2018

Strategies Taxicab Owners Use to Sustain Their Operations in a Competitive Environment

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2018

Abstract

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by

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MBA, Ashford University, 2015

BS, Penn Foster College, 2013

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

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April 2018

Abstract

Taxicab owners are losing market share to technology companies including Sidecars, Lyft, and Uber. Whereas Uber is growing rapidly, operating in over 150 U.S. cities and 58 countries with an estimated market valuation of $62.5 billion, taxicab owners have experienced a significant decline in growth because of a deficiency of business strategies. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. A purposive sampling of 6 taxicab owners and managers from 6 taxicab companies in Denver County, Colorado participated in semistructured face-to-face interviews. Data from the interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed to ascertain themes relating to business strategies that sustain taxicab operations. Methodological triangulation was used to validate data during the analysis process. Drawing from Christensen's disruptive innovation theory, 5 main themes emerged. The 5 main themes included excellent customer service, competitive strategies, market research, adaptation to technological and cultural changes, and training. Findings showed that successful taxicab business strategies included (a) providing effective customers services, (b) formulating and using efficient competitive strategies; (c) establishing appropriate training for drivers and employees; (d) conducting market research to ascertain market trends; and (e) adapting to the dynamics of technological and cultural changes to satisfy customers' requirements. The implication for positive social change includes taxicab business owners formulating effective business strategies, thereby improving the economic well-being of local communities.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to my loving mother, Christolite Baidoo and my Uncle John Baidoo who took care of my needs throughout my younger age, when all hope had dissipated. I also dedicate this study to my beautiful wife Shelia Evans Appah, my adorable kids Isiah, Ezekiel and Britney for their comprehension, absolute love, and supports. By the grace of God, I have leaped over the wall of limitation and underachievement. I pass the mantle to you to pursue and overcome. Accomplishing this milestone is a symptomatic of the fact that with God everything is achievable. It takes prayer, hard work, planning, commitment, and perseverance to see the fruition of one`s labor. I also dedicate this work to my pastor, Jake Aryee and my mother-in-law Alma Catholic for their moral supports and encouragement.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my thoughtful appreciation to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for sailing me through these waters. It would not have been a possibility to complete this study without the relentless guidance, encouragement, and immense support from my doctoral committee. First, I would like to express my sincere thanks to my committee chair, Dr. Roger Mayer, second committee member, Dr. David Harris, and my URR, Dr. Rocky Dwyer for their supports and constructive feedback. I extend my special thanks to Dr. Godfred Adomako, Dr. Rebecca Attah, and Dr. Robert Oppong for their supports. My special appreciation goes to Mr. Joseph Amos, Pastor Anderson, and my siblings for their moral support.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Taxicabs are crucial to the U.S. public transportation network. The taxicab industry provided approximately 233,700 jobs in the United States in 2014 (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2016). The massive transformation that occurred in urban life, as well as the continuing evolution of mass transit vehicles in the 20th century helped facilitate the development of the taxicab (Posen, 2015). Employment of taxi drivers will grow 13% by 2024 (BLS, 2016). However, the emergence of technology startups poses a challenge to the taxicab business because many taxicab passengers are switching to technology startups such as Uber and Lyft (Posen, 2015).

Background of the Problem

Taxicab businesses are an integral part of the U.S. transportation infrastructure by providing citizens a feasible mode of transportation. However, technological innovations impact the survival of this business model. The advent of ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft continues to have an adverse impact on the taxicab business with many passengers switching to their competitors (Posen, 2015). The scarcity of adequate strategies to sustain operations makes it difficult for taxicab owners to match their rivals. Researchers have conducted diverse studies to help modify and reshape the taxicab industry (Harding, Kandlikar, & Gulati, 2016; Liu, Ni, & Krishnan, 2014). Generally, the intents of these modifications were to regulate the taxicab industry to protect passengers (Shi & Lian, 2016). Taken together, the objectives of these studies were to examine and determine how regulations and technological advancement minimize taxicab-related misconduct, and to foster competence. While the researchers who conducted these studies focused on regulations, they failed to show the taxicab owners how to sustain their operations.

Furthermore, various researchers have carried out studies on restructuring taxicab services (Al-Ayyash, Abou-Zeid, & Kaysi, 2016; Cusumano, 2015; Egan & Jakob, 2016). However, these researchers did not address the strategies needed for taxicab owners to sustain their operations. The scarcity of strategies to sustain operations in the taxicab industry is critically affecting the taxicab business. Taxi medallions, which were valued at up to $1.3 million in 2013, are rapidly declining in value (Cusumano, 2015). Taxicab owners need to reconsider their strategies (Zhang, He, Lin, Munir, & Stankovic, 2015).

The various efforts to restructure and systematize taxicab businesses testifies to the inefficiencies in strategy within the taxi industry (Tay & Choi, 2016). Against this background, further research into strategies to compete to bolster the financial performance of taxicab businesses is necessary (Bai, Atkin, & Kendall, 2014). Taxicab owners need to devise strategies that will allow them to compete with their ride-sharing counterparts (Cusumano, 2015). The scarcity of research on such strategies creates a grave discrepancy in analyzing the strategies to sustain operations in the taxicab businesses.

Problem Statement

Taxicab owners are losing market share to technology startup companies including Sidecars, Lyft, and Uber (Anderson, 2014). Whereas Uber is growing rapidly, operating in over 150 U.S. cities and 58 countries with an estimated market valuation of

$62.5 billion, taxicab owners have experienced a significant decline in growth because of a deficiency of business strategies (Detsky & Garber, 2016). The general business problem is that taxicab owners risk going out of business due to a deficiency of business strategies to sustain their operations. The specific business problem is that some taxicab owners lack business strategies to sustain their operations.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. The targeted population consisted of the owners of six taxicab businesses in Denver, Colorado who had used business strategies to sustain their operations. The implications for positive social change included the potential for taxicab owners to develop sustainability strategies in a competitive environment. Taxicab owners with successful strategies could increase employment opportunities for unemployed citizens and improve the economic wellbeing of local communities.

Nature of the Study

McCusker and Gunaydin (2015) noted that researchers use three primary research methods including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method. Qualitative researchers explore the *what*, *how,* and *why* of a phenomenon (Riazi & Candlin, 2014). Using the qualitative research method enables researchers to explore social phenomena, situations, and processes using multiple sources of data (Hazzan & Nutov 2014). Employing a qualitative research method allowed me to obtain an in-depth understanding of my business problem by using different data collection techniques. Quantitative researchers examine relationships among numeric variables and test hypotheses (Ma, 2015). Mixed method researchers use both quantitative and qualitative components in a single study (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). I did not use the quantitative or mixed method because the purpose of this study was not to examine relationships among variables or to test a hypothesis, but to explore a business phenomenon.

While there are many qualitative research designs, I considered only case study, ethnography, and phenomenology. Researchers use a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the what, how, and why of a bounded system (Yin, 2014; Zhang, 2014). Using a case study provides methodological flexibility through the integration of diverse paradigms, study designs, and techniques (Hyett, Kenny, & Kickson-Swift, 2014). Ethnographic researchers focus on the culture and work to interpret the cultural behaviors of a group (Desmond, 2014). A phenomenological design is useful when the researcher wants to explore the meanings of individuals' lived experiences. I selected neither an ethnographic nor a phenomenological design because I was not studying the culture of a group or the lived experiences of individuals. The focus of this study was on exploring business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations in a competitive environment. Using a case study design helped facilitate my exploration of a bounded system using multiple data collection methods (see Yin, 2014). Therefore, the case study design was appropriate to address my research question.

Research Question

What business strategies do taxicab owners use to sustain their operations?

Interview Questions

1. What are the competitive issues that affect your operations?
2. What business strategies do you use to sustain your operations?
3. How do you implement these business strategies to sustain your operations?
4. How do you convey the business strategies to gain buy-in from all stakeholders?
5. What are some of the difficulties you encounter in carrying out these business strategies?
6. How have you addressed the effectiveness of the strategies to sustain your operations?
7. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies you use to sustain your operations?
8. Please share additional information related to business strategies you use to sustain your operations.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the study was Christensen's 1997 disruptive innovation theory. Christensen (1997) introduced the disruptive innovation theory to explain the phenomenon by which an innovation changes a prevailing market. The term *disruptive technology* predates the term *disruptive innovation*, which Christensen introduced to encompass both services and products (Čiutienė & Thattakath, 2014). Christensen identified the following key constructs underlying the theory: (a) simplicity, (b) affordability, (c) accessibility, and (d) convenience. The disruptive innovation framework is well suited for explaining why companies succeed or fail when responding to disruptive innovations (Karimi & Walter, 2015). The disruptive innovation theory was appropriate for this study because the underlying four constructs were useful for effectively gaining an in-depth understanding of business strategies that taxicab owners use to sustain their operations.

Operational Definitions

Entrepreneur: An entrepreneur is an individual who bears the risk of buying resources at certain prices and offering goods or services at uncertain prices (Szeman, 2014).

Competitive advantage: Competitive advantage refers to obtaining a unique position relative to competitors that enable a business to consistently do better than its rivals (Bilgihan & Wang, 2016).

Strategy: Strategy creates the direction and the scope for an organization (de Salas & Huxley, 2014).

Taxi drivers: Taxi drivers, also referred to as cab drivers or cabbies, typically use a meter to ascertain the fare when a customer requests a destination (BLS, 2016).

Wildcat cars: Wildcat cars refers to unlicensed taxicabs driven by laid-off workers that accompanied the great depression (Posen, 2015).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions in research refer to basic perceptions that are seemingly true but difficult to substantiate (Paechter, 2013). Despite this difficulty, a researcher believes an assumption to be true or valid for purpose of the study (Valentin, 2014). In this study, I made three fundamental assumptions. The first assumption was that a qualitative methodology was an appropriate methodology to explore the factors related to the study. The second assumption was that the respondents would provide honest responses and that the participant's responses were accurate and complete. The purposeful selection of participants for this study came from my assumption that the participants possessed valuable information about and had experiences with strategies to sustain their operations in a competitive environment. Third, I assumed that taxicab owners would be able to describe the strategies they used to sustain their operations and that the taxicab owners presented accurate accounts of the strategies they used to sustain their operations.

Limitations

Limitations refer to elements of a study beyond a researcher’s control (Paechter, 2013; Yin, 2014). Limitations include general methodological problems that may present quandaries (Gorylev, Tregubova, & Kurbatov, 2015). In this study, participant may not have offered comments about best practices. Also, technology may change (e.g., driverless cars) in such a way that might limit the value of this study’s results.

Delimitations

Delimitations refer to the boundaries of a study based on choices an investigator makes (Paechter, 2013). The delimitation of the study included the taxicab industry and excluded other transportation industries. I focused on the taxicab industry because taxicab business owners face stiff competition from the ride-sharing services. Another delimitation was location. The participants for the study worked in one geographic area, Denver, Colorado; thus, the results might not reflect the taxicab industry worldwide.

Significance of the Study

Taxicab owners and society at large could benefit from this study. First, the results of the study could contribute to the body of entrepreneurial knowledge to benefit both current and future taxicab owners. In addition, the findings may contribute to positive social change by enabling taxicab owners to achieve a long-term sustainable growth, generate employment, reducing poverty, and enhance the economic well-being of local communities.

Contribution to Business Practice

Taxicab owners could benefit from the results of this study by using them to formulate a well-organized business strategy to sustain their operations in a competitive environment. Moreover, the study could complement the body of literature concerning the efficient operation of taxicab businesses. The discoveries from this study might be useful for improving strategies for running taxicab businesses. Inefficiency in management contributes to the poor performance of business (Stehlik, 2014). Productive strategies might transform the operation of taxicab businesses. Taxicab owners may use the study to adopt best business practices to avoid insolvency and facilitate profitability.

Implications for Social Change

Society could benefit from the results of this study. Taxicab owners might make positive contributions to society by providing jobs to unemployed citizens. Improving taxicab services could boost the economy, reduce poverty, and improve the economic wellbeing of citizens. A good transportation system helps reduce poverty (Porter, 2014). Efficient taxicab services might improve social conditions. Taxicab business owners could create affordable transportation options that allow people to live a full personal and work life. A profitable business could produce income that could help support taxicab business owners and their families. Owners of taxicab businesses might contribute substantially to Denver's accessibility and provide a comprehensive service across numerous social groups and urban environments. The findings and recommendations in this study might help taxicab business owners formulate effective business strategies, thereby improving the economic wellbeing of local communities.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

A researcher carries out a literature review to assess a body of writing relating to a specific topic. A literature review could be useful in facilitating clarification of existing information from the previous research and may also enhance additional scholarly contributions regarding the specified topic (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. The central research question for the study was: What strategies do taxicab owners use to sustain their operations? To answer the research question and find solutions to the problem, it was imperative that I explored the literature relating to the established theory and the topic.

I conducted the literature review to develop a comprehensive critical analysis and synthesis of the literature related to the conceptual framework of disruptive innovation. Further, I thoroughly analyzed and synthesized the existing body of knowledge about the strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. I used peer-reviewed journals as well as other scholarly sources for the literature review. The sources listed in Table 1 include government publications, peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and dissertations. Of the 210 sources that I used in this study, 199 (95%) are peer-reviewed, and 206 (98%) were published within 5 years of my anticipated date of completion in 2018. I gathered the literature using databases I accessed via the Walden University Library including SAGE Premier, ABI/FORMS Complete, ScienceDirect, and Emerald Management. I gathered additional peer-reviewed articles from search engines outside the Walden University Library such as the Google Scholar.

The primary search terms that I employed as keywords includes *ride-sharing, business strategy, competitive advantage, sustainability, technology start-ups, differentiation strategy, low-cost strategy, focus strategy, service convenience,* and *quality of service*. In the following subsections, I begin with an analysis of literature on disruptive innovation, the historical context of disruptive innovation, disruptive innovation application, and recommendations for using disruptive innovation. I then discuss alternative business strategies including differentiation strategy, low-cost strategy, and focus or niche strategy. Next, I analyze competitive advantage including competitive advantage and disruptive innovation, service quality, and convenience of service. Finally, I offer an overview of the taxicab industry, the history of the taxicab industry and regulations, taxicabs and disruptive innovation, Uber, and Lyft.

Table 1.

Types and Counts of References

Sources	Before 2013	Since 2013	Total	Percentage of Total
Peer-reviewed journals	1	198	199	95%
Government sources	0	4	4	2%
Books	3	4	7	3%
Dissertations	0	0	0	0%
Total	4	206	210	100%
Percentage of total	2%	98%	100%	

Disruptive Innovation

Disruptive innovation is a technique or idea that enables business owners to establish a new market and value network that subsequently disrupts a current market and value network (Christensen, 1997; Meseko, 2014). Disruptive innovation is premised on the view that new technologies can generate new markets or drastically alter the status quo in the existing market (Nagy, Schuessler, & Dubinsky, 2016). Christensen and Raynor identified two types of customers who relate to disruptive innovation including entirely new non-consumers outside of the existing markets, and unserved customers in existing markets (Tomofumi & Junichi, 2015). Christensen proposed two fundamental groups of disruptive innovation: (a) incumbent firms that disregard the low-end section of the market, letting new competitors enter the market and capture the low-end market thereby creating a trajectory to the upper-level market; and (b) the formation of a new market where none existed previously (Christensen, 1997).

Tomofumi and Junichi (2015) asserted that new-market disruptive innovations present new value to non-consumers through novelties in the new markets that subsequently cause disruptive innovations in the existing markets. The low-end disruptive innovations provide services and products that present value consistent with the low-end overshot customers, but later target clients from the high-end (Tomofumi & Junichi, 2015). Although new-market disruptive innovations may lag in old-fashion performance, they secure new market with innovations in higher subsidiary performance and permeate from new markets to existing markets (Tomofumi & Junichi, 2015). Low-end disruptive innovations, on the contrary, have poor conventional performance; nonetheless, innovations with lower cost allow them to withdraw customers from existing markets (Christensen, 1997). Existing disruptive innovation theory focuses on market characteristics, new market, and low-end innovation (Nagy et al., 2015).

Kathuria (2016) contended that a disruptive innovation is a procedure whereby a service or product takes root in unsophisticated applications at the bottom of a market, persistently moves up the market, and at the right time displaces the incumbent competitors. Over time, the theory of disruptive innovation has become increasingly popular among both scholars and practitioners apprehensive about incumbents' failures and technological changes (Sandström, Berglund, & Magnusson, 2014). Ultimately, virtually all products or services progress past the requirements of the mainstream customers; hence, a shift in the basis of competition occurs to focus on price, flexibility, and convenience (Christensen, 2013).

King and Baatartogtokh (2015) acknowledged four noteworthy components of the theory of disruption. First, the incumbents in a market improve along a trajectory of sustaining innovation (King & Baatartogtokh, 2015). Next, incumbents overshoot customer needs (King & Baatartogtokh, 2015). Then, incumbents possess the capability to respond to disruptive threats (King & Baatartogtokh, 2015). Finally, the incumbents end up floundering because of the disruption (King & Baatartogtokh, 2015). Business managers are at risk of losing market share because of disruptive innovation if they fail to identify and use the appropriate emerging technologies to their advantage (Kathuria, 2016). Stories about disruptive innovation can provide warnings of what may happen, but they are no substitutes for critical thinking (King & Baatartogtokh, 2015).

Mchenry (2016) posited that at the outset, a disruptive innovation seems to be substandard to the level that is satisfactory to the consumers of the service or products that incumbents offer, targeting an audience discounted by the incumbents; but as they progress, disruptive innovations can contest for the market share. It is all too easy for established organizations to be initially complacent about new technology (Mchenry, 2016). Ultimately, the disruptive innovation improves to the extent that incumbents start losing market share (Mchenry, 2016). In industry after industry, disruptive innovations have displaced the establishment unless the incumbents have been able to buy the competitors or set up autonomous units to develop and market the innovations themselves (Christensen, 1997).

