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for Ph.D. Students and Young Researchers
November 15th, 2019
Faculty of Management
University of Economics, Prague



OECONOMICA
Nakladatelství VŠE

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Designing the Research Project is Like Making a Painting?

Žaneta Pilgrimienė

Designing and carrying out a research project is a complex activity. It is both an art and a science. It can be compared to the process of making a painting. You start with an idea and then you continuously work in all areas of the canvas. You have to step back from time to time, to view the harmony of the whole picture, and then continue to paint until the satisfying result.

When talking about research design, most researchers would understand that it involves selecting an empirical research strategy and methods appropriate for answering research questions. That is an important part of research, but not the only. This paper presents the holistic approach to research design that involves two separate sets of activities. The first involves determining what you wish to achieve through the research project, i.e., it deals with modelling the content of the research – the conceptual design. The second set of activities concerns how to realize everything you wish to achieve during the implementation stage of the project – technical research design. Thus, the conceptual design determines what (research aim), why (research problem, research questions) and how much (research structure, conceptual model) we are going to study. Meanwhile technical design consists of decisions concerning how (research strategy), where (data sources and data collection methods) and when (activity plan and time schedule) we are going to do our research in order to answer the research questions.

All the steps in designing and carrying out a research project leads to a result (e.g. PhD thesis), where the various components of research are presented in a methodical and scientifically sound way. However, it would be naïve to think that someone can hold this linear approach during the whole research process. There are continual movements back and forwards between the various stages of research, and various components often are carried out simultaneously. Therefore, sometimes the research project seems like a never-ending story. However, in the end of this iterative process, one can present his/her finished painting to the audience.

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Different Races in Advertising: Stereotypes Detected

Valeriya Alferova

Context

Racial differences are an integral part of modern-day advertising as globalisation enables the connection and mixing of different cultures and extends the importance of international marketing issues. Racial stereotypes used in advertising may have a major effect on consumer behaviour. Races shown in advertising can be the benchmark for everyday life for dealing with members of a particular race although some race stereotypes may be perceived negatively (or even as insulting) by the majority and by minorities, which subsequently has a negative influence on advertising effectiveness.

Objective

This study aims to examine the appearance of stereotypes in advertisements with a model of a racial group that differs from a native Czech European race (Indian, African, Arabic, Asian etc.).

Method

This study is a pilot for further research of different racial groups' portrayal in advertising and its perception by consumers. This study uses content analysis and semiotic analysis, methods that are suitable for the investigation of linguistic messages and visual or auditory messages. The reason for using semiotic analysis is a detailed analysis of advertisements and to identify implicit stereotype messages. The research sample contains 12 advertisements. The appearance of stereotypes is analysed in accordance with the definition and classification of a stereotype that is available in the literature.

Results

The results of the study suggest that the appearance of Indian, African, Arabic, Asian racial groups in advertising in the European Union is not always connected with stereotypes' usage. Nevertheless, the presence of racial stereotypes in advertising was not examined in the representative sample. The results indicate marketers do not endeavour to show particular racial groups in lights of stereotypes. Still, the question remains if the appearance of different racial groups (with or without stereotypes) in advertising has a positive effect on Czech consumers' perception.

Conclusion

This study shows that advertisements with racial stereotypes appear and that Czech consumers may be exposed to them. The contribution of the study is to confirm different racial groups may appear in advertising in the EU without stereotyping. This study is a pilot for a further PhD research of different racial groups in advertising and its perception by consumers.

Acknowledgements

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Value Preferences and Frustration in the Workplace

Martina Glaserová

Context

A long-term personnel crisis, especially among nursing staff, torments the Czech healthcare sector despite the fact that the average salary there is continuously growing. Therefore, the financial remuneration factor is not decisive for the employee retention. There is a number of other factors influencing the turnover rate such as job satisfaction or the role of clarity, but this paper deals with the influence of value preferences.

Objective

The aim of the study was to map the value preferences of employees in two departments of a selected healthcare facility. Technical staff members work for the first department while the other case involved medical staff. The comparison also focused on what values were attributed by the employees to the organization. Furthermore, it was investigated to what extent the value setting of managers is reflected in their management style and how it affects the frustration of their subordinates.

Method

The data needed to evaluate the above-mentioned objectives were obtained through a questionnaire based on The Portrait Value Questionnaire. The obtained data were converted into comparable values and further evaluated through the calculation of mean values and correlation analysis.

Result

It was found at selected workplaces of the given organization that the individual value settings of employees and their perception of organizational values do not match. Furthermore, the frustration experienced by the staff in a given workplace is related to the style of management of their superiors that is affected by their value preferences.

Conclusions

By identifying the value setting of employees and its alignment with the organization, it is possible to better understand the internal environment of the organization not only in connection with the effort to retain employees, but also with regard to their further motivation and achieving alignment with the values of the organization.

