

THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AS A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Technology has become an integral part of nearly every business today, as a result of increased competition, time pressures, and customer preferences. The hotel, cruise line and theme park businesses are no exception. Many of these tourism competitors use technology to make the customer experience easier and more pleasant. These businesses also use computers to increase safety and security for their guests. Other uses for mechanization revolve around demand management, pricing and profit maximization, virtual experiences as well as customer tracking and retention.

This paper will highlight strategic decisions and global strategies by top hospitality competitors that utilize technology as a key success factor. Consumer reaction to such tactics will be summarized, and the concept of strategic bundling will be evaluated in this industry. Survey results of hospitality consumers' reactions to technology offerings will be shared. The takeaways of the analysis will be given. The conclusions of the paper will provide managerial insights and guidance for tourism businesses so that they might maximize customer satisfaction, utilization rates and performance.

JOB PREPARATION STRATEGIES ACROSS THE EUROPEAN UNION: A CROSS CULTURAL STUDY OF THREE MEMBER NATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The objective of post-secondary education is to prepare students for the workforce. Though countless hours of lectures, labs, group projects, and presentations university students are prepared academically. But, how do these students utilize their skills to find that elusive treasure; their first job. The researchers sought to compare processes across Europe and surveyed university students in a northern, central, and southern European universities.

Sweden is a small country on the northernmost peninsula of Europe. This northern kingdom has total GDP of \$500 billion with a very high a per capita GDP of \$49,700 with 6.9 % unemployment.

Germany is the fifth largest economy in the world, and is the powerhouse on the European continent with a GDP of @ \$4 trillion. It's per capita GDP of \$48,200, is impressive, but is below that of its northern neighbor. However, Germany has the lowest unemployment rate of 4.3%

Finally, Spain is a one of the southernmost European countries with a total GDP of \$1.7 trillion. However, its inhabitants have a lower per capita GDP of \$36,500. Further, Spain is experiencing a depressed economy with an unemployment rate of 22.7%. Since jobs are harder to find in Spain, are the efforts comparable to that difficult environment?

A total of 746 usable responses were obtained and intriguing findings on their use of resumes, interviewing techniques, and a variety of job preparation skills were found. In addition, the researchers utilized statistical methods to ascertain if there were differences by country, gender, personality type, or field of study in their quest for employment. Several statistically significant findings emerged which will be presented and explained in the paper.

In addition, recommendations for practice will be presented.

UNRAVELLING E-COMMERCE IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

E-Commerce is an interesting area of research, which is volatile and vibrant. It is hard to imagine that it didn't exist a few years back, then it came with a lot of fanfare, only to slump in the early 2000s in India. Only deep pocket and few accepted industries like online travel, career, some B2B companies and social networking survived online. In 2007, flipkart started its operations in India and in 2013, Amazon entered India and for the last three years, it has been growing 100% in sales, every year*(Subramani , Kalyan)¹ , with over ten crores of products to offer. Flipkart has been giving it a tough competition, which has resulted in the customer position being stronger than ever before. The online retailing scene can be anything but still. India has been a very different playing field as opinionated by experts in the field. Indian customers are unique and so are the initiatives by the government. Digital India initiative is a big motivator for companies to come and invest in the Indian E-Commerce space. This paper is drafted around the detailed study of the E-commerce-phenomena in India, trying to figure out and try to predict how e-commerce would shape up in the coming years with special reference to Government Initiatives and tussle amongst the online retailers. To achieve these objectives a detailed study of literature related to E-commerce in India has been undertaken, accompanies by interviews with the Chief Executive Officers, Chief Marketing Officers, of various top e-commerce giants in India.

Key Words: E-Commerce, India, Digital India, Online Retailers, Flipkart, Amazon

¹ *Subramani, Kalyan, (2016), "Note ban has been good for Amazon", at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/business-news/note-ban-has-been-good-for-amazon-says-india-head/story-kNbY0SGckZvGaYsNMoiqZN.html> accessed on March 1, 2017

PERCIEVED SELF-EFFICACY AND SERVICE QUALITY AS PREDICTORS OF ONLINE LEARNING ACCEPTANCE AMONG ONLINE DISTANCE LEARNING STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

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ABSTRACT

Online learning is a new phenomenon in Sub-Sahara Africa, particularly in Nigeria. There is a gap between the conventional and online distance learning system on the acceptability of the system. Therefore this study examined Perceived Self-efficacy and Service Quality as Predictors of Online Learning Acceptance among Online Distance Learning Students of University of Ibadan.