The historical context of disruptive innovation. Joseph Bower and Clayton Christensen proposed the concept of disruptive technologies, which expanded to disruptive innovation in 1995 (Bower & Christensen, 1995). Christensen advanced the disruptive innovation theory in 1997 to explain the phenomenon by which an innovation changes a current market (Cortez, 2014). Initially, Christensen's disruptive innovation theory fixated on the technological innovation at the low end of the business's price-for-performance and quality continuum (Olson & Salvador, 2016). Christensen described disruptive innovations as products or services with business models that present packages that are substandard to what the mainstream considers valuable. Christensen used the term to describe innovations that create new markets and help open new customer segments (Vertakova, Rudakova, Shadrina, Kobersy, & Belova, 2016).

King and Baatartogtokh (2015) posited that Christensen's preliminary study in the hard disk drive industry in the 1970s and 1980s shaped the core of the theory. In its early development, a disruptive innovation merely aids niche segments (Bakhit, 2016). The disruptive innovation improves in conjunction with the established offerings; the disruptive innovation progresses adequately over time to gratify the mainstream customers and ultimately supplants the established offerings and the incumbents (Bakhit, 2016; Christensen, 2013). Disruptive innovations refer to innovations that interrupt the establishment and its traditional means of conducting business, rendering its suppositions invalid (Teuscher, 2015). Disruptive innovation emanates from dissatisfaction with the current solutions and a drive to find something better (Rifai, 2015). Christensen advanced the disruptive innovation concept as a key power of change in business, education, and health care (Christensen, 1997).

Christensen (1997) argued that good managers face a dilemma because by doing the very things they need to do to succeed—including listening to customers, investing in the company, and building distinctive capabilities—they run the danger of disregarding rivals with disruptive innovations. The general concept of disruptive innovation is that businesses confront the innovator's dilemma; they have mixed feelings in response to a possible game-changing, disruptive technology (Jameson, 2014). The quandary transpires because the novel and frequently inexpensive technologies put the more lucrative, sustaining innovation in jeopardy, making it difficult to substitute the newer technologies for the service or products that are generating the current margins (Jameson, 2014). Christensen originally emphasized innovations that industry-leading companies failed to adopt, which resulted in loss of competitive advantage to businesses that embraced the technological innovation (Olson & Salvador, 2016).

Disruptive innovation application. Nagy et al. (2016) asserted that disruptive innovation is an idea that has long impacted the sustainability of businesses. At the outset, the disruptive innovation helps engage a group of individuals that existing offerings are either under- or over-serving (Powell, Olivier, & Yuan, 2015). In itself, technology is not intrinsically disruptive. What is disruptive is for whom and how businesses provide value in the marketplace (Gobble, 2016). A disruptive innovation undermines and then displaces the incumbent (Cortez, 2014). A disruptive innovation produces an innovative business model via a new technique and normally a new technology to present a service or product with new features and lower cost (Powell et al., 2015; Van Bochoven, 2016). A disruptive innovator may obtain traction in the market either by generating a low-end product that entices clients for whom current services are too intricate, too much, too difficult, or too expensive, or by addressing a group of clients whom the mainstream rivals disregard (Gobble, 2016).

Markets rise and breakdown due to disruptive innovation (Collins & Williams, 2014). Disruptive innovation is a suitable strategic framework that managers, entrepreneurs, and innovators can use to comprehend the market, identify possible opportunities and threats, and formulate a strategy (Gobble, 2015). Predicting the disruptiveness of innovation is critical to market incumbent managers since this enables managers of the established firms to avert outcomes that may be detrimental to their companies because of ignoring disruptive innovation (Nagy et al., 2016). The adverse consequences of ignoring disruptive innovation may include reduced market share, a decrease in status, bankruptcy, or extinction of an organization's innovation (Nagy et al., 2016). The concept of disruptive innovation is useful for understanding what may be happening in a market, and thinking about how to respond strategically (Gobble, 2016). Managers of prominent firms are so mindful of what their customers require that they fail to notice the advent of disruptive innovation that at the beginning may not be valuable to their customers (Bakhit, 2016).

Using the lens of disruptive innovation enables organizations' managers to understand different types of innovations, and to set up the appropriate organizational and governance response measures that will allow them to be successful (Powell et al., 2015). In the literature on disruptive innovation, researchers have explained why many reputable firms encounter problems under conditions of discontinuous change (Sandström et al., 2014). The incumbent company managers fail to invest in new technologies that existing customers do not demand (Sandström et al., 2014). The dependency theory and its accompanying supposition that existing clients have power over a firm's internal resource procedures substantiates the argument (Sandström et al., 2014). Disruptive innovations may result from a reduction in product performance in relation to the existing standards, while advancing performance in other measures, and end up as replacements to existing service or products by improving performance (Tomofumi & Junichi, 2015).

Disruptive innovation brings new value propositions to the market. At the outset, disruptive innovation may not satisfy the needs of the existing, mainstream customers, but may fulfill the demands of either the new market segment or current or over-served customers due to usability or price (Powell et al., 2015). Disruptive innovation enables a sector that initially served just a limited few because its services and products were inaccessible, expensive, and complicated to transform into one that serves many with services and products are affordable, convenient, and simple (Robinson, Morgan, & Reed, 2016).

Therefore, over time, as the performance of the new services or products undergoes rapid improvement, they go beyond satisfying the requirements of the incumbent's low-end customers and substantially attract their mainstream and eventually, their top-end customers as well (Weeks, 2015). Disruptive innovations utilize models, which allow business managers to react to clients at new lower price level or a new better convenient manner without additional cost (Robinson et al., 2016). Usually, the existing firms fail to respond to disruptive innovation because of restraints they face from their present value network in which they have established a customer base and business interactions (Tomofumi & Junichi, 2015).

Uber has disrupted the taxicab industry by combining several sustaining innovations to reduce its overhead and offer more convenience for customers (Gobble, 2016). The framework of disruptive innovation is an important perspective that may help taxicab owners understand the business strategies to sustain their operations. Researchers utilize disruptive innovation model to discourse the importance of the differences among innovative customers (Christensen, 1997). Disruptive innovation theory is useful in explaining why businesses fail or succeed to (Karimi & Walter, 2015). The theory of disruptive innovation plays a key role in understanding the success of taxicab business (Gobble, 2016). Disruptive innovation disrupts and replaces old technology and renders it obsolete (Christensen, 1997).

When managers of established businesses attend to their current customers` sentiments about novel services or products, they apportion resources to inadequate and out of place technologies (Bakhit, 2016). The technologies that the incumbent firms reject will later displace these technologies (Reinhard & Gurtner, 2015). Disruptive innovations are new services and products with initially lower quality than those of the established companies (Klenner et al., 2013). The failure of existing businesses to introduce an innovation or to forecast changing market conditions leads to premature failure of the existing companies (Klenner et al., 2013). A review of the development of products or service and the successful market entry of disruptive innovations using supply and demand indicates that new services and products enter the market at a lower quality level

(Christensen, 1997). Leaders in established companies often do not see the new offerings as serious competition or a threat (Christensen, 1997).

Successful disruptive innovations are less expensive, simpler, smaller, and more convenient to use (Klenner et al., 2013). Christensen's theory of disruptive innovation describes the experience by which an innovation renovates a prevailing sector or market by presenting convenience, simplicity, affordability, and accessibility where impediment and astronomical cost are the existing state of affairs (Kowalski, 2017). The quality of disruptive innovation products or services has the potential to improve and ultimately surpass that of existing services or products over time (Mchenry, 2016). New entrants build a competitive advantage with a cost advantage while existing companies react with time delay and cost disadvantage (Tomofumi & Junichi, 2015). Disruptive innovation theory is useful in highlighting how certain innovations can undermine the existing companies, or an entire industry (Cortez, 2014). The taxicab industry faces a vigorous competition from the disruptive innovations like Uber and Lyft (Anderson, 2014). Disruptive innovation is a suitable framework that organizational managers, entrepreneurs, as well as innovators could utilize to comprehend a market, identify possible opportunities and threats, and formulate appropriate strategies (Gobble, 2015).

Nam (2015) suggested that in due course, disruptive innovation lowers cost of service or products without compromising their value and performance. The forces of disruptive innovation may encompass technological advances as well as social or policy forces and that managers should not presume that disruptive innovation to be pleasant or unpleasant (Nam, 2015). Most disruptive innovations have mixed features (Jameson, 2014). Sandström et al. (2014) suggested that an understanding of disruptive innovation helps researchers identify the initial appearance of a disruptive innovation and explain how the disruption changes business strategies. Nevertheless, the theory has its critics, many of whom call for more work on demand-side factors including managerially relevant work that explicitly considers the interplay between disruptive innovations and established business models (Sandström et al., 2014). Others have equally stressed the importance of leadership and proactively working to transform markets (Sandström et al., 2014). Notwithstanding the extensive use and appeal of disruptive innovation theory, researchers have not verified its indispensable validity and generalizability in academic literature (King & Baatartogtokh, 2015). While many scholars have pointed to the limits of disruptive innovation theory from a managerial and business model perspective, researchers have not paid adequate attention to the core theoretical assumptions of the concept despite existing shortcomings (Sandström et al., 2014). Managers have countered potential disruption through effective reactive management, usually by financing forcefully in that invention after competitors have brought it to the market, or by acquiring the competitors (Gans, 2016).

Recommendation for using disruptive Application. Three responses to disruptive innovation that managers execute when the disruption is taking place include beating, joining, or outlasting the competition (Gans, 2016). Countering disruptive innovation requires managers to compute the value of winning, find ways of leveraging present capabilities, and collaborate with other companies (King & Baatartogtokh, 2015). Managers can overcome barriers with openness, opening, networking, affirmation of complexity, and appropriate thoughts and actions (Friedrich, Freiling, & Matzler, 2015). The masterwork of Christensen, Johnson, and Horn's (2008) on disruptive innovations has aided industry experts in several diverse areas to identify the opportunities that radical transformation in underlying technologies can create in their respective industries (Estelami, 2017).

The incumbent companies can thrive with disruptive market-innovation by adopting market orientation, leveraging prior core competencies, and integrating the disruptive innovation under the same business unit that is responsible for traditional businesses (Habtav & Holmén, 2014). The only permanent way out of the innovator's dilemma is to alter the strategy and espouse a new business focus whereby innovation is an inevitability and not a possibility (Denning, 2016). The impediments to an effective business model invention links with hurdles of consciousness, exploration, system, lucidity, and culture (Friedrich et al., 2015). Disruptive innovation has completely reshaped numerous companies and industries, thus, causing some firms or organizations to fail while others succeed (Bakhit, 2016). New upstarts depose market leaders because the market leaders have inherent filters that weed out any innovation suggestions that do not directly facilitate the current service or products they present to their current markets (Powell et al., 2015). Any proposal to counter the disruption does not fit the elements of the current business model and therefore, may not enhance the current offering (Powell et al., 2015).

Van Bochoven (2016) recommended managers to deal with technologies and innovation by forming future squads, cultivating cognitive capabilities, and taking an ecocentric view of the world. Van Bochoven noted that these recommendations are reliant on two vital enablers to deal with disruptive innovation including an innovation platform and ecosystem. Organizational managers engage in the process of disruptive innovation as a survival strategy (Bakhit, 2016). Knowledge related to the effects of disruptive innovation can assist managers to comprehend the consequences of their strategic decision-making (Bakhit, 2016). The incumbent companies respond to disruptive innovation by setting up independent organizations, or autonomous sub-units that develop without the cultural rejection and resource battles the firms might otherwise face (Powel et al., 2015). Setting up autonomous units is an effective way to prevent the host organization's current business model, culture, procedures, systems, and decision-making from blocking the actions and resources they need to handle a disruptive innovation successfully (Powel et al., 2015).

Vertakova et al. (2016) insinuated that business managers willing to utilize disruptive innovation to overcome new markets develop new networks of value creation to handle the problem of lack of consumption. Organizational leaders need to train their staff to be efficient in supporting innovation to maintain profitability and retain market share (Vertakova et al., 2016). Discoveries of the impacts of disruptive innovation could lead to more cost-effective investments, which constructively affect the business and the societal viewpoint (Bakhit, 2016). An innovation platform offers the construct for knowledge exchange and expedites the problem-solving procedure (Van Bochoven, 2016). Due to the frequency of unparalleled technological transformation, business managers need to unearth creative means to work and innovate together (Van Bochoven, 2016).

Alternative Business Theories

Alternative business strategy theories included competitive strategy, which comprised of differentiation, cost leadership, and focus or niche strategy; and competitive advantage, which encompassed service quality and service convenience. A business strategy is a general model that encompasses various means that organizational managers utilize to achieve the goals of the entity (Gupta, 2016). Service convenience is a multidimensional formative concept that plays a significant role in the long-term exchange between the consumers and providers of services (Dai & Salam, 2014). Customers` readiness to sustain a relationship with a company is contingent with their views of the benefits of superior quality service that enhances a continuous flow of value (Dai & Salam, 2014). Service quality plays an integrating part of a business and its clients because service quality is the consequences of a company's internal strategies and procedures that are critical to the service sequences that advance customer satisfaction, customer value, and customer loyalty (Arshad & Su, 2015).

Competitive strategy. A business strategy or competitive strategy is an essential component of organizational strategy (Ghezzi, 2014). The modern business world is undergoing rapid transformation, and firms are operating in a highly turbulent and dynamic environment that calls for business managers to plan and anticipate any future uncertainty by crafting appropriate and sustainable response strategies (Mathooko & Ogutu, 2015). There are three basic competitive strategies including overall cost leadership, differentiation, and focus or niche strategies (Porter, 1980). For organizational leaders utilizing cost leadership strategy, the market competition increases the level of real earnings management, whereas market competition does not impact the level of earnings management of companies employing differentiation strategy (Wu, Gao, & Gu, 2015).

The strategic business choices of competitive value chains that are reliant on the business strategies include quality of innovation, lean cost, quick delivery, and attentive service (Den Hertog, 2014). Den Hertog noted that the value chain framework provided an essential guidance concerning business strategy and implementation from the middle of the 1980s. Nonetheless, new challenges of the information technology age like global sourcing and network distribution, e-commerce business proliferation, enterprise software disruptive innovation, as well as customer service expectations intensification call for questions that the value chain must answer to ensure its continuing importance in the 21st century (Den Hertog, 2014). The scope of business strategy is to define the long-term plan of action that a firm may engage in to accomplish its performance goals (Sigalas, 2015). Therefore, competitive advantage is widely putative in strategic management courses and textbooks as an essential concept in business strategy (Sigalas, 2015). At the very core of strategic decisions of management, must be the creation and retention of sustainable competitive advantage (Ceptureanu, 2016).

A strategy solely reliant on designing a business model would distract managers from other insignificant strategic practices, with the risk of missing the whole picture: made of strategic intent, industry foresight, external attractiveness, and competitive advantage (Ghezzi, 2014). Instead of viewing strategy as a single perfect plan that has a multi-year deployment cycle, managers need to see it as a portfolio of competitive opportunities with each one managed throughout its life cycle (Aurik, Fabel, & Jonk, 2015). The two generic strategies that a firm can use to achieve competitive advantage include cost leadership and differentiation (Banker, Mashruwala, & Tripathy, 2014).

The ability to change and adapt to the constantly evolving business environment is the only plausible long-term strategy in business strategy field because businesses in the modern era have to operate in an unpredictable, turbulent, fragile socioeconomic, and interconnected environment (Krotov, Junglas, & Steel, 2015). Business has to invest in developing dynamic capabilities that managers can assemble rapidly and utilize in response to an emerging threats or opportunities to achieve and sustain a competitive advantage in a constantly evolving environment (Krotov et al., 2015). Business leaders need to develop competitive advantage position to face competition and sustain growth rate (Ghosh, Kumuthadevi, & Jublee, 2016).

Differentiation strategy. Sihite and Simanjuntak (2015) asserted that differentiating the service or product that a firm offers- implies making something that is recognizable in an industry as being distinctive. Differentiation is a strategic choice that helps replicate the value-cost trade-off in a specified market structure (Randall, 2015). A differentiation strategy might imply distinguishing along two or more of these dimensions (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Pursuing a differentiation strategy results in more sustainable financial performance in comparison to pursuing a cost leadership strategy (Banker et al., 2014). There are various differentiation approaches that managers can use including new technology, brand image, the number of features, and different designs (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). However, a differentiation strategy may also be risky (Banker et al., 2014). Although both cost leadership and differentiation approaches have a constructive impact on contemporaneous performance, a differentiation strategy allows a firm to sustain its current performance in the future to a greater extent than a cost leadership strategy (Banker et al., 2014).

Sihite and Simanjuntak (2015) posited that differentiation is a reliable approach for receiving above average yields since it enables a manager to protect a company from competitive rivalry by building brand loyalty; differentiation helps managers to bring down the price elasticity of demand by making customers less sensitive to price changes in their products. Using a differentiation strategy implies providing products and services to create something new (Gupta, 2016). Employing a differentiation strategy enhances uniqueness, which allows a manager to build barriers and reduce substitutes, hence, resulting in higher margins which decrease the necessity for a low-cost advantage (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Managers can attain differentiation by delivering the best value at a greater cost to the company and a superior price for customers (Randal, 2015).

Wu et al. (2015) contended that companies that utilize differentiation approach are unlikely to use real earnings management. Porter's generic strategies of differentiation, focus, and cost leadership are not potentially successful strategies, which firms may employ to acquire a strategic position in any specified market (Alzoubi & Emeagwali, 2016). Attaining an effective differentiation strategy typically necessitates exclusivity, strong marketing skills, product or service innovation instead of process innovation, applied research and development, consumers support, and rare focus on incentive-based pay structure (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015).

Low-cost strategy. Sihite and Simanjuntak (2015) defined cost leadership as having the lowest per- unit cost relative to rivals within the industry. A low-cost or cost leadership strategy is the espousal of a succession of precise policies for the strategy to win the total cost in the industry (Gupta, 2016). Using cost leadership implies holding the lowest average cost amongst competitors in an incredibly competitive industry whereby profit or returns are low, nevertheless, higher than rivals (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Using cost leadership strategy may also suggest possessing the lowest cost among a few competitors whereby every company accrues high profit as well as pricing power (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015).

