficacy dimension areas to help both potential and practising entrepreneurs to strengthen those capabilities.

- the need for more specific tools and flexible software to assist entrepreneurs in managing information, giving them more confidence in their ability to manage entrepreneurial tasks.
- It is hoped that this research in the area of entrepreneurial information overload will generate interest among researchers and serve as an impetus to conduct more in-depth analysis in this area.
- To date, research outputs from this study have been presented at two international conferences: the Business and Information Technologies Conference/Workshop at the University of Auckland, and the Academy of International Business Conference at IIM, Bangalore. Both were well received.



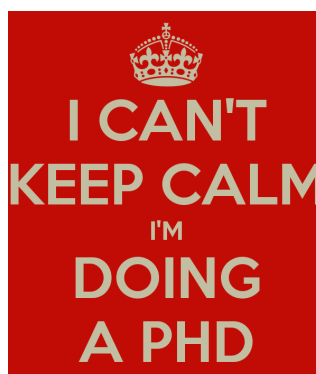
My thoughts on this PhD journey

Very rarely have I come across someone say, "It was easy!". I knew it was meant to be hard and there were times when I almost gave up and thought, "What use is a PhD?" While colleagues and friends of mine have labelled a PhD as 'permanent head damage' and 'poor and hungry doctors', I secretly wished I had studied to be an MD 'money making doctor'. However, I must add it was a very rewarding experience and one that I would suggest anyone in the teaching field should embark on.

Why should you do a PhD? While having a PhD definitely helps in progressing in a teaching career, there are many good reasons why it is worthwhile doing a doctorate. For me personally, it helped me improve myself; it fed my curiosity and pushed me to understand concepts, discover new linkages between concepts, and learn to articulate better. Overall it was a very excited feeling when I was able to achieve the challenging goals of completing each milestone.

Tips to surviving PhD studies

While there are many websites and university webpages that give tips to completing a successful doctoral thesis, we have to find what works for us the best. Here are just



some tips that worked for me:

Get on with it: I had trouble starting. It looks hard but once we start, there is a good possibility that we will complete it.

Supervisor: Getting a knowledgeable supervisor is very important. It is a long journey. So, it is good to get not only an experienced supervisor but also an empathetic supervisor.

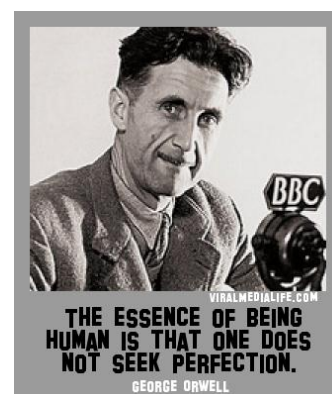
Networking and support: I believe that having a good network and team of supervisors helps a lot. Talking to fellow doctoral candidates makes you feel you are not alone on this journey. I spoke to everybody (domestic and international) that I thought could help me – friends, colleagues and even family. My networks helped with things like childcare, being my listening board, and in fact, my entire data collection was possible because of their support. Talk to your family about your studies; it will surprise you how they can help.

Attending conferences: Attend a few conferences related to your discipline and, if possible, attend the doctoral colloquiums. In my case, this helped me change the focus of my thesis.

Not trying for perfection: There is no perfect thesis. The sooner I came to terms with that, it was easier to see that the thesis could be completed. This document is only the beginning and there is a lot more to come. My supervisor always told me that the journal articles from the thesis will provide evidence of quality of contribution to the literature.

The best tip I received to complete my PhD studies is to work on it every day. Chug along slowly and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

“Attend a few conferences related to your discipline and, if possible, attend the doctoral colloquiums.”



“... you are interpreting your results in the context of the literature you cited in the introduction.”

SO WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN ?

Captions are supposed to be independent of the text, that is, a reader should be able to understand the contents of the table without having to read the entire paper. A large collection of numbers is hard to understand, so in a conference paper it is often better to use a graphical representation of the results than a table. The text of the results describes the results but does not interpret them, so results sections can be quite short. You can describe any analyses of results you did in the results section.

