ARTICLES

VECM MODELLING WITH EXOGENOUS VARIABLES AND METAL PRICE FORMATION IN PANEL DATA USING THE EXAMPLE OF ALUMINIUM
Aman Agarwal

A MIXED INTEGER GOAL PROGRAMMING (MIGP) MODEL FOR MULTI-PERIOD COMPLEX CORPORATE FINANCING PROBLEMS
J.H.W. Penn & R.D. Terrell

AN ANALYSIS OF EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH OF THE INDIAN BANKING SECTOR
Ali A. Ansary Rostamp, Adel Atar & Seyyed Hamid Khodadad Hosseini

EMERGING CYBER MARKET: POTENTIAL AND THREAT FOR REGIONAL BOURSES
Kuon W. Kothari, Athanasios G. Noulas & Man Mohan Agarwal

Sujit Sikdar & Kalpan Mukherjee

THE GOVERNMENT SECURITIES MARKET: POST REFORMS SCENARIO & POLICY ISSUES
Bharati Pathak

DETERMINANTS OF THE FLOW OF INSTITUTIONAL CREDIT TO AGRICULTURE IN KARNATAKA STATE
Adinath Abate, T.R. Krishna Reddy, N. Mahesh & Lalith Achutha

Thijja ten Raa

INVESTORS' DEMOGRAPHICS AND RISK BEARING CAPACITY
V. Rajanjan

ON INTEREST RATES, THE LIQUIDITY TRAP AND INFORMATION COSTS
Moniher Bellalah

INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO OF SCHEDULED COMMERCIAL BANKS
RBI Banking Statistical Division

FINANCES OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT COMPANIES, 2000-01
RBI Company Finances Division

ABSTRACTS OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

THE ROLE OF PRIMARY AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT SOCIETIES IN FARM CREDIT: A CASE STUDY OF EAST GODAVARI DISTRICT (A.P.)
N. Koti Reddi

ENERGY CONSUMPTION PATTERN IN RURAL HOUSEHOLDS OF ASSAM: A CASE STUDY OF JORHAT SUB-DIVISION
Leena Das

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF SELECTED COMPUTER CENTRES IN KOLHAPUR AND SANGOLI DISTRICTS
B. S. Sawant

DAIRY CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN KARNATAKA
Bastavraj S. Bensii

BIBLIOGRAPHY: FINANCIAL RE-ENGINEERING

BOOK REVIEWS

ANNOTATED LISTINGS

CONTENTS OF CURRENT PERIODICALS

INDEX OF CURRENT PERIODICALS

STATISTICS

SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

PLACEMENTS

The quarterly journal of Indian Institute of Finance
ARTICLES

VECM MODELLING WITH EXOGENOUS VARIABLES AND METAL PRICE FORMATION IN PANEL DATA USING THE EXAMPLE OF ALUMINIUM
Aman Agarwal, J.H.W. Penn & R.D. Terrell

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Ali A. Anvary Rostamy, Adel Azar & Seyyed H.K. Hosseini

AN ANALYSIS OF EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH OF THE INDIAN BANKING SECTOR
Kasum W. Kelkar, Athanasios G. Noulas & Man Mohan Agarwal

EMERGING CYBER MARKET : POTENTIAL AND THREAT FOR REGIONAL BOURSES
Sujit Sikdar & Sri Kalyan Mukherjee

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Bharati Pathak

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A SIMPLE VERSION OF THE HENRY GEORGE THEOREM
Thips ten Raai

INVESTORS DEMOGRAPHICS AND RISK BEARING CAPACITY
V. Rajarajan

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Mondher Bellalah

INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO OF SCHEDULED COMMERCIAL BANKS
RBI Banking Statistical Division

FINANCES OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT COMPANIES, 2009-01
RBI Company Finances Division

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B.S. Sawant

DAIRY CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN KARNATAKA
Basavaraj S. Binni

BIBLIOGRAPHY: FINANCIAL RE-ENGINEERING
Abstract of Doctoral Dissertation

Problems and Prospects of Selected Computer Centres in Kolhapur and Sangli Districts

B.S. SAWANT* 

Introduction

COMPUTER CENTRE PROVIDES computing services to a variety of users through the operation of computer and auxiliary hardware; and through ancillary services provided by its staff. In addition, the computer centre performs an advisory function in programming and in the development of new processes. Fundamentally, there are four services provided by a computer centre: 1) machine operation, 2) system programming, 3) application system development and 4) data control, scheduling and quality control.

Statement of Problem

It was observed that computer centres have been facing problems in hardware maintenance, software, training and education to employees upgradation, accessories maintenance and innovation. This requires in-depth study and the subject entitled “Problems and Prospects of Selected Computer Centres in Sangli and Kolhapur Districts” came up.

Objectives of The Study

The research work was undertaken with the prime objective of identifying the various problems of selected computer centres located in Sangli and Kolhapur districts. Therefore, the following specific objectives were kept in mind while conducting the study of the computer centres

- To trace the origin, growth, and development of computer centres.
- To study the sectorwise working pattern of selected computer centres.
- To examine the various problems and their causes of selected computer centres.