Wu et al. (2015) posited that companies that follow cost leadership strategy are more likely to have a higher level of real earnings management. A reliable way for managers to protect their businesses against influential buyers is to use cost leadership approach (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Buyers may cause price decrease only to the level of the subsequent well-organized producer (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Besides, a cost leadership strategy is useful in defending against dominant suppliers because it enhances the flexibility to absorb input costs increase that rivals may not possess (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Furthermore, on several occasions, the issues that cause cost leadership may offer entry barriers (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). For example, economies of scale necessitate possible competitors to enter the industry with a significant capability to manufacture, implying that the entry cost may be unaffordable to several possible rivals (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Using a low-cost leadership strategy allows managers to focus on achieving low-cost production of goods and services relative to existing rivals, and at the same time providing quality products and after-sales services to customers (Alzoubi & Emeagwali, 2016).

Attaining an effective cost leadership strategy typically necessitates a significant up-front capital investment in a new technology and doing so may result in substantial market share in the long-term; nonetheless, it could cause a short-term loss (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Obtaining a cost leadership necessitates a continued capital investment to sustain cost advantage via market share and economies of scale (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Another requirement for a cost leadership strategy is the process innovation which involves coming up with an inexpensive means of producing existing products or services (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Besides, managers could adopt an intensive monitoring of labor whereby employees regularly have an incentive-based pay structure (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015).

Focus strategy. Using a focus or niche strategy requires managers to emphasize on specific service or product segment, buyer category, or geographical market (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). A focus group strategy comprises of a succession of action, like gathering a specific customer base, a product line, a segment of the market (Gupta, 2016). Managers build focus approach on serving a specific target such as a service or product, location, or customer, whereas managers utilize differentiation and low-cost strategies to attain an industry-wide goal (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). A focused approach implies reaching either a differentiation in a contracted path of the market or a low-cost advantage (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). The propositions of focus or niche strategy are: the company can be more efficient, better outcomes for a narrow strategic target service to compete with a broader scope of competitors (Gupta, 2016). Focus strategy entails the implementation of either a cost leadership strategy or a differentiation strategy but targeting a very slender niche market (Alzoubi & Emeagwali, 2016).

Competitive advantage. Competitive advantage refers to obtaining a unique position relative to competitors that enable a business to consistently do better than its rivals (Bilgihan & Wang, 2016). Competitive advantage is the tool that allows a company to take a bigger market share and generate more sales (Naatu, 2016). Competitiveness refers to a stable business's ability to maintain a position in the market of goods and services at different times, determined by the effectiveness of the organization economic potential management and the degree of implementation of its competitive advantages (Koroteeva et al., 2016). Competitive advantage occurs when an organization acquires or develops an attribute or combination of attributes that allows it to outperform its competitors (Naatu, 2016). It is a key determinant of superior performance, which ensures survival and prominent placing in the market (Naatu, 2016). Development and proper exercise of a set of competitive priorities may create competitive advantage (Ghosh, Kumuthadevi, & Jublee, 2016). Competitive advantage has been a cornerstone concept in the field of strategic management since it explains what accounts for differences in performance among firms (Sigalas, 2015).

Service quality. Service quality refers to a perceptible judgment, emanating from an assessment procedure where clients relate their expectations with the service they perceive to have gotten (Giovanis, Athanasopoulou, & Tsoukatos, 2015). Service quality as the comparison of customer expectations with performance (Arshad & Su, 2015). Service quality may be either or all of the customer's perception relating to a firm`s technical and function quality, the service product, service delivery, and service environment: the reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurances, and tangibles related to a service experience (Mittal et al., 2015). Service quality is the extent to which an event or experience meets an individual's needs or expectations (Martin, 2016).

Arshad and Su (2015) asserted that service quality is the comparison of customer expectations with performance and that delivering service quality means fulfilling customer expectations on a regular basis. Service quality is a component of customer satisfaction (Martin, 2016). Service quality is a vital element in distinguishing service offering and fostering competitive advantage since the costs of comparing substitutes are comparatively low in online settings (Sharma & Halvadia, 2015). Customer service is an essential intermediary between service delivery innovation and service quality which touches the service quality of an enterprise (Arshad & Su, 2015). Service quality plays an integrating role between the organization and its clienteles because service quality is an outcome of internal organizational procedures and strategies that are enormously critical in the service sequence that results in customer satisfaction, customer value, and loyalty (Arshad & Su, 2015).

Giovanis et al. (2015) interpreted perceived service quality across five dimensions including reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. Excellent service quality, as well as the capability to promote improvements, allow organizations to be in a position to attract new customers (Arshad & Su, 2015). Service quality is among the most important determinants of service delivery evaluation by customers and that it is a great differentiator and the most powerful competitive weapon of service organizations (Giovanis et al., 2015). Organization managers measure and manage the overall service quality perceptions to develop trust and bolster loyalty intentions among their clients (Mittal, Gera, & Batra, 2015). Providing high service quality is a critical consideration for enhancing long-term relationships with customers, especially in the competitive business environments (Mittal et al., 2015). Business managers sustain their operations by exploiting knowledge resources to maintain customer relationships more efficiently and effectively, and also enhance their service quality (Tseng, 2016). Service quality plays a vital role in achieving sustainable competitive advantage (Arshad & Su, 2015). Satisfied customers increase organization’s profitability by repeat purchase, brand loyalty and positive word of mouth (Arshad & Su, 2015). Constructive suggestions allow firms to strengthen their service quality (Tseng, 2016).

The convenience of service. The convenience of service is one of the most vital concerns for most customers in purchase decision-making (Dai & Salam, 2014). Service convenience refers to the perceived sense of control by customers over the management, use, and conversion of their time and efforts in attaining their objectives related to access to, and use of the service (Dai & Salam, 2014). The efforts and time necessary to utilize or purchase a service are the consumer's perceptions of service convenience (Chou, Wu, & Huang, 2014). Service convenience has positive effects on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Kaura, Durga Prasad, & Sharma, 2015). In a homogenous, market if the service business owners present are similar, a superior service convenience may facilitate competitive advantage (Kaura et al., 2015).

Kaura et al. (2015) suggested five dimensions of service convenience including access, decision, benefit, transaction, and post benefit conveniences. Business managers can have a positive impact on the five dimensions of service convenience by reducing the time and efforts consumers use during the service consumption. Service convenience is a second order determinative construct with six convenience dimensions illustrating the procedure of online service consumption (Dai & Salam, 2014). Customers may find it convenient to make a purchase decision, to ascertain how difficult it is to have access to the service or find out if it is still worthwhile after utilizing the service (Chou et al., 2014). There is a significant relationship between service convenience and service loyalty in the presence of gender, education level, and age of customers (Rahman & Khan, 2014). Whereas researchers have discovered that decision and post-benefit convenience are significant throughout all classes of consumer characteristics, transaction convenience has been irrelevant in all groups of consumer characteristics (Rahman & Khan, 2014).

Dai and Salam (2014) posited that a customer's readiness to sustain involvement with a company is contingent with his view of the benefits of superior quality service that provides a continuous flow of value. Managers could make decisions relating to service design and delivery in manners that could warrant the highest level of convenience for their customers concerning decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit conveniences, knowing that service convenience can affect service loyalty (Rahman &

Khan, 2014). Service providers could create better competitive advantages by providing the appropriate benefit to the right set of consumers (Rahman & Khan, 2014).

Competitive advantage and disruptive innovation. Progression of technological transformation and some megatrends are reshaping how firms approach innovation, and consequently, the role that innovation managers play in the business (Jones, Cope, & Kintz, 2016). Disruptive innovation opens up new technological cycle and a novel cycle of business innovation with the aim of completely changing the technology radically to undermine the market (Vertakova et al., 2016). The future of innovation looks complex (Jones et al., 2016). Organizational managers will have to harness flexibility and discipline in their procedures, develop mechanisms to incorporate the predictive power of big data into innovation techniques, and master tools that link up open innovation to the broader innovation management plans (Jones et al., 2016).

Traditional competitive advantages such as market position, scale, production capabilities, and delivery models are essentially static competencies in the modern dynamic business environment (Katz, du Preez, & Louw, 2016). Due to the dynamic nature of technology and competitive environment of business which may necessitate a rapid response to a rival's move, it is inadequate for a firm to be sophisticated in a specific technology (Katz et al., 2016). The source of competitive advantages can be separate strategic directions of organization business in which it succeeds (Koroteeva et al., 2016). Sustainable competitive advantage is a company's strategy which helps provide a considerable advantage over present and potential competitors (Ceptureanu, 2016). Sustainable competitive advantage rests on a business's aptitude to adapt to new technologies and competitor's movements. This necessitates a firm to have the capacity to discover or espouse new technologies and become proficient at with these technologies on a continual basis (Katz et al., 2016). The key determinants of performance include positional competitive advantages comprising of differentiation advantage and low-cost advantage (Tan & Sousa, 2015). Managers could gain the positional competitive advantage using the company's competencies or capabilities (Tan & Sousa, 2015).

Overview of the Taxicab Industry

Taxicabs perform a crucial function in the United States public transportation network. The taxicab industry provided approximately 233,700 jobs in the United States in 2014 (BLS, 2016). Taxicab owners present citizens with a feasible means of transportation to get to their various destinations. Taxicab owners help reduces poverty in Africa (Porter, 2014). In the sub-Saharan African Cities, such as Lomé and Lagos, motorcycle taxis are emerging to be a vital component of the transportation network (Diaz, Guézéré, Plat, & Pochet, 2016). Typically, taxicabs and ride-hailing services operate in urban areas and complement public transit system because individuals who constantly ride on buses and trains are more likely to take taxicabs or ride-hailing services (Liu et al., 2014). Hence, increase in demand for taxis mostly occurs in larger metropolitan areas.

Several passengers request a cab by calling a central dispatcher who then informs the cab driver the pickup location. Some drivers pick up passengers waiting in lines at cab stands or in the taxi line at airports, train stations, and hotels. In some large cities, cab drivers drive around the streets searching for customers, even though it is illegal in some cities to do so (BLS, 2016). Taxi drivers offer the ride to people to their various destinations such as workplaces, airports, and hotels. It is imperative for a cab driver to be familiar with a city of operation to successfully take passengers to their requested destinations (BLS, 2016). Good drivers usually know the streets in the area they serve. A good cab driver will use the most efficient route to avoid traffic and knows where the most frequent requested destinations are in a city. Taxicab drivers have to follow regulations (Harding et al., 2016). Taxicab companies are encountering vigorous competition from the disruptive innovations like Uber and Lyft that have become very active in the past five years (Harding et al., 2016). Disruptive innovations build new markets and finally disrupt the prevailing ones (Vertakova et al., 2016). Most taxicab companies are losing business to the disruptive innovations as the owners lack the strategies to operate.

Taxicab operations. Taxicabs are vital to the modern public transportation networks, especially in countries where bus and underground train services are still under development and do not currently offer the coverage needed by customers (Bai et al., 2014). The taxicab industry is an imperative part of cities' transportation (Zhang, Li, & Lu, 2016). Taking a taxicab is an expedient means to get to one`s destination, although it is by and large rather costlier than buses and subways (Bai et al., 2014). With the economic development and increase in quality of life of individuals, the taxicab has been more and more popular due to its convenience and comfort (Zhang et al., 2016). Nonetheless, the taxicab industry has faced criticisms in recent times for bad operations (Zhang et al., 2016). Relying on the taxicab industry's longstanding monopoly advantage, several taxicab drivers offer poor services to customers (Zhang et al., 2016). In a fare-regulated taxicab markets, the local government or local taxi commission regulates the pricing structure of taxicabs within the locality (Carpenter, Curtis, & Keshav, 2014). Taxicab owners cannot individually change their pricing structure (Carpenter et al., 2014).

Bai et al. (2014) categorized taxicab services into three classes including street hailing, taxi stands, and pre-arranged bookings. Street hailing is a prevalent method for catching a taxicab. Street hailing is modest and has no obligation for expensive equipment or systems (Bai et al., 2014). Nevertheless, street hailing brings about several complications, including low taxi utilization, long passenger waiting times, road safety issues, and traffic congestion (Bai et al., 2014). Using taxicab stands is convenient; however, the stands can only serve a small group of customers at fixed locations, for example, city centers, train or bus stations, and airports (Bai et al., 2014). Pre-arranged booking is a more advanced and efficient taxicab dispatching technique, but is not practical when there are many independent taxicab drivers (Bai et al., 2014). Customers could book for a cab via the traditional telephone calls or by utilizing other communication technologies like text messages or websites (Bai et al., 2014). Taxicab owners often employ a taxicab dispatching center to collect all the passenger information and coordinate the taxicab dispatching centrally. The dispatching systems often utilize Global Positioning System devices (GPS) and wireless communication equipment (Bai et al., 2014).

Bai et al. (2014) noted the advantage of using a pre-booking scheme is that taxicab dispatch operators could determine the customers` requirements in advance. The major downside is that the system is usually expensive and hence only suitable for large taxicab business (Bai et al., 2014). Furthermore, the system relies on the mutual trust between taxicab drivers and passengers, in that neither party will break the agreed appointment (Bai et al., 2014). Unfortunately, in reality, the breaking of appointments happens frequently in many countries (Bai et al., 2014). In most urban cities, getting a reliable and safe taxi trip can be a major challenge (Zhang et al., 2016). Overcharging, refusal to go by meters, refusal to take passengers, does not know the directions, and lack of appropriate service attitude are some common scams that most of the taxi passengers have long suffered (Zhang et al., 2016). Customer dissatisfaction of the taxicab industry in conjunction with internet revolution has allowed competitors from disruptive innovation companies like Uber and Lyft to take over the taxicab market (Zhang et al., 2016). Most online firms offer quality, affordable, convenience, and accessible services to their customers (Zhang et al., 2016).

The history of taxicab industry and regulations. Taxicab emerged in the United States in the 20th century (Posen, 2015). The massive transformation that occurred in urban life, as well as the continuing evolution of mass transit vehicles in the 20th century, helped facilitate the development of the taxicab (Posen, 2015). Automobiles replaced the widespread use of horses as a taxicab, first, in New York City (Posen, 2015). Entrepreneurs saw economic prospect in the taxicab industry in the 1920s and systematized the industry into a fleet of taxis as the business grew (Posen, 2015). There were no regulations in the taxicab industry, although cities and states required taxi drivers to apply for licenses until the great depression in the 1900 (Elliot, 2016). The Wildcat drivers lowered fares to take business from the taxi industry (Elliot, 2016; Harding et al., 2016). The Haas Act, which currently established the medallion system and the transportation law was therefore enacted to respond to the rapidly diminishing taxicab industry and the violence (Elliot, 2016). Taxicab medallion owners possess the exclusive privilege to drive a taxicab; they would lose their substantial investment if cities eliminate the requirements for medallion (Kenny, 2014).

The origin of current taxi market regulation stemmed from the Great Depression of 1929 in United States cities when the worldwide economic downturn resulted in mass unemployment (Harding et al., 2016). Several unemployed individuals entered the taxicab industry illegitimately, circumventing quality regulations by procuring and running inexpensive vehicles as taxicabs, most of which were in a deprived, frequently unsafe, condition of repair (Harding et al., 2016). There was a divergence between supply and demand that caused disagreements between drivers (both legal and illegal) over prices. Wildcat cars which were unlicensed taxicabs driven by laid-off workers accompanied the great depression (Posen, 2015). The policy disagreement over bandit cabs caused the inclusion of taxis in the Interstate Commerce Act in 1935, handing the state authority to control prices (Harding et al., 2016). Besides, the City of New York enacted the Hass Ordinance in 1937, which introduced a strict permit regime eliminating the city’s capability to issue new licenses, an action which successfully immobilized taxi numbers (Harding et al., 2016).

Innovation and technology in disciplines practically unidentified or unrealized 50 years ago have fashioned consumer culture nowadays, and most customers bank on the ease and convenience of their smartphones to get what they need and even to go where they need to go (Posen, 2015). Uber and other technology start-ups can easily penetrate the public transportation market because cities limit the number of taxi drivers on their streets (Elliott, 2016). Uber, a ridesharing experience that allows customers to demand a car via a smartphone app, was established in the midst of the new consumer culture in which gaining access to goods is more significant than personal possession and where people esteem social interface and the human experience (Posen, 2015). The technology start-up companies like Uber and Lyft have been reluctant to adopt the taxicab regulations arguing that they are in the information business instead of transportation (Curtis, 2015). Allowing app-based companies to work under inaccurate labels outside of regulatory framework against similar activities which must function inside the framework is unfair and unsafe (Elliott, 2016). The purpose of regulations of for-hire vehicles, is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the traveling public (Curtis, 2015).

It is, therefore, imperative for regulators to ensure that the app-based companies comply with taxi regulations in a manner that serves the public interest, creates a level playing field among the various competing models, and yet encourages the innovation and opportunity in the market place (Curtis, 2016). The regulation of the market for taxicab journeys is reliant on the supposition that the taxicab market is subject to several fundamental problems, which must be amended by regulatory interposition (Harding et al., 2016). The taxicab industry and many cities and states have responded to Uber`s competition by demanding that Uber complies with already-existing taxi regulations, including entry controls and price-fixing (Posen, 2015). Cities need to open up more licenses for taxicab drivers and modify the regulatory burden on taxicab drivers (Elliott, 2016). Regulation by market forces works better than government regulation (Baetjer, 2015). Government regulates through agencies that have a monopoly on the service they offer, whereas market forces control via a vibrant, distributed, and competitive procedure in which both goods and service suppliers and quality assurance enterprises respond to consumer choices (Baetjer, 2015).