The *discussion* in many ways mirrors the introduction, because you are interpreting your results in the context of the literature you cited in the introduction. You are also answering your research questions, identifying any potential shortcomings in your approach, and suggesting future lines of research. In other words, the discussion is where you bring together all of the other sections of your

paper. A well-written discussion eliminates the need for a conclusion.

Write succinctly; don't spend a lot of time saying something that can be explained by a reference. When I started writing conference papers in the late 90s, they were limited to four to six pages because conference proceedings were all on paper. Now conference proceedings are digital, the page limits tend to be longer, closer to eight pages. But this is the limit, not the recommended number of pages. It's like the speed limit on the roads – the speed limit is the fastest you are allowed to drive, not the minimum speed you should be driving at all times. Just as you adjust your driving speed to the conditions, you should adjust the length of your paper to the material you are presenting: it is better to produce a succinctly written, clear and to-the-point four-page conference paper than it is to produce an eight-page paper that covers the same work but buries the important points among pages of padding.

Every sentence in a conference paper needs to tell a story. So if a sentence doesn't contribute something to

the paper, take it out. Avoid common grammatical errors, and don't rely on a spell-checker. Spell-checkers only tell you if a word is incorrectly spelt; it doesn't tell you if it is the wrong word for that sentence (I've seen quite enough instances of a "pubic announcement", which sounds far ruder than what I assume they meant, which was a "public announcement"). Proofread the paper at least twice and, if English is not your first language, for goodness sake get a native English speaker to read it. English grammar is bad enough for us native speakers, and has so many traps in it (especially with things like past / present / future tense, and correctly using "the") that errors are almost inevitable. Grammatical errors jar the reader out of the flow of the work and, if that happens often enough, they will lose the thread of the paper and not understand what you are trying to communicate.

Researchers in computer science can do good research, and are able to write good software. There is no reason they should not be able to also write good conference papers.

I don't judge people based on race, creed, colour or gender.

I judge people based on spelling, grammar, punctuation and sentence structure.

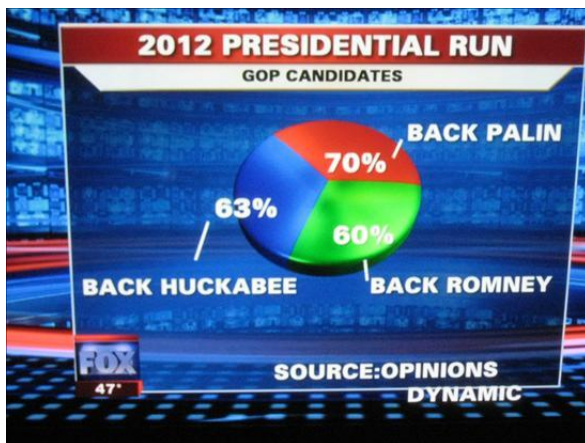


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Pie charts

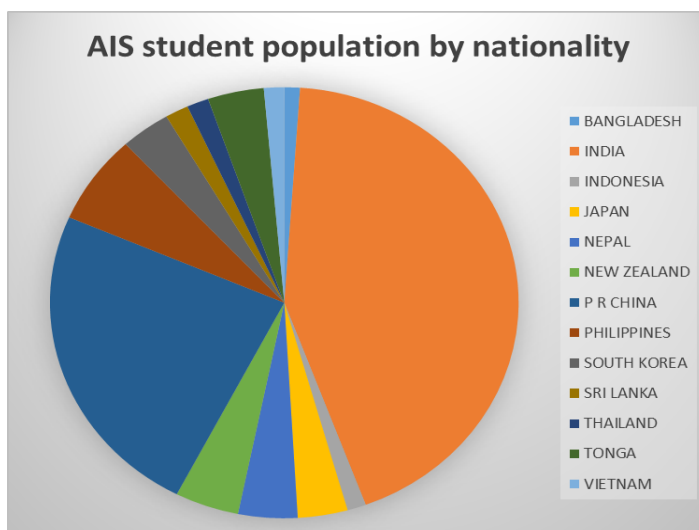
In the last issue we looked at bar charts and line graphs as types of graphics that can be used for presenting data in research reports. Here we look at another type: pie charts. As for bar charts and line graphs, if you input the data into Microsoft Excel, it will draw the graphic for you; however, it cannot tell you whether a pie chart is the correct graphic to use in the circumstances. You have to select the correct graphic, and it depends on the type of data, and what you want the graphic to show.