The study made use of cross-sectional survey to gather data from 473 respondents. A structured questionnaire made up of Perceived Self-efficacy (PS), Service Quality (SQ) and Online Learning Acceptability (OLA) scales were utilized. T-test for independent samples, zero order correlation and multiple regressions were used in analyzing data at $<.05$ level of significance.

Results indicated that participants with high level of self-efficacy scored significantly higher on online learning acceptance $t(471) = 14.896$. Service quality also predicted online learning acceptance $t(471) = -29.311$. Self-efficacy and service quality jointly predicted online learning acceptance ($R^2 = .765$; $F_{2, 470} = 765.389$), there is significant relationship between service quality, self-efficacy and online learning acceptance ($p < .01$).

Perceived self-efficacy, service quality are important factors in online learning acceptance, therefore the providers of Online Distance Learning should take these factors into consideration.

Keywords: Online distance learning, perceived self-efficacy, service quality, online learning acceptability

ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP STYLES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This research empirically examines leadership style differences in the context of Small and medium size enterprises. The research finding suggests there are significant differences between American and Indian immigrant leadership styles. A total of 160 Indian immigrants and 161 American employee sample responses were collected; data were analysed with Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANOVA), as it provided inferences of the significant differences based on Mean scores. The scores reported differences between leadership styles: transformational style (American 3.2) and (Indian immigrant 2.6); laissez-faire style (American 2.9) and (Indian immigrant 1.6). These significant findings offer firm-level leader style implications within a global small business context, and contributes to the accumulated literatures on cross-cultural leadership/firm-level theories.

Keywords: Leadership styles, Cross-cultural leadership, Innovative behavior, Entrepreneurial orientation

CHALLENGES OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE ON STEM MATHEMATICS COURSES

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, various challenges on teaching STEM Mathematics courses at UMES are summarized, and authors also proposed a threefold approach: Admirable Authority, Supportive Parenthood, Traceable Instructorship, in handling encountered difficulties. Major literature papers in neuropsychology and neurobiology, such as Roger Wolcott Sperry's research discoveries, are adopted in our teaching practice. In our teaching experiments, each student is recommended a booklet of micro-habit for his/her study guidance. Those students who had below average scores or outliers test scores will be individually diagnosed by Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technology (ZMET) as well as using Roger Wolcott Sperry's research results. The results of our teaching Mathematics courses are very satisfied.

ECONOMICS OF ORGANIC HEIRLOOM TOMATOES GROWN ON POULTRY COMPOST AND MYCORRHIZA-AMENDED SOIL ON DELMARVA

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ABSTRACT

Organic fruits and vegetables are on increasing demand in recent years. Researchers are continuously looking for economic ways of producing organic produce. This is a 4-year USDA Evans-Allen experimental research project to investigate the effects of using Mycorrhiza and Poultry Compost in the production of Organic Heirloom Tomatoes on the Delmarva Peninsula. Four different soil treatments, Control (only with Cover Crops), VAM (Vesicular Arbuscular Mycorrhiza), Poultry Compost, and VAM + Poultry Compost, were applied to designated plots on two varieties of tomatoes (Debarao Plum and Brandywine Red). A General Linear Model (GLM) procedure was used to analyze the effects of different treatments. Results showed some mixed and inconsistent responses to the soil treatments, in some situations, in terms of total yields and marketable yields. In general, Debarao Plum yielded significantly higher marketable produce than the Brandywine Red variety. From an economic point of view, year four showed better performance when poultry compost was significantly increased in the treatments. Hence, this seems to be a better and profitable practice for both varieties. Further research should be undertaken to find out the best practice to increase both total and marketable yields for greater profitability.