Competition in the taxicab industry. The susceptibility of the taxicab industry was imminent due to the normalization of poor services as a result of the difficulty for higher-quality substitutes in filling the gap (Detsky & Garber, 2016). Due to inconvenience, escalating prices, uncomfortable surroundings, and unreliable service, dissatisfied taxicab customers opted for Uber which uses technologies to offer simple, affordable, accessible, and convenience service to customers (Detsky & Garber, 2016). Uber has disrupted the taxi industry by combining several sustaining innovations to reduce its overhead and offer more convenience for customers (Gobble, 2016). Uber upended the taxicab industry by providing an appealing alternative (Detsky & Garber, 2016). Uber`s incursion into a highly regulated taxicab market indicates that if consumers gain enough from a new solution, they can overcome entrenched interests (Detsky & Garber, 2016). Uber offers more accessible ride services than do traditional taxicabs to low-income neighborhoods in Los Angeles (Alone, 2016). Taxicabs are independent and compete against each other to gain the maximum personal return (Bai et al., 2014).

Taxicab Business and Disruptive Innovation

Taxicabs are an essential transportation in the municipal area, providing great assistances and convenience to individuals` daily lives (Liu et al., 2014). However, the taxicab industry is one of the several businesses with a revenue base disrupted due to the ubiquitous use of technology (Anderson, 2014). The technology start-ups or the disruptive innovations utilize electronic hailing through Smartphone apps (Posen, 2015). Disruptive innovation drivers pick up passengers who request service through Smartphone app. Disruptive innovations such as Uber and Lyft use transportation apps which are pieces of software downloaded into personal devices to perform a specific task to locate passengers to offer them ride to their destinations for fares (Posen, 2015). Passengers can also use the apps to request for a ride. The fare rate can fluctuate depending on demand (Posen, 2015). Nonetheless, the company informs clients if the prevailing fare rate is higher than usual (Posen, 2015). Customers pay for the ride through a credit card that the firm connects to the app. Drivers utilize their personal vehicles and set their operation schedules. Uber, is only seven years old and already disrupting the established model of taxicabs by avoiding corporate ownership of cars or medallions (Aloni, 2016). Uber operated in more than 230 cities in 50 nations by the end of 2014 (Uber, 2014). The taxicab industry has experienced a disruptive transformation (Cramer & Krueger, 2016). In cities where there is an availability of data, ride-sharing drivers spend a substantially higher fraction of their work time, and drive a significantly higher share of miles with customers in their vehicles than their taxicab counterparts (Cramer & Krueger, 2016).

In spite of their wide geographical spread and popularity, the disruptive innovation companies are the subject of public debate. Uber, for example, sparked some public discussions in the United States because of its surge price model which encouraged price discrimination (Harding et al., 2016). Furthermore, Uber came under fire for circumventing taxi regulations in various cities (Eskenazi, 2014). Uber appears to circumvent existing taxi regulations. The incumbent taxicab owners claim that Uber has not been operating on a fair playing field. Uber drivers offer unfair competition as they do not carry the same regulatory burden as the traditional taxicab drivers (Harding et al., 2016). The advent of technology startups is crippling the taxicab firms with many customers turning to their competitors (Anderson, 2014). Excessive taxicab regulations in the United States makes it hard for taxicab owners to compete with the disruptive innovations (Harding et al., 2016). The big question is what strategies may the traditional taxicab companies use to compete with the disruptive innovation?

Harding et al. (2016) posited that the literature on taxicab industry paid little attention to the above question. Several researchers suggest the possibility of disruptive technologies transforming how transport systems are managed (Harding et al., 2016). Moreover, there are numerous studies on the impact of disruptive technologies on the traditional licensed taxicab companies (Chen, 2014). However, there is the scarcity of opinions on strategies for the traditional taxicab companies to compete with the disruptive technologies as well as the contentions associated with the disruptive innovations (Harding et al., 2016). The scarcity of sufficient management strategies precludes taxicab business owners to go up against their rivals to sustain their businesses.

Liu, Ni, and Krishnan (2014) sought to explore strategies to restructure the taxicab industry through regulations to safeguard the customers. Taxicab owners need to become more active in the sharing economy (Cusumano, 2015). The advent of disruptive innovation is molding the taxicab industry (Hortaçsu & Syverson, 2015). The enterprise-level strategy of taxicab business needs to express how the businesses connect with actors regarding its political, economic, and social environment to foster long-term performance (Crilly, 2013). Organizational culture comprises of the set of core values, beliefs, interpretations, rules, symbols, approaches, assumptions, which are peculiar to the organization and its members (Acar & Acar, 2014).

Uber. Garrett Camp and Travis Kalanick founded Uber which is one of the most successful companies of the sharing economy with over $62.5 billion as an alternative to the traditional taxicab service (Sanders & Pattison, 2016). Uber emerged from technology and innovation and provides consumers a choice of transportation based on convenience, and through their vocal support (Posen, 2016). Garrett Camp and Travis Kalanick formed Uber in the United States in 2009 (Leighton, 2016). Uber does not own cars and does not employ drivers but rather claims to be a marketplace where Uber's drivers as independent agents meet Uber's customers (Henten & Windekilde, 2016). From its founding in 2009 to its launching in hundreds of cities today, Uber's precipitously growing worldwide presence continues to bring people and their cities closer (Posen, 2015). Uber is the fastest-growing startup in the world and that its growth has been so explosive that its private market value now equals that of mainstay public companies like Target and Kraft Foods (Cunningham-Parmeter, 2016). Uber employs complex software to allow possible taxicab passengers with a specified app on their mobile phones to contact the firm explaining where they are, want to go and when and they normally pay Uber in advance by credit or debit card (Leighton, 2016).

Posen (2016) notated that besides transportation, Uber offers social services by, for example, engaging with and supporting the communities in which it operates, both philanthropically and just for fun. Uber delivers a reduction of search and transaction costs for both passengers and drivers as a core value (Henten & Windekilde, 2016). Besides, Uber offers several options associated with transportation or logistics that include the transportation brands Uber, UberSUV, Uber Black, UberXL, UberLUX, and UberX as well as the logistics brands Uber Eats, Uber FRESH, and Uber RUSH (Henten & Windekilde, 2016). Since its commencement, Uber has changed the fabric of 170 cities globally, developing the most secured way to get around cities, generating over 20,000 jobs per month, bringing down DUI incidents, accidents, and fatalities and improving local economies (Posen, 2016). Uber`s ascension had devastated taxicab business in several locations (Cunningham-Parmeter, 2016). The number of Uber rides increased within two years from 300,000 to 3.5 million whereas the traditional taxicabs lost 2.1 million rides during the same period (Cunningham-Parmeter, 2016). Uber’s advancement across the United States has brought more competition in a taxicab market that had been primarily undisrupted since it began in the early 20th century (Posen, 2016).

Lyft. Kortum (2015) suggested that Lyft and Uber are the most disruptive innovation to challenge the taxicab industry. Lyft was established as a rideshare business in June 2012 and is accessible in over 61 U.S. cities (Curtis, 2015). General Motors (GM) and Lyft publicized a long-term strategic alliance to form an integrated network of on-demand autonomous vehicles in the United States (Huefner, 2015). GM will invest $500 million in Lyft to help the company continue the rapid growth of its successful ridesharing service ((Kane, 2016). Also, GM will hold a seat on the company's board of directors.

Just like Uber, Lyft is a for-profit ridesharing service that offers on-demand rides much like taxicabs, distinguishing themselves from taxicabs by focusing on the friendly, social aspect of the in-car interaction (Anderson, 2016). Lyft uses the ride-sharing apps to streamline communication and payment while shaping the behavior of both drivers and passengers through monitoring (particularly through a reputation metric, the "rating system") and the control of pricing and information (Anderson, 2016). Lyft connects drivers with customers algorithmically (Kenney & Zysman, 2016). The algorithms integrate mapping software, real-time road conditions, and the availability of drivers to provide a price estimate (Kenney & Zysman, 2016). Lyft vets drivers through online checks, which, of course, work only as well as the data they have (Kenney & Zysman, 2016). Customers make payments via credit card information that is on file (Kenney & Zysman, 2016).

Cunningham-Parmeter (2016) noted that although Lyft exercised a great deal of control over the drivers when they were on duty, they also enjoyed many freedoms such as the ability to choose their work hours and to select the neighborhoods where they would drive. Lyft promotes a welcoming image by inspiring drivers and customers to shake hands at the start of every trip, and by having drivers affix fluffy pink mustaches to the front of their cars to playfully differentiate them from other automobiles (Anderson, 2016). Through these formalities and symbols, customers are requested to perceive Lyft, not as an unlicensed taxi service, but as a friend with a car on demand (Anderson, 2016). The mediation of driver and customer interface via a smartphone application has been pivotal to this rebranding (Anderson, 2016).

As part of the GM and Lyft alliance, the companies will jointly develop an on-demand autonomous vehicles network to leverage GM's expertise of autonomous technology and Lyft's capabilities in delivering a comprehensive choice of ride-sharing services (Attard, Haklay, & Capineri, 2016). GM will provide short-term use cars to Lyft drivers via rental centers in numerous U.S. cities (Kane, 2016). Drivers and clients will have access to General Motors' portfolio of cars and OnStar services, and besides, GM and Lyft will offer each other's clients with customized mobility services and experiences out of their respective channels (Huefner, 2015). Just like several taxicab firms, both Lyft and Uber contend that they exercise marginal control over drivers, whom they thus, categorize as independent contractors rather than workers (Anderson, 2016). As a dispatch service, Uber and Lyft firms hook up drivers with customers, via a combination of rating, locality, as well as logged in time (Anderson, 2016). The firms fix price by distance and time and establish the percentage of the fare that drivers collect (Anderson, 2016). Whereas taxicab fares are regularly set up by regulation, soft-cabs platforms employ dynamic pricing, computed by meticulously secured proprietary algorithms for the express purpose of affecting driver and passenger behavior (Anderson, 2016).

Transition

In Section 1 of this research study, I discussed the problem statement, purpose statement, nature of the study, conceptual framework, research question, significance of the study, and the review of the literature. The information in Section 2 includes the purpose statement, a review of my role as the researcher, the participants, and an overview of the research method and design, population and sampling method, and ethical research. The section also describes the data collection instrument, techniques of data organization, and data analysis. Section 3 includes the research study findings, including applications to professional practice, implications for social change, and recommendations for future study.

Section 2: The Project

In this section, I provide a comprehensive description of my qualitative multiple case study. The section encompasses the purpose statement, my role as the researcher, the role of participants, details of the population, and purposeful sampling method. In addition, the section includes overviews of the data collection instrument, data collection techniques, data organization, data analysis techniques, and design for rigorous reliability and validity of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. The targeted population consisted of the owners of six taxicab businesses in Denver, Colorado who have used business strategies to sustain their operations. The implications for positive social change include the potential for taxicab owners to develop sustainability strategies in a competitive environment. Taxicab owners with successful strategies could increase employment opportunities for unemployed citizens and improve the economic wellbeing of local communities.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher's "worldview" underwrites her/his approach to the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Researchers need to be conscious of their role in carrying out a qualitative research project. Unlike quantitative analysis where researchers employ written measures to evaluate constructs, the investigator in qualitative analysis is the instrument carrying out the study (Anderson, Guerreiro, & Smith, 2016). The role of a qualitative researcher encompasses data gathering, data organization, and data analysis (Collins & Cooper, 2014). My role as researcher was to select the appropriate methodology and design, locate prospective participants, collect data, and evaluate the data. The researcher's role in data analysis is critical, and reflexivity or awareness of biases is essential for maintaining rigor (Silver & Rivers, 2016). I had no professional or personal associations with the study's participants. A researcher's personal experience and acquaintance with participants' experiences could influence facets of the research process including recruitment of participants, data gathering, and data analysis (Berger, 2015).

It is imperative that researchers make ethical deliberations before researching any subject. Ethics refer to a set of intrinsic values that address the fundamental questions of right and wrong (Hamzaee & Baber, 2014). Researchers need to adhere to ethical standards throughout the research process (Akhavan, Ramezan, & Moghaddam, 2013). I conformed to the ethical standards outlined in the Belmont Report. The Belmont Report comprises a summary of the ethical principles and guidelines for research involving human subjects (National Institute of Health, 2014). The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research Subjects originally composed the report. The Belmont Report consists of a distinction between research and practice, the three basic ethical principles, and the application of these principles. The Belmont Report categorizes three fundamental ethical principles for research including beneficence, respect for individuals, and justice (U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services, 2016). The Belmont Report established guidelines for informed consent, assessment of risk and benefits, and the selection of subjects.

In this study, I used these three basic ethical principles to ensure a smooth research process. I treated the participants with respect and dignity to foster trust to ensure an appropriate researcher-participant working relationship. The principle of respect for persons necessitates that researchers handle individuals as autonomous agents. Human subjects should enter into the research voluntarily and with adequate information (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016). Further, I adhered to the Belmont principles by requesting the informed consent of all participants. My role included gathering data in a trustworthy way in conformity with the Belmont Report. The researcher is responsible for ensuring that informants comprehend the nature of the study, the role of the researcher, and their right to participate or not to participate in a study (Cross, Pickering, & Hickey, 2015). Researchers need to take precautions to ensure participants comprehend the role of the researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Bracketing is a means of signifying scientific rigor and the validity of the research (Sorsa, Kiikkala, & Åstedt-Kurki, 2015). Bracketing involves researchers reserving their pre-understanding and operating non-judgmentally (Sorsa et al., 2015). It allows the researcher to mitigate the potentially harmful effects of unacknowledged preconceptions to increase the rigor of the study (Sorsa et al., 2015). I consistently bracketed my views as I asked the participants questions. To mitigate personal bias, I also controlled my reactions to the interview responses during the interviews. An interview protocol permits the researcher to maintain consistency in the data collection process (Yin, 2014).

Interview protocols are useful in enhancing unity, consistency, and reliability during the entire interview process (Foley & O`Conner, 2013). I followed the interview protocol with each participant to make sure that I did not miss or skip any vital steps in the course of the interview process. My interview protocol comprised (a) an introduction, (b) discussion purpose, (c) discussion guidelines, (d) general instruction, (e) interview questions, and (f) conclusion (Appendix A). Using interview protocols to establish rules and guidelines is crucial when carrying out qualitative interviews (Dikko, 2016; Yin, 2014).

Participants

Participants for a study need to have relevant experiences related to the research question to offer valuable insights (Bernard, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Robinson, 2014). When carrying out a qualitative case study, researchers need to ensure that the experience of participants relates to the overarching research question (Yin, 2014). In addition, participants' willingness to partake in the study is critical (Yin, 2014). Researchers employ eligibility criteria to help in the selection of knowledgeable, willing participants who can present pertinent data on the study topic (Latiffi, Brahim, & Fathi, 2016). The primary criterion for inclusion in this study was that participants were taxicab business owners who had successfully implemented business strategies to sustain their operations. Thus, I selected participants who met the following qualifications: (a) were willing to participate, (b) were taxicab owners in Denver, Colorado, and (c) had successfully implemented business strategies to sustain their operations. I identified six successful taxicab owners and managers working for different cab companies to contact for the study.

Gaining access to participants requires a combination of strategic planning, hard work, and luck (Neale, Miller, & West, 2014). Researchers often obtain authorization from a gatekeeper within an organization to carry out research (Gülmez, Sağtaş, & Kahyaoğlu, 2016). A gatekeeper is an individual within a firm who controls an investigator's access to research (Gülmez et al., 2016). Gatekeepers must make decisions that ensure the welfare of the people and the company they stand in for (Whicher, Miller, Dunham, & Joffe, 2015). I worked directly with taxicab owners, so there were no gatekeepers who restricted access to potential participants. Through my network of taxicab business associates, I identified potential participants and contacted each taxicab owner directly through email with a letter of introduction (Appendix B). Participants confirmed their agreement to participate via a consent form. The introductory letter contained a description of the nature and importance of the research study. Researchers need to extend a letter of invitation to the participants after identifying the eligible participants for the study (Powell, Wilson, Redmond, Gaunt, & Ridd, 2016). In the introductory letter, I also included the informed consent form, which helped protect the participants' privacy. Those who agreed to participate signed the informed consent form, which outlined the purpose, criteria, and procedures of the study.

Hirschberg, Kahrass, and Strech (2014) noted that trust has a critical role in establishing a working relationship with participants and their decision to participate in a study. Creating a positive connection with participants is fundamental to establishing trust (Puig, Erwin, & Evenson, 2015). It was imperative for me to establish a working relationship with each participant by constant communication through site visits. An investigator must have a working relationship with the participants to successfully adhere to the case study protocol (Yin, 2014). I explained the reason and importance of the study to the participants to obtain their support. Establishing trust and building a good relationship are crucial because the participant must be at ease to respond to questions truthfully (Doody & Noonan, 2013). I ensured that the participants were comfortable by conducting the interview in the participants' offices.

Research Method and Design

A qualitative multiple case study helped me obtain in-depth perspectives of the taxicab owners. Using a multiple case study allows an investigator to analyze dissimilarities in cases and to comprehend discernable facts (Yin, 2014). Acquiring the knowledge from the experiences of the six participants enabled me to explore, identify, and corroborate the strategies significant for taxicab owners to sustain their operations.

Research Method

McCusker and Gunaydin (2015) observed that researchers use three primary research methods including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method. Qualitative researchers explore the *what*, *how,* and *why* of a phenomenon (Riazi & Candlin, 2014). Using the qualitative research method enables researchers to explore social phenomena, situations, and processes using multiple sources of data (Hazzan & Nutov 2014). Researchers conduct qualitative research to understand specific phenomena (Cronin, 2014). Employing a qualitative research method allowed me to obtain an in-depth understanding of my business problem by using different data collection techniques. Qualitative methods are useful for generating in-depth information that would be difficult to quantify, such as meanings, experiences, and understandings (Bristowe, Selman, & Murtagh, 2015). Using a qualitative approach allows a researcher to seek out the deep motivations underlying the respondents` mind-set (Barnham, 2015). Quantitative researchers examine relationships among numeric variables and test hypotheses (Ma, 2015). Mixed method researchers use both quantitative and qualitative components in a single study (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). I did not use the quantitative or mixed method because the purpose of this study was not to examine relationships among variables or to test a hypothesis, but rather to explore a business phenomenon.