The important feature of pie charts is that they clearly show percentages that add up to a whole (100%). An infamous example of this going wrong was the following pie chart (from Kosara, 2010) from a Fox News report about people's preferences for the US Republican Party candidates in the 2012 presidential election.



The problem here was that the percentages (70, 63, 60) do not add up to 100%, and it is not clear what the whole is. In fact, people could express preferences for more than one candidate, so the categories are not mutually exclusive, but overlap. As a result, the chart makes no sense, and is uninterpretable.

Once you can clearly identify what the whole is, and that the components add up to that whole, then a pie chart is relatively simple. For instance, here is a pie chart of the composition of AIS students according to nationality. So, the whole is the total AIS student population, and the components are the various nationalities (with more than ten students), expressed as percentages of the whole. (There are certain design problems, which will be discussed below.)

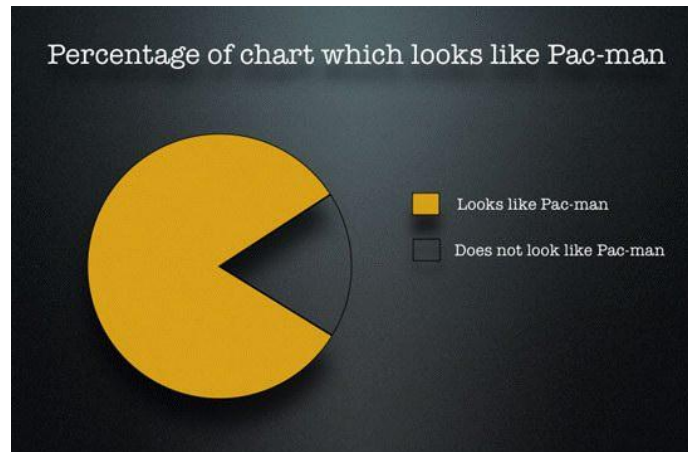


What follows is various tips for designing pie charts.

Labels

As for all types of graphic, two things should be clearly labelled:

1. the whole graphic should be given a title (*AIS student population by nationality*)
2. each component should be labelled (*Bangladesh, India, etc*)