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System Approach to Identification of Drivers and Indicators of Firm Competitiveness

Vítězslav Kotík

Context

Company strategy is usually considered as the initial and fundamental platform for synthesis of its competitiveness. There are, however, several bottlenecks, affecting smooth transformation of particular strategies into overall performance. The main problem consists in the fixed and incompatible lengths of managerial cycles, applied for (i) implementation of strategies and (ii) efficient regular controlling.

Objective

To characterize the gap between top-down strategic planning and bottom-up regular controlling and propose a theoretical framework for their seamless integration.

Method

Problem identification and description based on extensive literature review. Qualitative modeling of collected results, resulting in heterogeneous model of structural and behavioral aspects of analyzed phenomena. Validation of model with domain knowledge and data. Formulation, justification and discussion of underlying dynamic hypotheses. Suggestion of viable scenarios for problem elimination.

Results

The paper merges dynamic balanced scorecard (BSC) with management by objectives/objectives and key results (MBO/OKR) approaches. This bidirectional viewpoint allows to find the key multilateral correspondences among single competitiveness drivers and indicators. Authors also found that the current four-sector structure of BSC is too coarse and requires refinement. They also propose and justify need for increase of managerial on-demand agility.

Conclusion

Frequently toothless realization of strategies prevents firms from higher performance achievement. This paper analyzes and systemically models this problem and shows that structural refinement of BSC, structurally interconnected with the latest principles of MBO/OKR and extended with variable length of managerial cycles can improve the current situation and make companies more competitive.

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Introduction to Competitiveness and CSR Concept

Olga Oberreiterová

Context

In this paper will be presented the first part of my dissertation. There will be presented information collection, literature search and used research methods on the topic of competitiveness and corporate social responsibilities.

Objective

The paper should bring a comprehensive view of the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises. Furthermore, it will represent the area of corporate social responsibility, again with a focus on SMEs. What way is the concept of CSR used in small and medium-sized enterprises included.

Method

Methods for assessing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises will be presented. Furthermore, parts of the CSR concept used by SMEs will be introduced.

Results

The paper should be based on existing literature sources. The outcome of this paper will serve as a supporting article on promoting entrepreneurship, focusing on SMEs.

Conclusion

This paper will present an analysis of the literature review and the teaching methods used on the topic of competitiveness and social responsibility of companies.

Acknowledgement

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Effectiveness of Employee Training and Development

Gabriela Petru

Context

If every organisation is to develop in today's highly competitive environment, it cannot do without continuous training and development of its employees. However, training programmes are set in every organisation based on its given strategy and the resulting goals that have to meet not only the requirements of stakeholders (primarily the management of the organisation and the employees themselves), but also be in line with modern development trends and educational methods used.

Objective

The objective of this contribution is to find factors influencing the evaluation of the effectiveness of employee training and development.

Method

The theoretical methods of analysis were used, primary and secondary sources were analysed by synthesis, induction, deduction and comparison. The quantitative data was obtained by a questionnaire survey in the Czech organisations ($n = 207$; quota-based selection). The results can be generalised only for the given control sample. In total, 860 e-mails to owners or management of organisations were sent out, 207 returned, so it can be said that the e-mail return rate was 24.06%.

Results

The results have shown that the preferred methods for evaluating the training effectiveness include evaluating the employees' responses immediately after the training and evaluating the fulfilment of goals set in the employee training plan. It has been found that the evaluation method of the training effectiveness influences the evaluation of employee training and development.

Conclusion

The examined organisations most use the informal feedback from direct supervisors, informal feedback from employees, evaluation of employees' responses immediately after the training and evaluation of fulfilling goals set in the training plan. The results have also shown the dependence of the systematic process of measuring the training effectiveness on the size of the organisation, the existence of the HR department, the business sector and the fact whether the organisation is part of a larger organisation.

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Public Transport: Effectivity of Costs and Description of Specific Case

Ondřej Prchal

Context

Public transport is one of movers in world's economy. Many regions with their specific needs and history consequences can be supported by donations from government for public transport to their successful growth. As I mentioned in pervious text, subsidies from government budget is in total basic condition of functioning all over the word. But the sources are limited, so there is pressure on effective spending of money.

Objective

Identification of the main relations between cost of this service and offer of transport to citizens in regions. Proposal of strategies for their long-time sustainability, maximizing the stakeholders' utility.

Method

As method of research there will be review of literature together with observation of daily service of service on specific place. It should help to find statistical dependency of network density, frequency of lines and transporting capacity in cooperation with outgoings from public sector budget. Conclusion from this part of work should be description of main important relationships between costs on one side and effect for public, what we can defined as increase of interest for this service.

Results

I found consequences between increasing of costs/donations for companies, which operates service on concrete lines/region and interest of people for this type of service. One of the biggest problem in this problematics is to find a compromise between needs of potential passengers, organizing of services and budget limitations by submitters.

Conclusion

Proposed paper deals with specific internal matters of public transport in regions. It suggests and justifies transparent model of its implementation, eliminating the major bottlenecks. With this knowledge, addressed regions and their politic representatives can sustainably develop their existing and provisioning this type of services and keep the quality of public transport in compares with costs for municipal budget on a desirable level.