Research Design

While there are many research designs, I considered only case study, ethnography, and phenomenology. Researchers use a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the what, how, and why of a bounded system (Yin, 2014; Zhang, 2014). Using a case study provides methodological flexibility through the integration of diverse paradigms, study designs, and techniques (Hyett et al., 2014). Ethnographic researchers focus on the culture and interpret cultural behaviors of a group (Desmond, 2014). A phenomenological design is useful when the researcher wants to explore the meanings of individuals' lived experiences. I did not select either an ethnographic or phenomenological design because I was not studying the culture of a group or the lived experiences of individuals.

The focus of this study was on business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. Using a case study design helps facilitate exploration of a bounded system using multiple data collection methods (Yin, 2014). Therefore, the case study design was appropriate for addressing my research question. I conducted semistructured face-to-face interviews and gathered secondary data sources such as charts of accounts from taxicab owners and managers who have successfully used business strategies to sustain their operations. The rich description of data and the use of other sources of data may assist a researcher in confirming findings and reducing potential bias (Finlay, 2013). Interviews are the most reliable data collection technique in qualitative research (Onwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014). I viewed semistructured interviews as the most suitable way to explore strategies taxicab owners may use to sustain their operations.

In qualitative research, data saturation is a technique that safeguards that the integrity of the researcher-acquired data. A researcher needs to avoid using too large or too small a sample size to arrive at saturation. The sample should be large enough for the researcher to obtain redundancy of responses or saturation (Yin, 2014). I ensured saturation by exploring the participants' responses until no new information emerged from the discussions. Some key features of data saturation include the emergence of no new codes, themes, or data (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Fusch and Ness (2015) also asserted that the type of study design will have impact on how and when a researcher arrives at data saturation. Data saturation arises when participants` responses become repetitive (Morse, Lowery, & Steury, 2014; Tavakol & Sandars, 2014). To attain data saturation, I continued to interview study participants until data become repetitive, no new information emerged, and no further coding was feasible. I carried out member checking after the interviews to ensure the validity of the data and the academic rigor of the study. Member checking enhances data validity (Birt et al., 2016).

Population and Sampling

The research's population consisted of the owners of taxicab businesses located in Denver County, Colorado who had used business strategies to sustain their operations. Qualitative studies do not have a commonly putative sample size because the ideal sample is dependent on the intent of the study, research questions, and productivity of the data (Elo et al., 2014). The appropriateness of participant numbers encompasses thoughtful decision-making; too few may not be adequate for obtaining the depth and breadth of the data necessary, whereas too many may result in superficial or cumbersome volumes of data (Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014). The sample size of this qualitative study consisted of all qualified participants including the six taxicab business owners and managers in Denver county, Colorado who had successfully used business strategies to sustain their operations. When a researcher defines conceptual framework accurately and concisely, a small sample size is appropriate for a case study (Yin, 2014).

Jenkins and Price (2014) contended that a small sample-size selection in a study produces a richer and deeper meaning of participants’ experiences of the problem. The use of samples smaller than the population size generates a risk of error in the analysis (Zhu, Barnes-Farrell, & Dalal, 2015). A researcher could determine the sample size by reaching a saturation point, whereby the investigator identifies no new themes (Mohamed et al., 2016). I used purposeful criterion sampling because it enabled me to conduct a qualitative inquiry on information-rich cases that focused on the research question of the study. Researchers use this form of purposeful criterion sampling as a guide to obtain information pertinent to the issue under investigation (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Purposeful criterion sampling is relevant for qualitative research such as case studies Moss, Gibson, & Dollarhide, 2014). A disadvantage of using purposeful criterion sampling is that there is a limitation of the sample size (Roy, Zvonkovic, Goldberg, Sharp, & LaRossa, 2015).

I requested each participant to read and sign a consent form to participate in the study. I secured the consent forms, field notes, and data transcription in a locked container for 5 years, and then destroy the materials to maintain the confidentiality of the participants. The six taxicab owners and managers that I selected for the study needed to possess the knowledge necessary to understand the factors I was investigating. The size of the sample needs to be large enough for the researcher to obtain redundancy of responses or saturation (Yin, 2014). To ensure saturation, it was imperative to explore the participants' responses until no new information emerged from the discussion. The sample was a representative of taxicab owners and managers in the taxicab industry. The parameters of the study were in Denver, Colorado. The number of interviews necessary to attain saturation is reliant on the point where there is no new information, new themes, new coding, and the ability to replicate is not achievable (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Morse & Coulehan, 2015).

Ethical Research

It is imperative for researchers to be cognizant of the ethical deliberations before carrying out research on any subject. Ethics refer to a set of intrinsic values that address the fundamental questions of right and wrong (Hamzaee & Baber, 2014). Researchers need to ensure ethical standards throughout the research process to preserve the meaning and purpose of the research (Akhavan et al., 2013). I complied with the ethical standards. I conformed to the three basic ethical principles for research outlined in the Belmont Report, which includes respect for individuals, beneficence, and justice (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016). Scholarly research rests upon the researchers' ethical actions. I considered and employed ethical issues during the collection of data from participants.

To make certain that I met the acceptable standards and practices, I explained all aspects of the study process to the participants. Researchers need to adhere to the acceptable research standards and practices (Brehaut et al., 2015). Each participant signed a consent form before participating in the interview. The consent form included information informing the participants about the research topic, risks, and benefits of being in the study. I walked through the consent form with each participant to confirm his or her understanding and clarified any questions. I held the interviews at the participants` sites in a conference room, which helped ensure privacy, and enabled participants to speak freely.

Participants` involvement in this study was voluntary, and participants could withdraw from the study at any time. If a participant chose to pull out from the study, I provided him/her with the interview notes and the audio recording to destroy. The participants for this study did not receive any compensation for their participation. I provided a copy of the interview notes and recordings to the participants for review before analyzing the data, and after the completion of my doctoral study, I sent the participants a summary of the results. All collected data remained in a password-protected external hard drive for 5 years before disposal. The participants' identities were confidential. Each participant received a unique number to maintain confidentiality. The final doctoral document contained the Walden IRB approval number. Walden University's approval number for this study is 12- 06-17-0492822

Data Collection Instruments

The objective of the study was to explore the insights and actions of six taxicab owners and managers who had successfully used business strategies to sustain their operations. A qualitative approach helped achieve the analysis and exploration. In a case study, the researcher is the primary data gathering instrument (Houghton et al., 2016). In this study, I served as the principal data collection instrument. Researchers carrying out case study research gather data from several sources and may profit from incorporating both perceptual and objective data (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). A case study design encompasses the use of multiple sources of data to explore case specifics (Phillips et al., 2014). There are six potential sources of data, including documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts (Yin, 2014). I employed semistructured interviews to explore the strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. I supplemented the semistructured interviews with observation and archival records. Semistructured interviews are typically exploratory, while structured interviews are more likely to be quantitative and confirmatory (Green et al., 2015). Semistructured interviews facilitate the flexibility of qualitative data collection while at the same time offering more standardization than in naturalistic or unstructured interviews (Green et al., 2015).

Semistructured interviews provide the researcher with a guide to drive the discussion, nevertheless, offer plasticity to refocus, or prompt for supplementary information, grounded on developing themes in the dialogue (Baškarada, 2014; Yin, 2014). A researcher organizes semistructured interview around a topic guide, which helps steer the discussion in a standardized manner and at the same time allowing adequate opportunity for relevant issues to emerge (Green et al., 2015). Participant interviews are critical sources of data in case study designs that enable a researcher to create a dialog with case actors to extract thematic data for accurate case representation (Yin, 2014). Data collection in case study research requires the researcher to integrate the data collection plan with real-world events thus making it indispensable to accurately design study field procedures (Yin, 2014). Before the interviews began, I asked each participant to sign a consent form.

I used an interview protocol (Appendix A) to ensure asking the participants the same questions systemically. The interview protocol is essential to guide the participant's dialogue and interaction (Erickson, 2014). Using an interview protocol helped ensure that the face-to-face interview was efficient and that I was asking each participant the same questions systemically. After getting informed consent from participants, I conducted semistructured, face-to-face interviews utilizing the established interview protocol (Appendix A). I followed the interview protocol by setting a time, date, and location for the interview that was convenient for the participants, as well as addressing any privacy and comfort concerns of the participants. I used a handheld digital recorder, with permission from the participants, to aid in understanding and to transcribe interview data. Conducting interviews is advantageous for researchers because of the accompanying opportunity to establish rapport with participants, and thereby obtaining their perceptions about the research topic (Yin, 2014). The qualitative interview method is a technique researcher employ to capture people's experiences and to comprehend how they give meaning to those experiences (Zhu & Mostafavi, 2017). The interview session commenced with greetings and introductions. I then, offered the participants hard copy prints out of the signed consent form letter for their records. It is imperative for participants to comprehend the possible risks and benefits by participating in a research study (Cook & Hoas, 2014; Schrems, 2014). Using an interview protocol (Appendix A) enabled me to reduce inconsistencies in the data collection process with each participant by ensuring that each step in the interview process was consistent. The interview protocol development is an essential task in semi-structured interviews (Zhu & Mostafavi, 2017). The quality of the protocol directly affects the quality of the study (Zhu & Mostafavi, 2017).

I provided the participants with information about the member checking procedures that researchers use to ensure the reliability and validity of the data. Member checking occurs near the end of the research project, by giving the transcript and report to the participants to review for the authenticity of the work (Andraski, Chandler, Powell, Humes, & Wakefield, 2014). After conducting the interviews, I used the member checking strategy to enhance the reliability and validity of the data collection process. In member checking, a researcher asks selected participants to read and comment on the study's findings as they develop and in final form to endorse the work as an accurate representation of the phenomenon (Neuman, 2014). Member checking is the most important action that qualitative researchers can take to ensure the credibility of a study's findings (Neuman, 2014). I interpreted the participants' responses from the interviews and allowed the participants to confirm or correct my interpretations of responses the participants provided during the interview.

Data Collection Technique

I commenced the data collection procedure through an email invitation to each possible participant. I employed a follow-up telephone call to substantiate receipt of participants' consent form to participate in the study, and in brief, introduced, and discoursed the study interview procedure and scheduled each initial interview, and started establishing rapport with the consenting participants. The data collection comprised of face-to-face semi structured interviews to capture the viewpoints of the participants, observations, and archival data. I used an audio-recorder to capture the interview process except for participants who declined the use of audio-record. The interview process encompassed collecting demographic information on each participant.

During the interview, I took notes of the participant's facial expressions and voice tones in a reflective journal. The combination of interviews, business artifact examination, and reflective journaling helped facilitate data analysis triangulation (Klonoski, 2013; Yin, 2014). Self-reflexivity is useful for qualitative researchers to expand the comprehension of the phenomenon (Cruz, 2015). I audio recorded all interviews, kept details of the notes, and then transferred the content from the notes to the Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word. Researchers need to record each interview to safeguard the utmost transference of participants` responses and to improve the ultimate data analysis procedure (Neuman, 2014). Qualitative data is a record of people’s statements (Myers, 2013) and qualitative data could emanate from interviews, observations, and documents (Yin, 2014). Interviews are the most popular technique of gathering data in qualitative research (Onwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014). Qualitative interviewing is about the human interface, and participating in live human subjects every so often requires complex power dynamics and associated ethical issues that researchers need to take into consideration (Cairney & Denny, 2015). While focus groups can spawn a substantial amount of naturalistic data in a comparatively short time, a possible drawback is that the researcher may have less control over the data that comes out (Marshall & Edgley, 2015). Moreover, with focus groups, dominant personalities may *take over* the group and other participants may not feel comfortable participating (Marshall & Edgley, 2015).

Neuman (2014) posited that using observation method allows a researcher to develop an appropriate level of understanding and an informed perspective from which to interpret and analyze the data. Besides, observation provides a defense against distortions stemming from superficiality (Neuman, 2014). Related to main informant interviews, researchers usually design individual in-depth interviews to gain deeper understandings of cohesions and variances among groups of people that share vital features or experiences, or to comprehend the viewpoints of persons at diverse points along a continuum of interest (Green et al., 2015). Investigators envision in-depth interviews to produce personal, intimate, and detailed narratives (Green et al., 2015). Interviews are the most important case study information source, and by the integration of the interviews and the supplemental materials, triangulation can occur (Yin, 2014).

Yin (2014) recommended asking participants open-ended interview questions to give participants the freedom of expression and opportunities to share views and experiences. I used an open-ended semi structured interview approach. Using semi structured interviews enables the researcher to capture rich data about how participants think, interpret information, and make judgments (Elsawah et al., 2015). Semistructured interviews provide the researcher with flexible, yet restricted, questions for participants designed to elicit answers within a given stem of inquiry (Morse & Coulehan, 2015). The face-to-face interviews allowed for an in-depth understanding of the taxicab owners and managers under study.

Besides, the face-to-face interviews allowed for forthcoming or relaxed sanctions. Face-to-face meetings were crucial to establish trust and establish relationships with taxicab owners and managers. With set questions, the interviews were conversational where participants elaborated on responses and gave additional insight. Each interview lasted 45-60 minutes. Identifying themes helped facilitate conceptualizing the underlying patterns in the data. I reviewed the raw data and notes several times to assist with identifying themes. After reviewing the transcripts, I presented my interpretation to the participants for member checking. In member checking, a researcher asks selected participants to read and comment on the study's findings as they develop and in final form to endorse the work as an accurate representation of the phenomenon (Neuman, 2014). To ensure confidentiality, I kept the data (interview questions, field notes, and flash drive) in a locked container for 5 years.

Data Organization Technique

A researcher brings order and structure to management and organization of the data from field notes, interviews, memos, and documents (Malagon-Maldonado, 2014). Data organization refers to separation of data into controllable pieces that researchers can analyze for perceptiveness related to the research questions (Neuman, 2014). A researcher needs to utilize an easy retrieval system to organize data for analysis and to adapt pre-defined categories during the analysis phase if necessary (Green & Thorogood, 2013). The richest type of data may emanate from transcribing verbatim, and is the preliminary phase in the data preparation for analysis (Malagon-Maldonado, 2014). After transcribing the interview, I (a) organized the data using word processing and spreadsheet software, (b) saved each interview as a separate file according to the date of the interview, and (c) stored the files within one designated folder on my personal computer.

I utilized a rolling coding process, which encompassed: (a) identifying units of meaning according to the word table categories relating to each theoretical proposition, (b) establishing initial in vivo codes based on participant responses, and (c) organizing these codes by color and extracted the main key themes based on the analysis procedure. Coding happens in the initial phases of data analysis and is noticeable as marking segments of the data and assigning labels that proceed toward the development of categories, themes, or major constructs (Malagon-Maldonado, 2014). Codes are concise signs that symbolize the key topics existing in the data which the researcher establishes to cover such areas as events, relationships, situations, opinions and so on (Neuman, 2014). I listed each theme on a spreadsheet; color coded each key theme and the associated sub-themes and organized both sub-themes and key themes in the spreadsheet. In creating a research project, it is important to create a secure storage repository for all raw data the researcher collected for the research project (Yin, 2014). While conducting a case study project, researchers should create a formal database to increase the reliability of the study and allow other investigators to review collected evidence (Yin, 2014).

The database from notes, documents, tabular materials, and narratives is necessary to document evidence and increase transparency (Yin, 2014). I kept and organized all physical elements associated with each interview in a physical file for electronic filing procedures, then organized the physical files according to the association with either interview events or thematic descriptions. I transferred all electronic files to a compact disc, stored this disc and all physical files associated with the research in a locked safe at my home for a predetermined period of at least five years, and I destroyed all data at the end of this retention period.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is procedure researchers utilize to arrange, assess, and interpret all information from the data gathering process (Yin, 2014). Triangulation is the process of crosschecking data from multiple sources to create accurate outcomes for certainty in data collection (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). Triangulation is the process of gathering data from multiple sources, via manifold approaches, and at various times, and analyzing the data from several theoretical, frameworks, if these are part of the study's conceptual structure to make sure that the data are thorough and representative of a variety of perspectives concerning the phenomenon under study (Neuman, 2014). The four types of triangulation in conducting evaluations include data triangulation which refers to the triangulation of data sources; investigator triangulation denoting the triangulation among different evaluators; the theory triangulation referring to the triangulation of perspective to the same data set and; methodological triangulation or triangulation of methods (Yin, 2014). I used methodological triangulation to validate data during the data analysis procedure. Researchers using methodological triangulation add confidence into the aspects of the study by demonstrating the unity that exists between research questions and the thematic identification process (Newman & Covrig, 2013). I carried out methodological triangulation in this study through three data collection sources, including semistructured interviews, company archival records, and the field notes to validate data during the data analysis procedure. A researcher needs to utilize more than one technique for gathering data for a research study (Neuman, 2014).

Yin (2014) suggested a five phase processes for researchers to carry out a qualitative data analysis including compiling, dissembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. The data analysis process commences with researchers accumulating all the data (Yin, 2014). Researchers then, disassemble the collected data into manageable fragments (Yin, 2014). In stage three, investigators generate codes and clusters (Yin, 2014). After forming the relevant themes, the researcher commences the data interpretations (Yin, 2014). In the final phase, the researcher needs to make conclusions from the analysis from the previous stage (Yin, 2014). Using the five steps represent a systematic way of analyzing the data (Cox & McLeod, 2014). Electronic formats for collecting and analyzing data have evolved through technology (Cope, 2014).