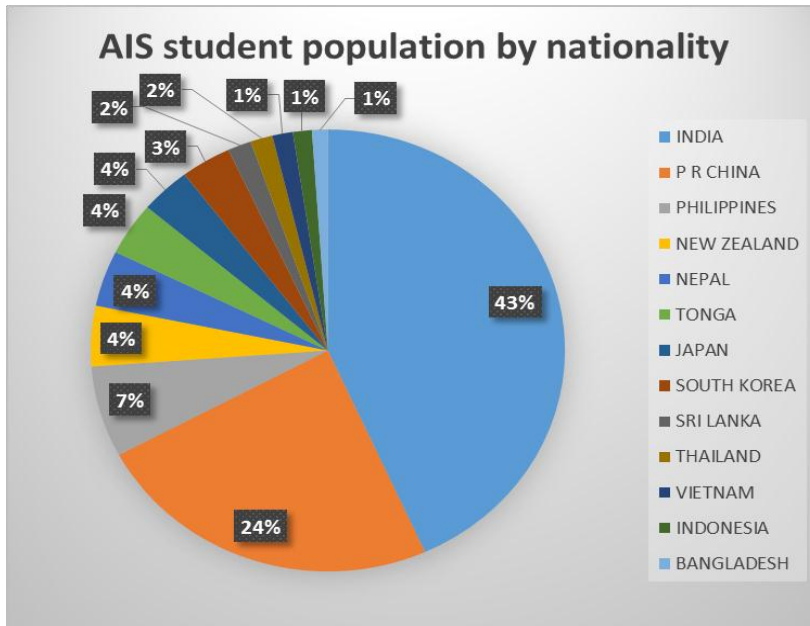
Values

Is it obvious, solely by looking at the size of the segments, whether there are more Nepalese (light blue) or Tongan (rust) students at AIS? Probably not. So, it is usually worthwhile adding the absolute values and/or the percentages to the segments (in fact, there are 38 Nepalese and 36 Tongan students).

Order

In what order should the segments be? If the segments are in a clear natural order, then that should be used, eg times of day. However, for nationalities, there is no natural order. Failing all else, alphabetical order could be used (this was used above). However, for pie charts, segments are usually put in descending order of size; that is, important segments are put first, then smaller ones. Similarly, many people follow the unwritten rule that the largest segments should start at 12 o'clock, with subsequent segments following in clockwise fashion.

The following graphic incorporates the last two refinements.



Colours

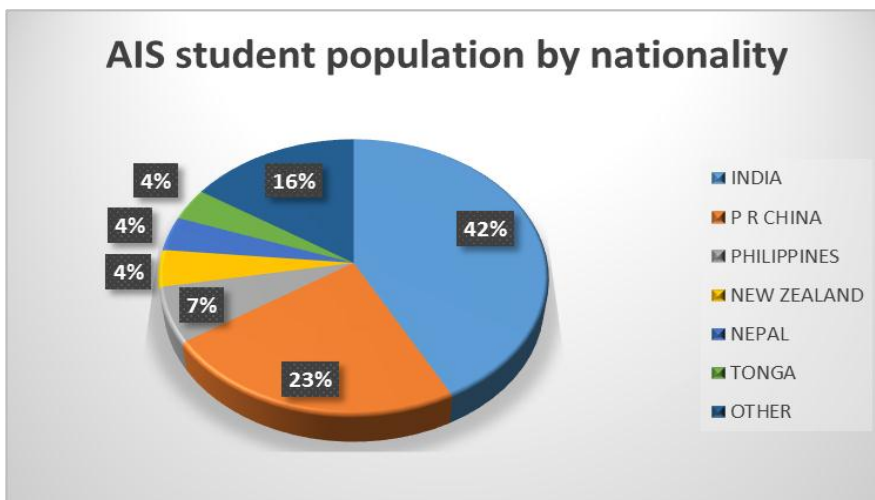
Microsoft Excel automatically adds colours to the segments. This is fine, provided your final version is going to be displayed or printed in colour. If not, then the various colours will appear as different shades of grey, and you should check that they can be distinguished. Both colours and shading can be adjusted. Some writers (eg University of Leicester, n.d.) suggest that you should start with the largest segment having the darkest shading, with increasing lighter shades for smaller segments.

How many segments?

How many segments can your pie chart contain? A realistic answer is in the region of six segments. If more segments are included, then the extra segments are small, often only representing 1 or 2% of the total (as in the previous graphic). In short, the extra ones are relatively insignificant. In such cases, it makes sense to group the small, insignificant ones, and call them "Other".