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Marketing Communication on Instagram: the Case of Czech Universities

Anton Shavshukov

Context

The number of universities in the Czech Republic and Europe is increasing. This trend is forcing universities to use modern marketing communication channels such as Instagram to address potential applicants. The younger generation Z has chosen Instagram as the main communication channel. Currently, Instagram users are in the age of 15 to 25 years old, the age of applying for university or considering a future application. The growing popularity of Instagram has created the possibility of both organic and paid advertising campaigns. To reduce costs and increase the effectiveness of organic advertising campaigns, universities need to understand and accept the “game” on Instagram and fully exploit its potential.

Objective

The objective of this study is to analyse the organic marketing communication of Czech universities on Instagram and to examine its relationship to university attractiveness (measured as the number of applicants).

Method

The study uses a quantitative approach based on primary data on Instagram communication in 2018 from public Instagram profiles and secondary data about the number of applicants in 2018 and 2019 (at particular universities) from the Ministry of Education. The first part of this study analyses the universities' Instagram profiles and deploys content analysis, comparative analysis and Chi-square test. The second part focuses on university attractiveness and uses descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.

Results

The results show that the number of universities using Instagram communication is increasing. The correlation between the organic universities' Instagram communication and university attractiveness was not confirmed. Despite the increasing number of Instagram posts, universities do not fully use the potential of the social network in terms of post content. The analysis of the thematic structure of the published content showed that the most popular topics are: a) people; b) the interiors of the University or the city where it is located; c) text message.

Conclusion

The main benefit of this study is the unique data collected for analysis. The results of the study show the marketing communication problems of universities on Instagram. Further research may be aimed at a comparative analysis of universities' communication between Instagram and Facebook, to a deeper analysis of the university followers' profiles.

Acknowledgements

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Family Business: Sustainability Model

Petr Svoboda

Context

Family firms form a worldwide considerable economic pillar with a long tradition. Due to their restricted ownership structure and extended value structure, they deal with specific managerial challenges. In comparison with their generally owned competitors, family firms tend to be more stable, accountable and trustable. On the other hand, they have to combine private and business life, deal with succession matters and relative closeness of top management or resolve nonstandard governance mechanisms.

Objective

The main objective is to highlight structural differences between generally and family-owned firms, summarise the state of this field and propose a way, how to create a dynamic model that can further propose viable strategies for long-time sustainability of family businesses, maximizing the stakeholders' utility.

Method

To be able to understand internal dynamics of family business, as well as to properly incorporate changing external environment, an underlying systemic model is necessary. It is proposed to incorporate several gradually evolving and mutually interlinked stages, formalizing knowledge, acquired from the present literature, and extended with available data. Initial modelling stage, the mind mapping, summarizes key terminology and outlines basic structure. These findings are subsequently refined through system and causal loop diagrams. The latter allows formulation, discussion and generalization of behavioural hypotheses, related to the researched sustainability phenomenon.

Results

It was found, that standard techniques and tools of strategic planning does not fully support all the above-mentioned aspects of family business. Thus, these specific features, reflecting various aspects of "familiness" were modelled and incorporated into general framework for strategic planning and management.

Conclusion

Proposed paper deals with specific internal matters of family-owned firms. It suggests and justifies transparent model of their implementation, eliminating the major bottlenecks. With this knowledge, addressed companies can sustainably develop their businesses and keep the quality of private life on a desirable level.

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Crisis Management Process: A Literature Review and a Conceptual Integration

Veronika Vašíčková

Context

Up to date business environment requires a constant activity of crisis management. Every day of procrastination brings with it the risk of a significant disruption of balance that will result in a crisis. Crisis management should be generally characterized as sets of approaches, measures and methods that are used in situations where the managerial skills are no longer sufficient. The goal is obvious: to minimize the impact of the crisis or to avoid a potential crisis. Therefore, this literature review refers to several approaches to this discipline, which mainly consider proactive management. More specifically, this article deals with reactive and proactive models that were described by a lot of authors (Pearson and Clair, 1998; Bertrand and Lajtha, 2002; Pollard and Hotho, 2006; Coombs, 2007; Zuzak and Köngiova, 2008; Antusak, 2009;; Parnell, Spillan and Crandall, 2014; Sahin et al., 2015), a crisis management model with an emphasis on organizational learning and feedback (Shrivastava), a resolution algorithm (Frybert, 1995; Mikusinova, Horvathova, 2019) and issues and crisis management relational model (Jaques, 2010). Based on literature review of these approaches are compared and finally grounded in a crisis management process.

Objective

The aim of this paper is a literature review, to summarize the gained knowledge and find common features of mentioned crisis management models.

Following research questions are answered:¹

Can the current concept of crisis management be seen as a suitable crisis management process?

How should be set up a crisis management process to lead to be a proactive management?

Method

Method is the literature review for building a literature background one of the research's stage.

Conclusion

This part of the literature review and findings support a thesis so called "Crisis as a Management Phenomenon". It helps to create a grounded theory corresponds with studied phenomenon reality.

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1 These research questions are patterned on a general assumption of thesis.