I utilized NVivo 11 plus software for the data analyses. NVivo is an effective tool for identifying key themes, coding, and mind-mapping data (Huberman & Saldana, 2013). Researchers could use NVivo to generate themes in seconds while reducing human error during the coding and theme selection process (Edwards-Jones, 2014). A researcher may use NVivo as the data software package to analyze data (Castleberry, 2014). I reread the interview to comprehend the content in the context and then presented the interview transcript to the interviewee for validation. I subsequently filtered the data and extracted the key concepts as they related to the overarching research question. The next step was to fit the extracted concepts into the research framework. I then performed forward-backwards and cross-case analysis to facilitate identification and mapping of common themes with the conceptual framework. I outlined a list of the concepts, reread the interviews, and assigned codes to all the concepts and ideas employing P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6 to denote participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 respectively until I attained data saturation. Next, I entered the narratives with their corresponding themes and codes in the NVivo software database for analysis. Researchers can identify key themes by searching the data for word frequency (Castleberry, 2014; Yin, 2013). The keywords located in the literature review such as business strategies, taxicab operations, customer service, competitive environment, competitive advantage, disruptive innovation, sustainability, and regulations served as the levers to form triggers or researcher generated categories during the interviewing process. Clustering and analyzing the collected data assisted in developing themes across the conceptual framework. Finally, I extracted the findings from the NVivo 11 plus software analysis, and reported the results by sharing with the participants and other stakeholders.

Reliability and Validity

Evaluating and safeguarding research quality are critical considerations for researchers to assess evidence to inform their research (Baillie, 2015). Reliability and validity concepts enable researchers to establish trustworthiness, quality, rigor, and consistency (Venkatesh et al., 2013). The most popular method for evaluating rigor include (a) dependability, (b) credibility, (c) transferability, and (d) confirmability (Elo et al., 2014; Houghton et al., 2013).

Reliability

Bernard (2013) asserted that reliability in a qualitative approach is the degree to which the outcomes of a study correctly represents the opinions of the participants. Reliability closes the gap between the findings of a study and the realities of the world.

Member checking probing techniques confirm the participants' responses during the interview to establish validity and reliability of the data collected (Koelsch, 2014). Member checking is a follow-up procedure that is useful for encouraging participants to validate the data interpretation and to offer a further viewpoint on the phenomenon under study. Member checking helps the researcher assure accurate interpretation of data collected from each participant (Koelsch, 2014; Yilmaz, 2013).

Dependability is the consistency and stability of the research procedure over time (Maron & Lussier, 2014). Dependability in a qualitative study ensures that audiences can rely on the research discoveries and can follow the specific research techniques the researchers utilized in carrying out the research (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). With the potential existence of disparity in participants' perspectives, dependability in a qualitative study helps ensure that the same outcomes from the study are realizable if repeated over time and under similar circumstances (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Hence, I covered the variations for similarities and differences in the participant's viewpoints to confirm the dependability of this study by asking questions utilizing member checking that concerned the phenomenon, describing modifications that happened in the research setting and how those alterations influenced the research outcomes. Furthermore, I searched for variations among participants' responses, appropriately detected emerging codes, examined the data amassed by using triangulation techniques, and after the transcript reviews, recoded data when necessary.

Validity

Yin (2014) asserted that researchers might realize validity in a study through the convergence of information they gather from several sources. As the investigator, I collected data from multiple sources utilizing semi structured, face-to-face interviews, and my observations within taxicab industry. Data needs to be highly reliable to be valid (Woolcock, 2013). The importance of validity in the context of a qualitative study depends on credibility, integrity, transferability, and hence, the findings can be defendable upon any confrontation (Venkatesh et al., 2013).

Creditability. Credibility is the extent to which participants of the study believe or trust the research findings (Munn, Porritt, Lockwood, Aromataris, & Pearson, 2014). Strategies for establishing credibility include peer debriefing, member checking, triangulation, and constant observation (Houghton et al., 2013). Data triangulation and data saturation process supports the credibility and the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Kaczynski, Salmona, & Smith, 2014; Klotz, Da Motta Veiga, Buckley, & Gavin, 2013). Strengthening credibility in the study encompassed the use of member checking and methodological triangulation. Researchers use member checking to allow participants to approve, correct, or extend the investigator's interpretation of their experiences as recorded in interview transcript (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Member checking for the study encompassed the participants` review of my preliminary interpretation of interview data for accuracy.

Methodological triangulation occurs when researchers employ multiple lines of evidence to answer the research question (Baillie, 2015). The triangulation for this study encompassed open-ended research questions, review of documentation and notes, and casual observations. Data sources for the study included semi structured interviews, review of company documents, and archival records about taxicab companies. The review of business documents enhances validation of an interviewee's response and facilitates data analysis (Houghton et al., 2013). The utilization of more than one procedure will further confirm that the data analysis is credible and trustworthy (Kornbluh, 2015).

Transferability. Transferability refers to the researcher's ability to transfer research methods and findings to other contexts, places, times, and people (Hallberg, 2013). Transferability is a process whereby another researcher decides to follow the same methods in a qualitative study although the investigator may not obtain the same outcomes because of the small sample size that researchers utilize in both studies (Yin, 2014). Transferability is about how well the study has made it possible for a reader to decide whether similar processes will succeed in their setting by understanding in an in-depth fashion how the research took place at the research site. Transferability refers to the ability to apply the findings of one research study to another setting (Elo et al., 2014).

A qualitative researcher can enhance transferability by doing a thorough description of the research context and limitations (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). High-quality outcomes, reporting of the analysis procedure, and unambiguous descriptions of participants and research context contribute to readers and future researchers' ability to evaluate if the findings apply to another context (Elo et al., 2014). Since I explored the business strategies that taxicab owners use to sustain their operations in Denver

Colorado, the boundaries of this study might affect the transferability of the findings to other sectors and geographical locations. To ensure transferability of my study, I provided a detailed description of the participants, research context, and data analysis process. The responsibility of demonstrating that a set of discoveries applies to another context rests more with another researcher who would make that transfer than the original investigator (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Confirmability. Aguirre and Bolton (2014) described confirmability as a degree of neutrality in the study findings shaped by the participants and the researcher’s interest. Confirmability is the extent to which participant responses from research discoveries instead of researcher bias, interest, or motivation (Cope, 2014). I assured confirmability through member checking, documentation of procedures for checking and rechecking the data during the data collection process, and through recording all personal feelings, biases, and insights. Most importantly, instead of leading the interviews, I followed by asking participants for clarity of definitions, metaphors, and sayings.

Marshall and Rossman (2016) noted that member checking enables a researcher to share data and interpretations with participants to ensure the integrity, trustworthiness, and accuracy of the findings. Reviewing the data for accuracy after analysis and interpretation of data can decrease the incidence of incorrect information (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Methodological triangulation and reflexivity formed the basis for addressing confirmability in this research. A researcher strengthens confirmability by gathering multiple sources of data to explore the research question from diverse perspectives (Baillie, 2015). Data from document review and semi structured interviews formed the basis for developing the themes that aligned with the purpose of the study.

Data saturation. Data saturation occurs when participant responses become repetitive (Morse et al., 2014; Tavakol & Sandars, 2014). Data saturation is a critical concern in qualitative case study research (Yin, 2014). Data saturation arises when additional interviews do not add any new information (Adom, Amakye, Doh, & Anku, 2014; Onwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014; O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). Data saturation involves employing diverse techniques to capturing all possible data from participants. Participants may provide insufficient information during the interviews (Fusch & Ness, 2015). In a situation, whereby the sample size is small, additional interviews might be necessary to assure that the researcher achieves data saturation (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Therefore, I continued to interview the study participants until data become repetitive, no new information emerged, and no further coding was feasible. A researcher attains data saturation when the participants mention no new emerging themes (Morse & Coulehan, 2015). Participants may provide insufficient information in the course of interviews (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Hence, follow up interviews led to accessing new data from the participants. I followed up with the six participants by email and continue to triangulate the interview data with documentation and archival records. I carried on with the data collection process until data saturation was evident.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of Section 2 was to provide detailed descriptions of the methodologies and strategies of the study. The discussions encompassed justification of the qualitative multiple case study design as the most suitable for the study, the role of the researcher, and criteria for participant selection. Besides, I discussed data collection, data analysis, and how I established reliability and validity. Section 3 includes a presentation of findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for actions, and recommendations for further studies.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. The emergence of so-called "ride sharing" services poses a challenge to the taxicab industry. My focus in this study was on business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. Collection and analysis of semistructured interview data in conjunction with reviews of the companies' archival records and my field notes showed business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. The five business strategy themes that emerged from the interview transcripts and other data sources included (a) customer service, (b) competitive strategies (c) market research (d) technological and cultural change, and (e) training. The findings showed how the taxicab owners and managers implemented these business strategies to sustain their operations. The participants suggested that comprehensive implementation of these business strategies might help other taxicab owners sustain their operations.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question for this study was: What strategies do taxicab owners use to sustain their operations? I used semistructured interviews and reviewed companies' archival records to gain an in-depth comprehension of the business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. I conducted, and audio recorded semistructured interviews in the participants' offices. The participants contributed their experiences, concepts, and perceptions about business strategies used to sustain their operations during the interview procedure. The six taxicab owners and managers responded to eight open-ended interview questions. I employed an interview protocol (Appendix A) as a guide to ensure that I gathered all data needed to respond to the research question. I thanked the participants for their participation in the study after the interview. I then transcribed the recordings and conducted member checking by presenting the participants with my interpretation of the interviews to close possible gaps and imprecise statements. Subsequently, I imported the substantiated interview data and information from the archival records into NVivo Plus software to code, organize, and analyze the data. I coded the names of the six participants as P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6 respectively to protect their identities.

I analyzed the data and identified five main themes related to the research topic including (a) customer service, (b) market research, (c) training, (d) competitive strategies, and (e) technological and cultural change. Other sub-themes emerged under the five main themes. The customer service theme included subthemes (a) convenience of service, and (b) service quality. Under competitive strategy, the sub-themes (a) affordability of service, and (b) differentiation strategy emerged. Figures 2 below represent the sub-themes.

The findings of this study involve business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. I discovered congruence between the themes I identified and those in the peer-reviewed articles I reviewed. Most of the participants’ responses regarding affordability of service, market research, technological and cultural change, convenience of service, and competitive strategies supported Christensen`s disruptive innovation theory.

Main Theme 1: Customer Service

Excellent customer service was the first theme. Participants identified excellent customer service as the most important business strategy to sustain taxicab operations. Each participant acknowledged customer relationships as the linchpin for their success and sustainability. Customer services included (a) convenience of service, and (b) service quality. Participants acknowledged that most taxicab owners are losing customers due to bad customer service such as high fares, lack of professionalism, unreliability of service, and inconvenient service. This view substantiated findings in the literature review that because of inconvenience, escalating prices, uncomfortable surroundings, and unreliable service, dissatisfied taxicab customers opted for Uber, which uses technologies to offer simple, affordable, accessible, and convenience service to customers (Detsky & Garber, 2016). Participants' responses to Questions 1 and 2 revealed the business strategies they used to sustain their operations. Participants identified good customer service as an indispensable business strategy to sustain taxicab operations.

Most of the participants reported that offering customers the service they desire and ensuring customer loyalty is vital to sustaining taxicab business operations. This finding buttress those in the existing body of literature indicating that satisfied customers increase an organization's profitability by repeat purchase, brand loyalty, and positive word of mouth (Arshad & Su, 2015). P2 and P3 reported regularly conducting customer surveys to ascertain trip satisfaction. Participants indicated that good communication was imperative in facilitating customer service. The responses of the participants along with the archival records revealed the role customer service played in sustaining their operations. Participants indicated that they established standards for customer service excellence and awarded deserving drivers and staff as a means of motivating them to exceed customers' expectations.

My analysis of participant responses and archival records indicated that an excellent customer relationship is fundamental to taxicab business' success. Finding ways of leveraging internal capabilities through excellent customer service is imperative in countering disruptive innovation (King & Baatartogtokh, 2015). Participants indicated that excellent customer services allowed them to counter the threats from disruptive innovations like Uber and Lyft. Table 2 and Figure 1 below show the frequency of the word *customer* in participants` responses.

Table 2.

Frequency of Customer Usage

Participants	References	Coverage
P1	13	3.46%
P2	9	1.65%
P3	6	1.40%
P4	12	2.19%
P5	16	2.94%
P6	10	3.52%

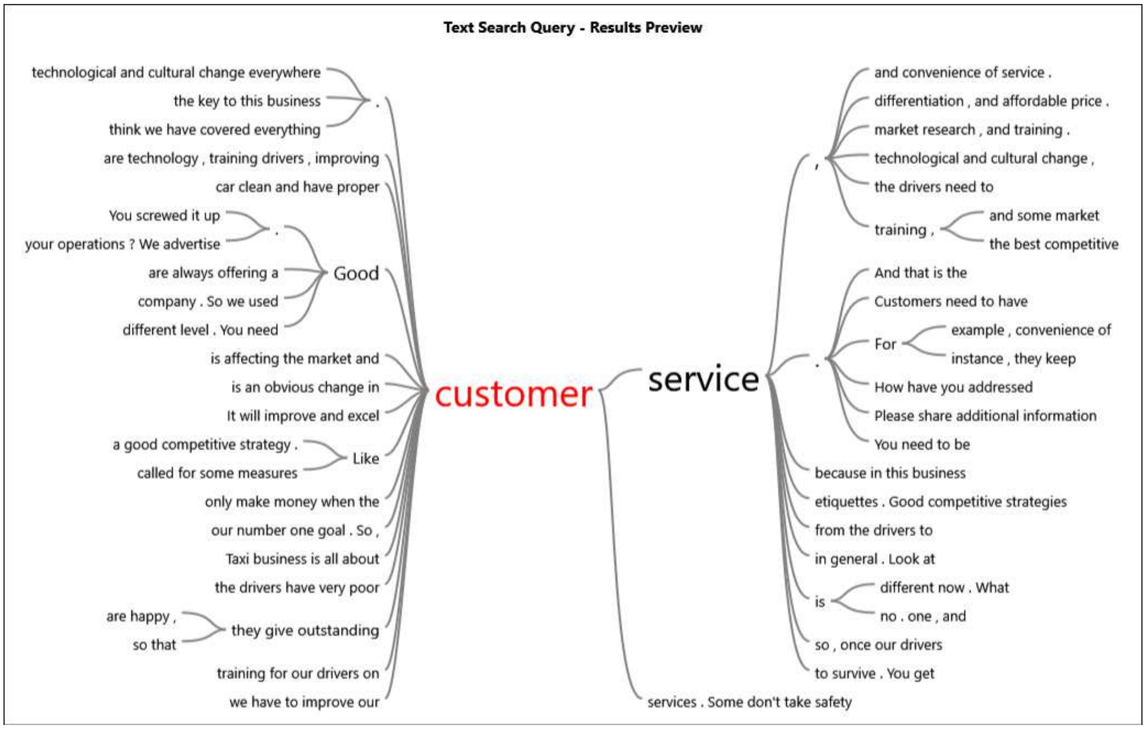

Figure 1. Word cloud, customer.

All six participants emphasized the importance of customer service in maintaining sustainable business operations. For instance, P1 reported that “customer service is very important in sustain my operations and I focus on serving the female communities.” To ensure that his business was consistently delivering outstanding customer service, P2 note that he “regularly conducted a survey to see if customers were satisfied.” P3 indicated that "asking customers how satisfied they were with our customer service helped us retain more customers." P4 revealed that he "ensured good customer service to sustain his operations." P5 reported that "providing excellent customer service was my number one goal and this assisted me to sustain my operations in spite of Uber." P6 revealed that "without good customer service we could not have sustained our operations, so the key was exceeding the customers` expectations."

Sub-theme 1: Convenience of service. The participants held the view that convenience of service is critical to attracting new customers and retaining old ones. Most participants indicated that service convenience has positive impact on customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. Participants acknowledged that providing convenient service allowed them to retain and attract more customers. Service convenience has positive effects on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Kaura, Durga Prasad, & Sharma, 2015). Participants reported that to ensure convenience of service, they needed to provide apps that allow customers to request rides from any location at any time.

Participants' response indicated that they responded to customers` request for rides quickly and made rides available in a timely manner. P2, P3, and P6 asserted that providing customers the services they needed in a timely manner helped them sustain their operations. Likewise, P1 stated, "Taxicab owners can have a positive impact on the five dimensions of service convenience including access, decision, benefit, transaction, and post benefit conveniences by reducing the time and efforts passengers use during the service consumption." Business managers could make decisions regarding service design and delivery in manners that could facilitate the highest level of convenience for their customers concerning decision, access, transaction, benefit, and post-benefit conveniences, knowing that service convenience can affect service loyalty (Rahman & Khan, 2014). The findings on sub-theme convenience of service supported this assertion. Table 3 and Figure 2 below show the frequency of *convenience of service* in participant responses.

Table 3.

Frequency of Convenience Usage

Participants	References	Coverage
P1	2	0.76%
P2	1	0.28%
P3	1	0.36%
P4	1	0.27%
P5	2	0.56%
P6	1	0.52%

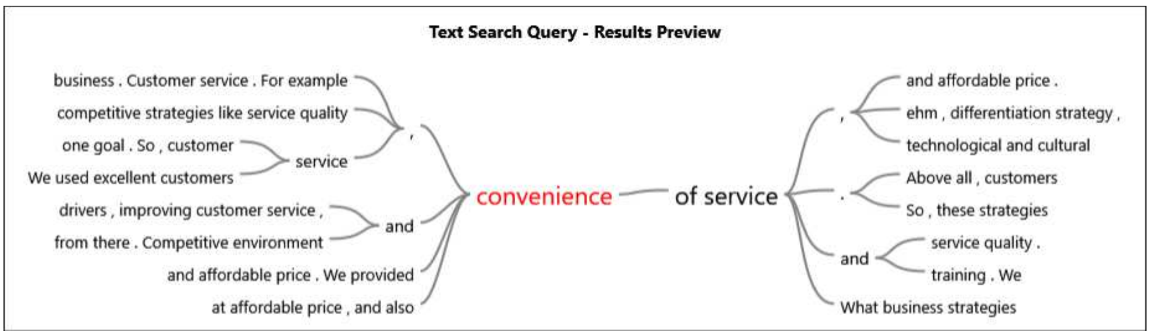

Figure 2. Frequency of convenience appearance.