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1 The Thesis submitted to Shivaji University, Kolhapur on 30th June 2000 for the award of Ph. D. Degree, awarded on July 5th, 2001, under the supervision of Professor V. M. Chavan, Pro—Vice Chancellor, Shivaji University, Kolhapur, INDIA
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Abstract of Doctoral Dissertation

To explore the motivating factors that lead to the development of computer centres in private, public, and cooperative sectors.
To evaluate the performance of selected computer centres.
To make comparative analysis of selected computer centres with respect to performance, problems and prospects.
To suggest ways and means to overcome the problems being faced by the selected computer centres in Sangli and Kolhapur Districts.

Hypothesis Of The Study
With the above stated objectives in mind, the following hypotheses were formed for the present study-

- There is tremendous growth of computer centre facility utilization in public, private and cooperative sectors.
- There is no significant difference between computer centre working activities busy hours and their sectors.
- Most of the computer centres are doing the data processing work for their own organisation.
- Installation of computer centre facilities in all the sectors has been motivated by potential growth through speed, accuracy and automation.
- Hardware and software maintenance problems faced by computer centres in different sectors are similar in nature.
- The computer centres are facing a number of problems such as high technology obsolesces, lack of trained staff, under-utilisation and inadequate infrastructure facilities.

Methodology Of The Study
With the aforesaid objectives in mind, the methodology chosen for the research study and it can be elaborated as under-

1. Survey method: In order to elicit relevant information pertaining to the problems of selected computer centres, a survey method was adopted. In order to collect responses, a comprehensive questionnaire was administered by personally visiting the selected computer centres.

2. Observation method: To have a microscopic view of computer centre Management practices, the researcher adopted an observation method too. The objective of these observation method was to cross examine the various responses received from the respondents regarding problems facing.

Sample Design
The computer centres for study were selected from three major sectors, namely, public, private and cooperative, on the basis of purposive sampling technique as well as stratified random sampling and in a strata representation given to all types of computer centres in all the organisations. While deciding the sample size, the following important criteria were used

- The major computer centres from all the three sectors that employed full-time programmers and analysts were selected;
The computer centres having at least 8 computer systems, and different system software, along with facilities of different operating platforms such as LAN, Unix, Windows, Windows-NT, were selected.

Those computer centres working efficiently and with a reputation in their sector and which were started three years before, doing the work of data processing for own organization or for customer or for both.

Outline Of The Study

The research study is divided into seven chapters. In the first chapter, a detailed note on, statement of problem, objective, scope, methodology adopted, source of data collection, hypotheses of the study and review of the past literature are explained. In the second chapter, the conceptual ideas about computer centre are covered; namely their type, activities, role of staff, and infrastructure. In the third chapter, there is brief explanation of recent trends in information technology and Indian Information Technology Industry development. A broad profile of the Kolhapur and Sangli districts is presented in the fourth chapter. In the fifth chapter, a broad profile of history of evolution of computer centers in the Kolhapur and Sangli districts is presented. In the sixth chapter, the data thus collected has been presented in tabular form and the analysis carried out is described in this chapter. In the Seventh chapter, in the light of the analyses, findings are developed and an attempt is made to give suggestions for improving the prospects of the computer centres. A comprehensive Bibliography is also given for ready reference in the appendix.

Major Observations

- The computer centres working in Kolhapur and Sangli districts are mostly in public, private and cooperative sectors.
- Most of the computers are used for on-line data processing work.
- In most of the samples selected from computer centres (95%), total investment on hardware is more because there is a heavy problem of maintenance of the old machines.
- Software industry has a trend of bringing new versions of software in the market with additional facilities such as Visual Basic, Visual FoxPro, Visual C++, JAVA, ASP, JSP and RDBMS etc. and their selling price also rises higher, and the existing machine configuration is not capable for installation of these latest software.
- Computer centres of the sample selected in the study have not developed a contingency plan to provide guidance for immediate control over the probable contingencies and backup arrangements for use during interim operation.
- It is found through this research work, that the computer centres are not fully utilized.
- It is observed that most of the computer centres used tailor-made software packages and have paid less attention on software development.
- It is found that, majority of the computer centres face at present the problems of rapid changes in Information Technology industry, lack of trained staff availability and under utilized capacity.
Suggestions
Consdering the problem areas identified in the study and keeping them in view, the researcher wishes to make the following suggestions for the increase of performance and greater prospects in various sector-wise computer centres:

- Proper scheduling of day-to-day work is a sure solution for full utilization of the resources.
- To develop adequate security measures for minimizing the impact of threats, more serious threats are from people from inside or outside gaining unauthorized access in the computer centre.
- It is necessary to make the computer centre as much immune to the viruses as possible.
- Protection measures such as prevention, detection and recovery should be used in computer centres.
- Prevention of unauthorized access to computer centres.
- Training camps should be arranged for the varied staff.

Conclusion
It is concluded that, if these suggestions are implemented, they can lead to better performance, which is very essential for not only the survival of any computer centre but also maintain its competitive position in the market, especially in these days of globalization, liberalization and free economy which are the market buzzwords.