3D

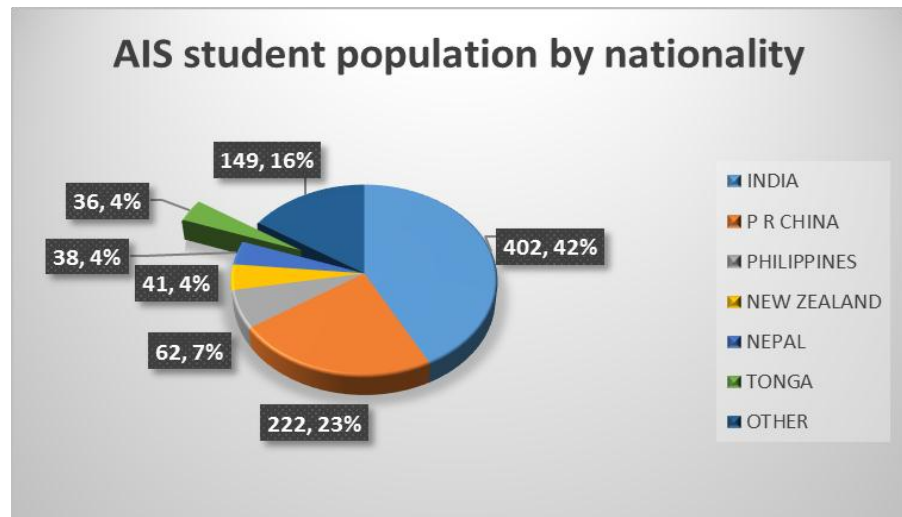
Which is more attractive: two-dimensional or three-dimensional?



Most people answer that three-dimensional is far more attractive. Both 2D and 3D are equally easy to produce in Microsoft Excel. So, why not make your pie charts 3D?

Exploded pie charts

If you are particularly interested in, say, the Tongan students at AIS, then the following pie chart would be appropriate.

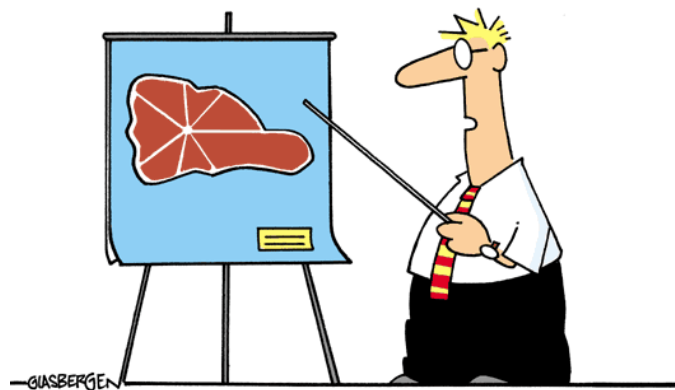


Notice that the Tongan segment has been pulled out of the pie, in order to draw attention to it.

Conclusion

To reiterate, Microsoft Excel can take inputted data and produce attractive graphics. However, it cannot tell you which graphic is the best one to use in the circumstances. The important feature of pie charts is that the segments represent percentages of the whole 100%.

Kosara, R. (2010). *Understanding pie charts*. Eager Eyes: Visualization and Visual Communication. Retrieved from eagereyes.org/techniques/pie-charts
 University of Leicester (n.d.). *Pie charts*. Retrieved from www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld/resources/numerical-data/pie-charts



“At the request of those who are following a low-carb diet, my pie chart has been replaced by a steak chart.”