Sub-theme 2: Service quality. Participants explained how service quality allowed them to attract and retained customers to sustain their operations. All the participants mentioned that using mostly new and clean vehicles allowed them to offer quality service to their customers, which in turn resulted in customer loyalty and sustainability of operations. P1, P3, and P6 indicated that providing clean and well-maintained vehicles along with quality customer service was instrumental in sustaining operations. P2 reported offering free water bottles to customers and ensured drivers opened and closed car doors for passengers. Participants measured and managed the overall service quality perceptions to develop trust and encourage customer loyalty. P6 mentioned that service quality played a key role in achieving sustainable advantage because satisfied customers increased their profitability by repeat rides and positive word of mouth. P4 ensured that customers had value for each dollar they spent taking a cab by providing quality service to customers, and P6 mentioned that quality of services set their company apart from the competitors.

Participants noted that conducting business with the highest level of trust, ethical standards, and honesty was essential in providing service quality to sustain operations. Service quality plays an integrating role in the relationship between the organization and its clientele because service quality is an outcome of internal organizational procedures and strategies that are critical in the service sequence that results in customer satisfaction, customer value, and loyalty (Arshad & Su, 2015). This assertion was supported by the findings on the service quality sub-theme. Table 4 and Figure 3 below show the frequency of *quality* in participant responses.

Table 4.

Frequency of Quality Usage

Participants	References	Coverage
P1	1	0.24%
P2	3	0.52%
P3	1	0.22%
P4	1	0.17%
P5	2	0.35%
P6	1	0.33%

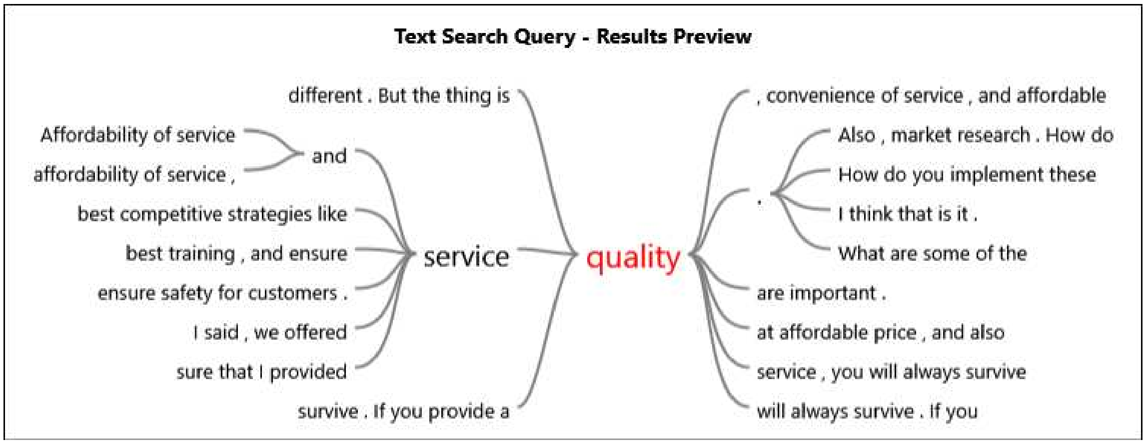

Figure 3. Frequency of quality usage

Main Theme 2: Competitive Strategies

The second main theme that emerged from the analysis of participants' responses and archival records was competitive strategies. Table 5 and figure 4 below show the frequency of *competitive* usage.

Table 5.

Frequency of Competitive Usage

Participants	References	Coverage
P1	3	0.56%
P2	2	0.55%
P3	4	1.43%
P4	2	0.54%
P5	3	0.84%
P6	3	1.57%

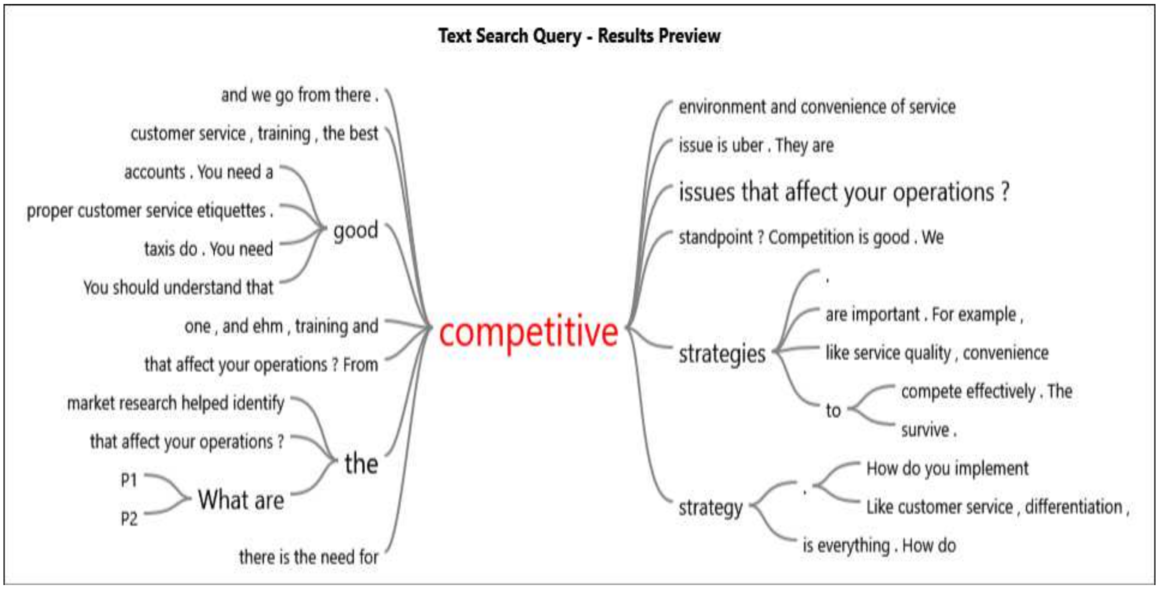

Figure 4. Frequency of competitive appearance

Competitive strategies included (a) differentiation strategy, and (b) affordability of service. Participants mentioned the immeasurable contribution of using competitive strategies in sustaining taxicab operations. The findings indicated that competitive strategies that taxicab owners used helped sustain their operations and the archival records confirmed this finding. The responses from the participants corroborated the findings of other researches that researchers recognize the significance of competitive strategies in sustaining business operations (Mathooko & Ogutu, 2015; Wu, Gao, & Gu, 2015). A competitive strategy is an essential component of organizational strategy (Ghezzi, 2014). The three basic competitive strategies include (a) overall cost leadership, (b) differentiation, and C) focus or niche strategies (Porter, 1980). My analysis of participants` responses to the interview questions and companies` internal records indicated that effective competitive strategies that taxicab owners and managers used were critical contributory components to sustaining taxicab operations. The findings of this research study demonstrate that one of the central indispensable instruments to sustaining taxicab operations is an effective and efficient competitive strategy which encompasses planning, anticipation of any future uncertainty, and designing appropriate and sustainable response strategies. Research findings emanated from the literature review, which discoursed competitive strategies was in alignment with the emergent theme competitive strategies. Instead of considering strategy as a single perfect plan that has a multi-year deployment cycle, business leaders ought to see it as a portfolio of competitive opportunities with each one managed throughout its life cycle (Aurik et al., 2015). Business leaders need to develop competitive advantage position to face competition and sustain growth rate (Ghosh et al., 2016).

Sub-theme 3: Differentiation strategy. Responses from all the participants depicted a distinct and efficient differentiation strategy. Participants shared how well-defined differentiation strategy adoption helped them gain competitive advantage over rivals to sustain their operations. All participants alleged effective differentiation strategy as an imperative vehicle for competitive advantage to sustain operations. Using a differentiation strategy facilitates distinctiveness, which enables a business manager to create barriers and reduce substitutes, thus, leading to higher margins which decrease the necessity for a low-cost advantage (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Four out of six participants or 66% of the participants mentioned that the use of uniqueness, robust marketing aptitudes, service innovation, and customers support helped attained efficient differentiation strategies. Participant 1 stated that “You always need to study and outsmart your rivals." Participant 5 mentioned that using the mobility vehicle allowed them to offer services to several medical and disabled passengers in the community.

The analysis of taxicab companies` documents corroborated participants` responses related to differentiation strategies. The participants responses regarding differentiation strategies corroborated other research`s findings in the literature review section of this study. Achieving a successful differentiation strategy naturally requires exceptionality, solid marketing abilities, service innovation instead of process innovation, applied research and development, consumers support, and rare focus on incentive-based pay structure (Sihite & Simanjuntak, 2015). Table 6 and Figure 5 below depict the frequency of *differentiation* usage.

Table 6.

Frequency of Differentiation Usage

Participants	References	Coverage
P1	1	0.51%
P2	1	0.37%
P3	1	0.49%
P4	2	0.73%
P5	1	0.38%
P6	2	1.41%

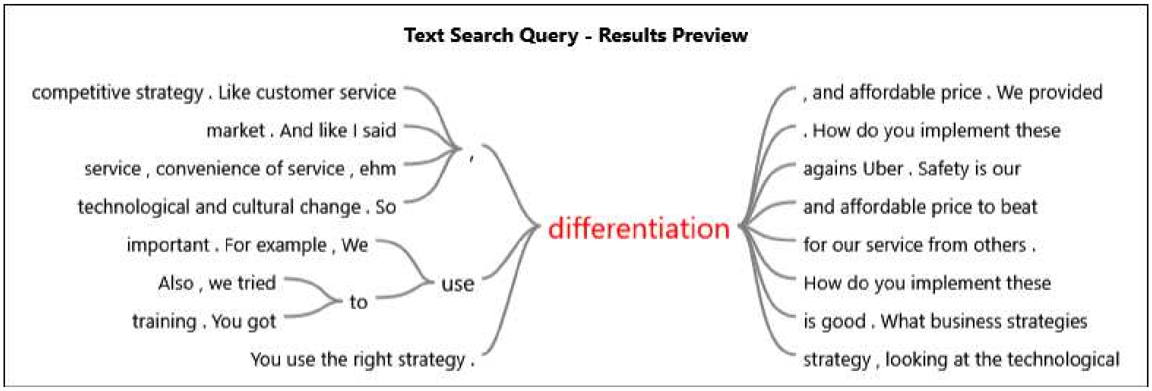

Figure 5. Frequency of differentiation usage

Sub-theme 4: Affordability of service. Affordability of service was another sub-theme that emerged. About half or 50% of the participants (i.e. three out of six participants) indicated affordability of service was one of the most essential means to attract and retain customers to sustain their taxicab business operations. Several participants mentioned that one of the reasons some taxicab companies failed to sustain their operations was inability to make rides affordable to customers. Most participants noted that by keeping fares low, they could fend off competition from the disruptive innovations like Uber and Lyft. This affirms the assertion that successful disruptive innovations are less expensive, simpler, smaller, and more convenient to use (Klenner et al., 2013). Participants 1, 2 and 5 ensured that their fares were lower than that of competitors. Participants 3 and 6 used advertising to show customers how low their fares were relative to rivals.

Participants paid close attention to the competition in the market and formulated new ideas on how to make their service more affordable to customers. Half of the participants asserted that affordable fares ensured customer loyalty which helped sustain operations. This assertion affirms Christensen's disruptive innovation theory. Christensen's theory of disruptive innovation describes the experience by which an innovation renovates a prevailing sector or market by presenting convenience, simplicity, affordability, and accessibility where impediment and astronomical cost are the existing state of affairs (Kowalski, 2017). Table 7 and Figure 6 below show the frequency of *affordability* usage.

Table 7.

Frequency of Affordability Usage

Participants	References	Coverage
P1	2	0.45%
P2	1	0.32%
P3	1	0.82%
P4	1	0.32%
P5	1	0.33%
P6	1	0.61%

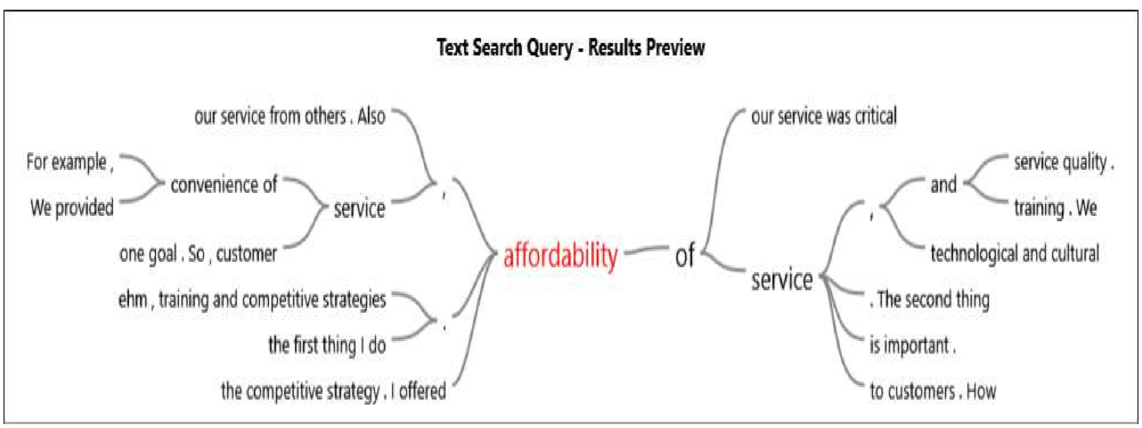

Figure 6. Frequency of affordability usage

Main Theme 3: Market Research

All participants suggested carrying out market research to identify potential customers and their specific transportation needs, and also to comprehend competitors and the trend of the taxicab market. Some participants claimed that the use of market research allowed them to provide mobility vehicles to pick up disabled customers. The mobility vehicles enabled cab drivers to pick up customers with wheel chairs. Five out of six or 83% of the participants periodically conducted market research that enable them to plan, make projections, or forecast their activities to efficiently serve their customers to sustain their operations. Participants 2 and 6 mentioned that periodic market research aided in forecasting the market and assessment of the business environment. Participant 3 stated that “the months of October, November, and December are usually low periods.” Participant 5 and 4 claimed that market research helps them identify what competitors are up to and countered them better innovative ideas. Participant 1 mentioned the significance of comprehending trends in seasons and the need to prepare for it. These responses corroborated with the assertion in the conceptual framework that the failure of existing businesses to introduce an innovation or to forecast changing market conditions leads to premature failure of the existing companies (Klenner et al., 2013).

The market research theme was in harmony with the study`s theory because taxicab owners and managers employed market research strategies to study the market and formulated business strategies to counter changes to sustain their operations. Disruptive innovation is a technique or an idea that enables business owners to establish a new market as well as value network that subsequently disrupts a current market and value network (Christensen, 1997; Meseko, 2014). Disruptive innovation is a suitable strategic framework that managers, entrepreneurs, and innovators could utilize to comprehend the market, identify possible opportunities and threats, and formulate a strategy (Gobble, 2015). Participant 6 and 4 mentioned that using market research allowed them to predict the market. Predicting the disruptiveness of innovation is critical to market incumbent managers since this enables managers of the established firms to avert outcomes that may be detrimental to their companies because of ignoring disruptive innovation (Nagy et al., 2016). Table 8 and Figure 7 show the frequency of *research* usage.

Table 8.

Frequency of Research Usage

Participants	References	Coverage
P1	1	0.27%
P2	1	0.20%
P3	3	0.78%
P4	1	0.20%
P5	1	0.20%
P6	3	1.12%

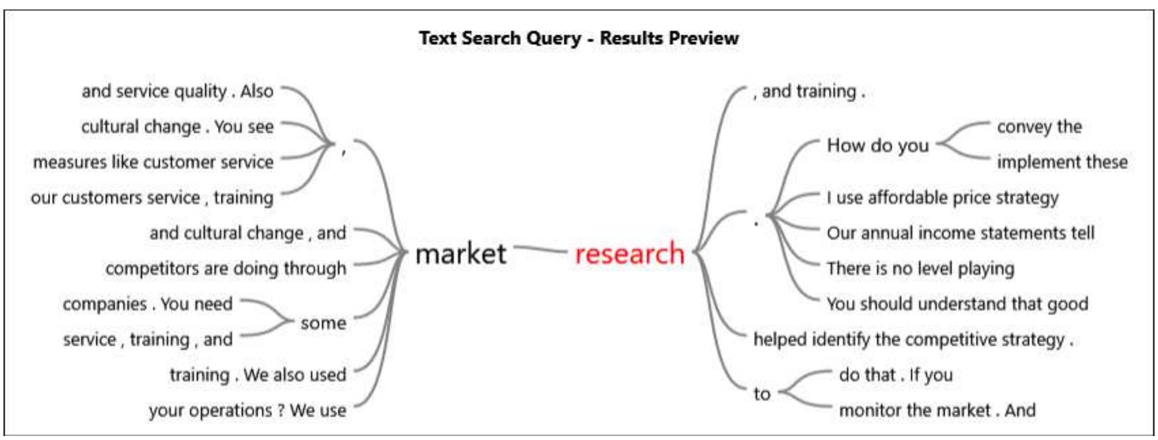

Figure 7. Frequency of research usage

Main Theme 4: Adaptation to Technological and Cultural changes

Another vital theme that emerged from the interviews was adaptation to technological and cultural changes. Due to the frequency of unparalleled technological transformation, business managers need to unearth creative means to work and innovate together (Van Bochoven, 2016). The technologies that the incumbent firms reject will later displace these technologies (Reinhard & Gurtner, 2015). Participants posited that the ability to adapt to the increasing technological and cultural changes was the key to sustaining taxicab operations amidst disruptive innovations like Uber and Lyft. This affirms the assertion that the three responses to disruptive innovation that business managers may execute when the disruption occurs include beating, joining, or outlasting the competition (Gans, 2016). Participants 1, 2, 3, and 5 indicated that switching from the traditional radio dispatch system to the use of modern computerized systems helped sustain their operations. Participant 2 noted that the computerized dispatch system was more efficient than the radio.

