




Identifying Key Competitive Factors in Industrial Enterprises Producing and Supplying Chemical Products in the Northwest Region of the Country Using Thematic Analysis

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence "Scott defines competitiveness as the ability to increase revenues..." should mention the context (e.g., firm-level, industry-level) more clearly to distinguish it from other definitions provided later in the paragraph.

The extensive listing of studies (e.g., Shehiki Tash et al., 2015; Vitayunun and Rongnganun, 2019) lacks synthesis. Consider summarizing common themes or contrasting insights instead of listing studies consecutively.

The phrase "From the 14th interview onward, repeated information was observed..." is not sufficient to define saturation. Please specify the criteria used to determine thematic saturation (e.g., no new codes/themes emerging).

The manuscript mentions feedback from five colleagues and three faculty members. Consider describing their expertise or roles to justify their involvement in ensuring confirmability.

While ethical considerations are generally covered, the manuscript should explicitly mention IRB or ethics committee approval if obtained. If not, state that none was required under institutional guidelines.

The mention of “433 data points in the form of short sentences” is vague. Please provide an example of a representative data point or how it contributed to code formation.

The progression from 82 keywords to 30 codes, 10 sub-themes, and 4 themes is significant. Please include a visual diagram or conceptual model to illustrate this structure for better clarity.

The suggestion to use ERP and CRM systems is appropriate, but it would be stronger with an example or brief justification for their relevance in chemical production enterprises.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The paragraph discusses the salt industry in northwest Iran but doesn't explain how this connects specifically to chemical product enterprises. Please clarify the link between salt resources and chemical industry competitiveness.

The sentence "One of the main reasons for conducting this study..." implies a research gap but does not specify what previous literature lacks. Please define the research gap more precisely, perhaps with citations.

While the use of snowball sampling is appropriate, the manuscript should describe how the initial participants were identified to strengthen transparency and credibility.

The table lacks clear explanations or operational definitions for many sub-themes (e.g., “Perceived value of customers”). Consider adding footnotes or a supplementary figure that defines each term based on coded data.

The discussion repeats the results without connecting them back to theoretical frameworks (e.g., Porter's Competitive Advantage or Resource-Based View). Strengthen the discussion by embedding the findings into these established theories.

The sentence "The results... do not align with the findings of..." is too general. Explain why the current results contradict those previous studies—was it due to different methodologies, industry sectors, or regional focus?

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.