Key Words: Control, VAM, Compost, GLM, Organic, Treatments, Mycorrhiza

AN EXAMINATION OF STAKEHOLDER THEORY IN ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Stakeholder theory is a widely accepted concept that suggests that businesses who look beyond the immediate focus of financial gain for its shareholders and subsequently embrace the interdependent nature between all its stakeholders increase the likelihood of long term sustainability (Wu and Wokutch, 2015). While highly established and supported as an effective theory related to corporate social responsibility (Kilic and Kalkan, 2017), it is not without shortcomings. The lack of an agreed upon definition of “stakeholder” and the vast array of theory narratives prevent clarity and theory development (Miles 2017). As a result, theorists are now focusing on definitions and ideological classification methods (Miles, 2017). Stakeholder theory has led to the development of stakeholder management, which provides guidelines and steps for managers who look to apply the theory. The identified stakeholder organizational systems, interest levels, engagement levels and likelihood of support are critical to success (Harrison and Wicks, 2013). If the concept of stakeholder theory is sincerely embraced by an organization and stakeholder project management processes are implemented, an organization’s long-term success should be significantly improved.

A FACTOR ANALYTIC STUDY OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF CAMPUS ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE WITH PRACTICES THAT WORK

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ABSTRACT

A campus environment of a university is unique but there are factors that are common to how students experience it. Students spend several formative years at a university. Students' perceptions of a campus influence their responses to the experiences they have on campus as well as lifelong academic and learning experiences after they have graduated. Our research purpose is to identify the key factors that make up the organizational life of a campus especially as perceived by its students. There are multiple studies on campus climate conducted on the educational environment and diversity of the student body as mandated by federal authorities. Academic consultants conduct surveys of campuses and report findings that are important for cultural, political and sociological purposes. Very few of these studies address the organizational life of a campus and even fewer that have been designed with input from students. Few studies identify what affects student engagement. This study provides insight into factors important to students' engagement and personal growth. In this study we have used personal interviews, focus groups and survey methodology to research student aspirations and the direct and indirect factors on campus that enable them to achieve their aspirations. Several focus groups were conducted to identify the direction and content of the study. All participants were undergraduate students in a four year college. Based on the qualitative analysis of the focus groups results, a set of research objectives emerged. The research objectives were operationalized as a survey instrument with twenty eight Likert scaled questions and various demographic variables. Several step-wise regression analyses and factor analyses routines were run using SPSS. We ran the program until we had a model structure of a campus' organizational climate. One research hypothesis models the major components of campus' organizational climate. Our preliminary findings are that these factors include social interaction, professional development, administrative support, academic faculty-student interaction and system wide support. Another hypothesis models the influence of engagement on the degree of responsiveness that can impact student outcomes. Our preliminary results show that project work with student faculty interaction impacts engagement and affects student outcomes positively. We conclude that a campus' organizational climate has a critical impact on student engagement and lifelong learning.

SPORTS AS A TOOL FOR LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This paper touched briefly on the historical and linguistic origin of the word “sport,” and then proceeded to explore how some academic cum sport enthusiasts in the modern era such as English Dr. William Penny Brookes, French Pierre Fredy (a.k.a. Baron de Coubertin), as well as American Dr. Luther H. Gulick pioneered the use of sports to facilitate learning. Furthermore, Brookes and Coubertin helped revive the ancient Greek Olympic Games between the middle and the late nineteenth century.

The three academic and sports gurus mentioned above were not alone in the quest to adapt sports to learning. For instance, L.E. Sadovskii and A. L. Sadovskii in *Mathematics and Sports, Mathematical World*. Vol. 3, 1985 posit that “sports (could) promote a person’s all-around development, intellectual as well as physical.” What’s more, in a compendium of essays titled *Mathematics and Sports* (2010), authors/scholars in *Mathematical Association of America’s* publication also uphold the views that different sport events could be used to teach mathematics to a broad audience.

The paper concluded with the attestation to a better graduation rate of over 80% by student-athletes, compared to about 38% graduation rate by non-athletes at a Historically Black Institution. Thus, arguably, the effect of sports on learning to student-athletes seems not only measurable, but inspiring.

TECHNOLOGY AND RELATED DISCIPLINES IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Abstract. Even though technology has played an important role in many disciplines and research areas, including the area of international business, there is little existing discussion on the trends, contributions, and roles of technology within this research area. Technology has been referenced widely in the research area of international business and exists within several contexts, such as those of knowledge, information technology (IT), and information communication technology (ICT). The aim of this paper is to explore how technology is used in the area of international business and investigate the trends regarding technology in the main international business journals. By providing the trends and information, I expect to help IB scholars to leverage technology to make the IB area more abundant as well as to focus on interdisciplinary areas such as information systems (IS).