The participants trained their drivers on the use of new technologies. Participants 6 and 4 used external professionals to train drivers to operate new technologies effectively. Participants emphasized the significance of training both drivers and employees about new technologies. Besides, all participants indicated adjusting to social change which allowed them to sustain their operations. For example, some of the participants limited the use of old cars and used modern vehicles to match the taste and preferences of customers. Participants 5 used more-black colored SUV`s and hybrid vehicles. The findings were in harmony with the existing body of knowledge. The ability to change and adapt to the constantly evolving business environment is the only plausible long-term strategy in business strategy field because businesses in the modern era have to operate in an unpredictable, turbulent, fragile socioeconomic, and interconnected environment (Krotov et al., 2015). Some of the participants mentioned that adapting to technological and cultural changes required efficient and effective management. Progression of technological transformation and some megatrends are reshaping how firms approach innovation, and consequently, the role that innovation managers play in the business (Jones et al., 2016). Table 9 and Figure 8 below show the frequency of *technology* usage.

Table 9.

Frequency of Technological Usage

Participants	References	Coverage
P1	2	0.89%
P2	1	0.32%
P3	2	0.85%
P4	3	0.95%
P5	1	0.33%
P6	2	1.22%

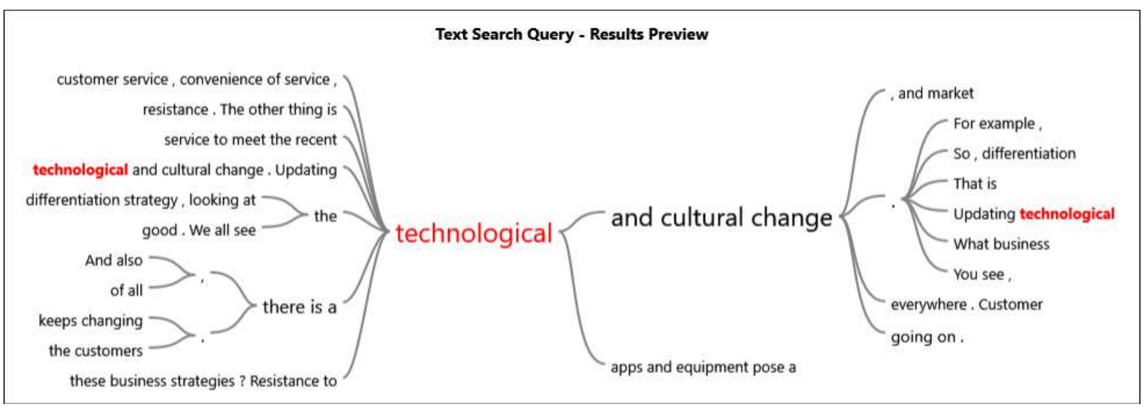

Figure 8. Frequency of technological usage

Main Theme 5: Training

The last but not the least main theme for the study was training. Each participant stressed the importance of training in sustaining their operations. This supposition buttressed previous research that revealed that business managers need to train their staff to be efficient in supporting innovation to maintain profitability and retain market share (Vertakova et al., 2016). Participants maintained that training encompassed both drivers and employees. Training focused mostly on customer service and new technologies to counter disruptive innovations such as Uber and Lyft. Business managers have countered potential disruption through effective reactive management, usually by financing forcefully in that invention after competitors have brought it to the market, or by acquiring the competitors (Gans, 2016).

Participants indicated that effective training on new technologies helped them satisfy customers to sustain operations. Participants 1, 4 and 5 vigorously trained employees and drivers on the efficient use new technologies. Participants trained employees and drivers on efficient customer service. Participants 1, 3, and 6 conducted monthly customer service training for drivers. The participated suggested that such training ensured customer satisfaction which helped sustain operations. Besides, all participants provided defensive training to drivers on regular basis to ensure safety of their customers. The internal documents from the companies validated such statements. The discoveries were in alignment with the existing body of knowledge. Customer service is an essential intermediary between service delivery innovation and service quality which touches the service quality of an enterprise (Arshad & Su, 2015). In addition, the findings affirmed the assertion that business managers need to invest in training and offer familiarity to technology that could assist effective operation of technological innovations, and enhance the operative challenges of the business

(Dwomoh, 2015). The use of training may have a significant impact on the performance of a firm (Guisado-Gonzalez, Vila-Alonso, & Guisado-Tato, 2016). Table 10 and Figure 9 below depicts the frequency of usage of *training*.

Table 10.

Frequency of Training Usage

Participants	References	Coverage
P1	2	0.56%
P2	4	0.80%
P3	2	0.52%
P4	3	0.59%
P5	1	0.20%
P6	4	1.52%

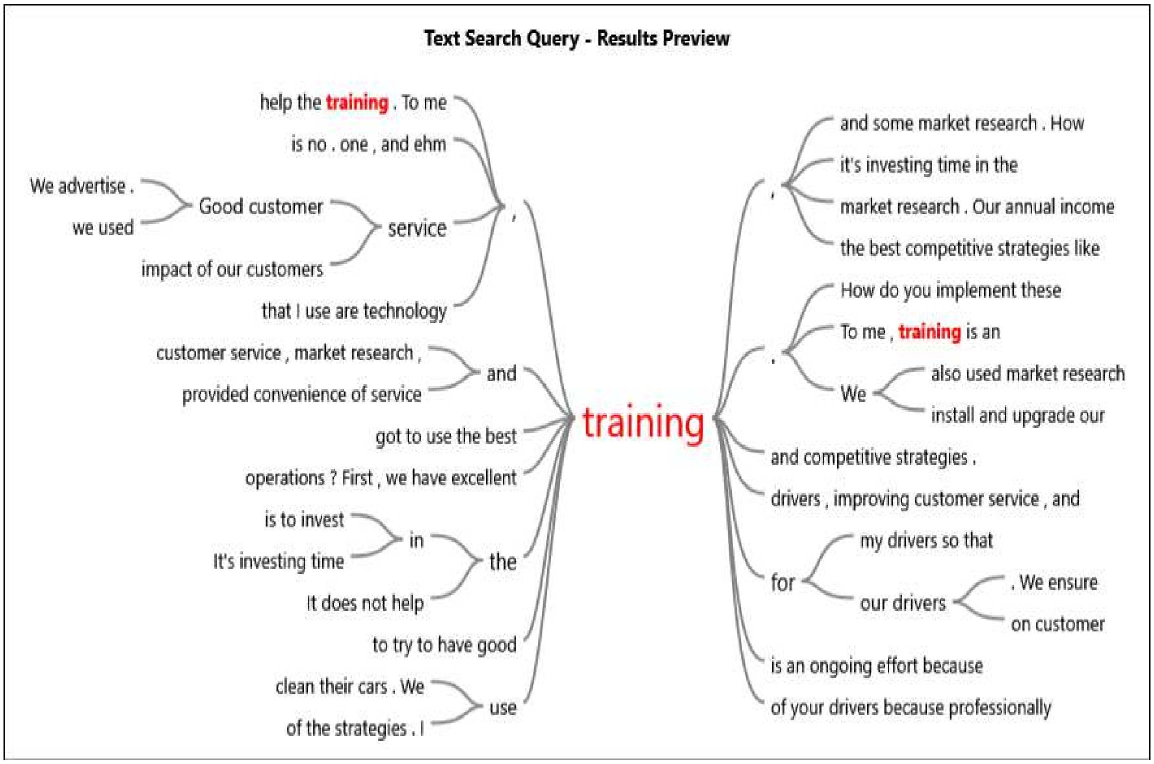

Figure 9. Frequency of training Usage

All participants stressed the need for training to sustain business operations. For instance, P1 stated that "as a taxicab owner, I make sure that my drivers are well-trained." P2 noted that he " used training and has excellent training system for his drivers." P3 emphasized that "investing time in training his drivers resulted in good customer service." P4 reported that “training our drivers on safety driving and customer relationship helps sustain our business.” P5 reported that “as a manager of the company, I ensure customer service training for drivers every month.” P5 indicated that “training our drivers on new technologies was vital to meeting our customers` needs to sustain our operations.”

The main themes emanated from the study included (a) customer service, (b) market research, (c) technological and cultural change, (d) competitive strategies, and (e) training. The four sub-themes comprised of (a) service quality, (b) convenience of service, (c) affordability of service, and (d) differentiation strategy. The conceptual framework that underlined the study was Christensen`s (1997) disruptive innovation theory. The study`s findings indicated that taxicab owners used excellent customers service, efficient market research, technological and cultural changes, competitive strategies, effective training, service quality, convenience of service, differentiation strategies, and affordability of service to sustain their operations. The findings aligned with the conceptual framework of disruptive innovation and the body of knowledge in this study.

Applications to Professional Practice

Taxicab owners could benefit from the results of this study by allowing owners to formulate a well-organized business strategy to sustain their operations in a competitive environment. Moreover, the study will complement the body of literature concerning the efficient operation of taxicab businesses. The discoveries from this study may be useful for improving strategies for running taxicab businesses. Inefficiency in management contributes to the poor performance of business (Stehlik, 2014). Productive business strategies may transform the operation of taxicab businesses. The result from this study could be useful for taxicab owners as it may allow them to adopt best business practices to avoid insolvency and facilitate profitability.

These effective and efficient business strategies include (a) effective customers services mechanism such as convenience of service and service quality, (b) formulation and use of efficient competitive strategies including differentiation strategy and making service affordable to customers, (c) establishing appropriate training mechanism for drivers and employees, (d) conducting market research to ascertain the market trends, customers, and competitors, and (e) adapting to the dynamics of technological and cultural changes to satisfy customers` requirements. Business managers could counter potential disruption through effective reactive management (Gans, 2016). Implementation of these strategies may be challenging as it could be met with resistance from drivers and staff, and also involve capital. Nonetheless, looking at business strategies to sustain operations from the lens of the long-term benefits might assist taxicab owners to gravitate away from the ineffective business strategies.

Implications for Social Change

Taxicabs are crucial to the U.S. public transportation network. The taxicab industry provided approximately 233,700 jobs in the United States in 2014 (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2016). However, the emergence of technology startups poses a challenge to the taxicab business because many taxicab passengers are switching to the technology startups, such as Uber and Lyft (Posen, 2015). Society could benefit from the results of this study. Taxicab owners may make positive contributions to society by providing jobs to unemployed citizens. Improving taxicab services could help boost the economy, reduce poverty, and improve the economic wellbeing of citizens. A good transportation system helps reduce poverty (Porter, 2014).

Efficient taxicab services may improve social conditions. Taxicab owners could create affordable transportation options that allow people to live a full personal and work life. A profitable business can produce income that can help support taxicab business owners and their families. Owners of taxicab businesses may contribute substantially to Denver's accessibility and provide a comprehensive service across numerous social groups and an urban environment. The findings and recommendations emanating from this study may help taxicab business owners to formulate effective business strategies, thereby improving the economic wellbeing of local communities.

Recommendations for Action

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. Taxicabs are crucial to the U.S. public transportation network. The taxicab industry provided approximately 233,700 jobs in the United States in 2014 (BLS, 2016). Existing and potential taxicab owners should be attentive to the study`s findings to comprehend how other taxicab owners have sustained their operations amidst competitive environment. I discovered five recommendations that could benefit potential and existing taxicab owners. Current and prospective taxicab owners need to focus on (a) providing excellent customer service, (b) providing market research, (c) formulating and implementing competitive strategies, (d) adapting to technological and cultural changes, and (e) offering appropriate training to drivers and staff. First, I recommend that taxicab owners pay close attention to customer service. The findings of the study revealed the significance of excellent customer service in sustaining taxicab business. Participants of the study strongly contended that excellent customer service is the key to attracting and retaining customers regardless of competition. Taxicab owners need to focus on providing service quality and convenience of service to foster excellent customer service.

The second recommendation for taxicab owners is to utilize market research to ascertain business trends, customer requirements, and current and potential competitions in the market. The study`s participants indicated how important using market research allowed them to adjust their strategies to sustain their operations. Carrying out market research will enable taxicab owners to develop effective business strategies to attract new customers and retain existing clients to sustain their operations. Participants suggested that utilizing market research is vital to identifying and satisfying customers' needs to sustain operations. Third, I recommend that taxicab owners, both current and potential use competitive strategies such as differentiation, affordability, and low-cost to gain competitive advantage over their rivals to sustain their operations. Reponses from the study`s participants indicated that using effective competitive strategies is imperative in fending off competition from rivals and also attracting and retaining customers to sustain taxicab operations. Taxicab owners who develop and implement efficient and effective competitive strategies may increase their market share as a result of accrued competitive advantage to sustain their operations.

The fourth recommendation for taxicab owners is to adapt to technological and cultural changes. Participants of the study asserted that due to constant technological advancement and cultural changes, taxicab owners need to be flexible to adapt to technological and cultural changes to sustain business. Participants suggested taxicab owners pay close attention to new technologies and cultural changes to meet their customers` needs to sustain operations. Finally, I recommend taxicab owners to pay close attention to training. Participants unanimously stressed the significance of utilizing training to sustain operations. Participants asserted that periodically training drivers and staff on customer service, technologies, cleanliness, and safety and professional driving is imperative to retain customers to sustain taxicab operations. Leaders of the Denver Chambers of Commerce and Colorado Public Utilities should share this study to potential and current taxicab owners. The results of this study could also be useful to struggling taxicab owners to develop business strategies to sustain their operations.

Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study comprised of the business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. The findings consisted of numerous business strategies that were indispensable to taxicab owners to sustain their operations. Carrying out further qualitative studies could be imperative in ascertaining other viable business strategies essential to assisting taxicab owners sustain their operations. As the study encompassed only the City of Denver, researchers need to carry out further studies outside the delimited geographical region of this research. I recommend future researchers to explore the strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations in diverse geographical locations to compare business strategies. In conducting this study, I utilized a qualitative multiple case study design, I therefore, recommend future researchers to employ other research designs and methodologies for further research on strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations.

Reflections

I was fortunate to have the chance to interview successful taxicab owners in Denver, Colorado who had used business strategies to sustain their operations. During this doctoral research process, I gained new knowledge that improved my comprehension of running taxicab business successfully. Initially, the participants were unwilling to participate and share information as they were alarmed discoursing matters related to their businesses. Nevertheless, they were willing to cooperate as I explained to them the purpose of the study. The participants of the study offered adequate data that resulted in the discoveries. The research transformed my view about transportation business, and I developed an interest in becoming a magnate to set up a transportation business to create employments and build up my community.

Conclusion

Taxicab businesses are an integral part of the U.S. transportation infrastructure by providing citizens a feasible mode of transportation. Formulating business strategies that will aid taxicab owners sustain their operations may help improve the economic wellbeing of local communities. Although, technological innovations impact the survival of this business model, some taxicab owners successfully sustain their operations using certain business strategies. Several taxicab owners require comprehension of the business strategies utilized by the successful taxicab owners to sustain their operations. In this study, the data collection procedure encompassed semistructured interview as well as evaluation of the companies` archival records. I utilized methodological triangulation to substantiate themes from manifold sources of data. The results of this research will serve as a supplementary information source for taxicab owners to develop business strategies to sustain operations. Besides, the discoveries of the study led to recommendations for further actions and studies. The findings may contribute to positive social change by allowing taxicab owners to achieve a long-term sustainable growth, generate employment, reduce poverty, and enhance the economic well-being of local communities. Five main themes and four sub-themes emanated from the study. The findings of the study revealed that taxicab owners placed value on customer service, innovation, and research based on the disruptive innovation theory. Moreover, the study`s finding revealed numerous business strategies to sustain taxicab operations including adaptation to technological changes, market research, competitive strategies, and training.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocols

Introduction

- Welcome participant and introduce myself.
- Explain the general purpose of the interview and why the participant was chosen.
- Discuss the purpose and process of interview.
- Explain the presence and purpose of the recording equipment.
- Outline general ground rules and interview guidelines such as being prepared for the interviewer to interrupt to assure that all the topics can be covered.
- Review break schedule and where the restrooms are located.
- Address the assurance of confidentiality.
- Inform the participant that information discussed is going to be analyzed as a whole and participant's name will not be used in any analysis of the interview.

Discussion Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations by interviewing at 4 taxicab owners located in Denver, CO who have used business strategies to sustain their business.

Discussion Guidelines

Interviewer will explain:

Please respond directly to the questions and if you don't understand the question, please let me know. I am here to ask questions, listen, and answer any questions you might have. If we seem to get stuck on a topic, I may interrupt you. I will keep your identity, participation, and remarks private. Please speak openly and honestly. This session will be tape recorded because I do not want to miss any comments.

General Instructions

When responding to questions that will be asked of you in the interview, please exclude all identifying information, such as your name and names of other parties. Your identity will be kept confidential and any information that will permit identification will be removed from the analysis.

Interview Questions

1. What are the competitive issues that affect your operations?
2. What business strategies do you use to sustain your operations?
3. How do you implement these business strategies to sustain your operations?
4. What are the competitive issues that affect your operations?
5. How do you convey the business strategies to gain buy-in from all stakeholders?
6. What are some of the difficulties you encounter in carrying out these business strategies?
7. How have you addressed the effectiveness of the strategies to sustain your operations?
8. Please share additional information related to business strategies you use to sustain your operations.

Conclusion

Discuss the transcription review process with participant, ask and answer any questions, and thank the participant for his or her time.

Appendix B: Introduction

Date: [Insert Date]

Re: Request to Participate in a Research Study

Dear [Recipient],

My name is Emmanuel Appah and I am currently a doctoral student at Walden University. I am investigating business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations by understanding at least 6 taxicabs owners' experiences.

I would greatly appreciate your participation.

The study will take the form of semi structured interviews with participants lasting approximately 45-60 minutes. Your participation and information will be consistent with Walden University's confidentiality guidelines. Your participation will be instrumental in providing the required data best to explore business strategies taxicab owners use to sustain their operations. If you decide to participate, I will send you a consent form via email that dictates your rights during the process and the purpose of the doctoral study.

At the end of this study, I will share results and findings with participants, scholars, and other stakeholders. Participation in the reviews will be voluntary, and the rights to decline to take part or stop at any time during the interview will be respected. Interviews will be conducted at a time that is convenient for you.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to email me or give me a call.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and assistance with my research project.

Sincerely,

Emmanuel Appah.

Appendix C: National Institutes of Health Certificate of Completion

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **emmanuel appah** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 07/03/2016.

Certification Number: 2105594.