Conferences

- 1 - 4 July 2015
International Conference on Information Technology and Applications (ICITA 2015)
Hilton Hotel, Sydney
www.icita.org
- 6 - 9 July 2015
HERDSA Higher Education Conference 2015
Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre
herdsa2015.org
- 8 - 11 July 2015
16th Tonga Research Association Conference, Nukualofa, Tonga.
Positioning Tonga for the future
asinatesamate@gmail.com
- 13 - 17 July 2015
17th Biennial Conference of Teachers and Teaching
University of Auckland
isatt2015.com
- 15 August 2015
THEIRES-International conference on Economics and Social Sciences (ICISS)
Rendezvous Hotel, Melbourne
theires.org/Conference/Australia/ICISS/
- 16 August 2015
THEIRES-International Conference on Science, Technology and Management(ICSTM)
Rendezvous Hotel, Melbourne
theires.org/Conference/Australia/ICSTM/
- 13 September 2015
ISER- International Conference on Economics and Business Research (ICEBR-2015)
Hilton Hotel, Sydney
iser.co/conference/Australia/ICEBR/
- 29 September - 2 October 2015
3rd National Wildlife Tourism Conference
Mercure Hotel, Geelong, Victoria
www.wildlifetourism.org.au/blog/wildlife-tourism-conference-2015/
- 6 - 9 November 2015
Computing and Information Technology Research and Education New Zealand (CITRENZ) conference
"Inspirational computing education"
Rydges Hotel, Queenstown
conference.citrenz.ac.nz
- 17 November 2015
AdTech (for marketers in media and brand advertising)
AUT Business School
www.ad-tech.co.nz/
- 17 - 19 November 2015
Global Eco Asia-Pacific Tourism Conference
Rottneest Island, Western Australia
www.globaleco.com.au/
- 23 - 25 November 2015
32nd International Business Research Conference
Rendezvous Hotel, Melbourne
ausconfo.com/
- 1 - 4 December 2015
26th ISANA (International Student Advisers' Network of Australasia) International Education Association Conference
Collaborations in providing services to international students
Pullman on the Park, Melbourne
www.isanaconference.com
- 30 December 2015
THEIIR-28th International Conference on Advances in Business Management and Information Technology (ICABMIT)
Rendezvous Hotel, Melbourne
theiir.org/Conference/Australia/2/ICABMIT/index.php
- 31 December 2015
IASTEM-6th International Conference on Economics and Business Management (ICEBM)
Rendezvous Hotel, Melbourne
Website: <http://iastem.org/Conference/Australia/ICEBM/>
- 18 - 20 January 2016
Centre for Research in International Education (CRIE) conference
Trends and issues in international education
Auckland Institute of Studies
crie.org.nz/conferences.htm
- 25 - 27 January 2016
13th Finance, Business & Banking symposium
Sofitel on Collins, Melbourne
fbb-symposium.review-gjsg.com
- 24 - 25 February 2014
World Business and Economics Research Conference
Rendezvous Hotel, Auckland
www.newzealandconfo.com/

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1 - 4 July 2016
International Conference on
Information Technology and
Applications (ICITA 2016)
Hilton Hotel, Sydney
www.icita.org/2016/

14-17 July 2016
CLESOL (Community Languages and
ESOL)
University of Waikato
www.clesol.org.nz

Research outputs by AIS staff

- Ali, E., deSilva, K., Khan, R. & Parvin, S.** (2015). *A study on the mental health of international students in New Zealand*. Auckland: Asian Health Foundation.
- Brown, A.** (2015). The practical and psychological transition to e-textbooks. Presentation at the 24th AMIC (Asian Media Information and Communication) Annual Conference, American University in Dubai, 10-13 June.
- Spring, J.** (2015). Caught in the crossfire: Using participant observation to research guided tours. In M. Lück, J. Velvin, & B. Eisenstein (Eds.) *The social side of tourism: The interface between tourism, society, and the environment* (pp. 127-140). Frankfurt, Germany: Peter Lang Verlag.
- Taumoepau, S.** (2015). Air transport linkages in the Pacific. Presentation at CAUTHE Specialist Conference, AUT University, 14-16 April.
- Taumoepau, S.** (2015). Positioning Tonga as a desirable tourism destination in the Pacific. Presentation at Tonga Research Association Conference, Queen Salote College, Nukualofa, Tonga, 8-10 July.
- Taumoepau, S., Penrose, G. and Towner, N.** (2015.) Tonga accreditation and quality star rating of accommodation facilities. Presentation at APacChrie Conference, ANZ Viaduct Events Centre, Auckland, 10-12 June.

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The AIS research newsletter (ISSN 2357-2426) aims to establish and foster collegial partnerships in common research interests, through high quality research outputs and sharing research ideas and resources. Correspondence about the newsletter should be sent to Christine Edwards at the above address, or email christinee@ais.ac.nz. The editors are Dr Adam Brown (adamb@ais.ac.nz), Dr Ershad Ali (ershada@ais.ac.nz), and Rubaiyet Khan (rubaiyetk@ais.ac.nz).