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ABSTRACTS

Customized versus standardized financial services: A cross-cultural comparison of investment offers in USA and Finland

Jukka Laitamaki and Raija Järvinen

This study addresses customization versus standardization of financial services in a cross-cultural context by comparing investment offers in the United States of America and Finland. The study first defines the concepts of customization, standardization, personalization, and service offer in the context of financial services. It then describes the methodology and the results of the empirical study with focus on customization versus standardization of investment offers. The study concludes by discussing managerial applications and limitations of the study as well as implications for future research.

Predicting high-value stocks with financial ratios

Jo Vu

This study examines 150 Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) listed companies in an attempt to predict which company stocks are of greatest economic return based on their potential value to shareholders. Using the company characteristics and its twelve financial ratios, a discriminant analysis approach is used to identify which stocks are of high-value. The analysis shows that the four most significant predictor variables in discriminating between high, medium and low-value stocks are: earnings per share, return on assets, book value, and debt/equity ratios. High earnings, high return on assets, solid book value, and low debt/equity ratio are indicators of companies that are profitably run, under-priced, and well managed. Thus this finding, quantitatively derived, does make qualitative sense in the real world of finance. To the investment community, the analysis presented in this paper provides an additional tool for refining their decision in reviewing their existing portfolio, or in selecting new stocks.

A study of service expectations and perceptions of customers in the fitness industry in Malaysia: Building and enhancing marketing intelligence

Derek Ong Lai Teik and Elizabeth Andrews

The study aims to investigate the service expectations and perceptions of customers in the Fitness Industry in the Klang Valley Malaysia. A customer profile model based on needs was built to enhance intelligent marketing within the fitness industry. The results of the study show that there are specific cluster of needs that cater to combination of demographics. The SSQRS model was used as a tool to measure consumer perceptions of service quality at fitness centres. By using a combination of SSQRS analysis and data mining techniques such as principle component analysis and decision trees; fitness centres in the Klang Valley will be able to target their marketing strategies to match the needs and wants of their potential new customers as well as retain their current customer base.

FDI as a transmission mechanism of the 2007-2009 global financial crisis: Exploring the evidence through employment in the South African manufacturing sector

Kabelo Moeti and Jacques Kibambe Ngoie

Isolating the 2007-2009 global financial crisis from the other two global crises (oil price and food price) of the same period, it can be duly noted that key amongst the proposed reforms for preventing it's re-occurrence were calls for the reversal of the decades long trend towards deregulating national and international banking industries. Available evidence suggests that the global financial crisis resulted, in part from the sub-prime mortgage crisis in the United States.

The current paper gauges the effects that the aforementioned crisis may have had on employment in the South African manufacturing industry. Spread of the crisis via one of several possible transmission mechanisms, namely FDI, is explored by use of an econometric model. Further, as there is better disaggregated data and anecdotal evidence available for the automotive industrial sector (as compared to other sectors of the manufacturing industry), this evidence from the automotive sector is explored for purposes of either lending support to, or refuting the findings suggested by the model.

An investigation of employee silence within turkish organizations

Kubilay Ozyer, Esra Erenler, Oznur Azizoglu and Semra Guney

This study was conducted to examine the effects of top management openness on employee silence behaviors. Besides, the relationships between organizational commitment components and employee silence behaviour has been also analyzed in this study. With this aim, employee silence survey and affective and continuance organizational commitment survey were distributed to firms settled in Ankara, Turkey. Results of this study show that top management openness have direct and significant effect on employee silence behaviour. And also a significant and negative relation between employee silence behaviour and affective organizational commitment and a significant and positive relationship between employee silence and continuance commitment.