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Selected Abstracts from Seidman Faculty

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Selected Abstracts from Seidman Faculty
(Compiled by Professor Jaideep Motwani, Chair,
Research Advisory Committee)

***The following papers are available on request.
Please contact Jaideep Motwani at (616) 771-6742.***

"Environmental Scanning in U.S. Companies: Their Nature and their Relationship to Performance," **Ram Subramanian, Nirmala Fernandes, Earl Harper**. Published in: Management International Review.

Questionnaire responses from 101 *Fortune* 500 companies were used to examine the current practices in environmental scanning and to test two hypotheses relating performance to scanning phase. Results indicated that about 60 percent of the sample firms exhibited advanced scanning systems. The study also found support for a relationship between performance (measured by profitability and growth) and advanced scanning systems.

"How to Integrate and Refine Global Operations," **Jaideep Motwani** (with Susan Kadzban). Published in: Review of Business.

Expanding global operations affords an opportunity for organizations to grow and optimize. This study describes today's rich macroeconomics climate and offers a multiphased definition of globalization. In addition, it emphasizes the importance of worldwide operations in meeting market needs and as a competitive response to the escalating importance of quality and flexibility. Recommendations for integration and refinement of operations are also offered. Finally, the benefits and rewards of successfully integrating global operations are discussed.

"Information Systems Management Issues: Controlling Issue Proliferation," James Jiang. Under Review.

Understanding information systems management issues is important in the allocation of scarce resources. However, issues shift over time, are not often clearly delineated, and depend on respondent vocabularies. These problems have lead to an ever increasing list of issues that can blur understanding of the issues as well as make survey design a larger challenge. By means of an empirical investigation of West Michigan firms, this study examines perceptions of issue importance to develop a preliminary definition of issue categories. With further refinement, the issue categories can mitigate difficulties of vocabulary, lessen technology bias, and allow for a clearer descriptive framework.

"A Methodology for Assessing Time-Based Competitive Advantage of Manufacturing Firms," **Ashok Kumar and Jaideep Motwani**. Published in: International Journal of Operations & Production Management.

Compressing the time for idea to market has become a focal competitive priority of global manufacturing companies. In this paper, a framework that assesses the strategic value of a company in terms of its "time" performance is developed. The primary tool employed to accomplish this is an agility matrix whose cells represent intersection of agility-determinants and segments of time-to-market. After grading a company on each cell, a weighted sum, called the "ability index" is computed, which is an indicator of the firm's capability to compete on time.

"Perceptions of Charismatic Leadership in an Air Force Aircraft Maintenance Organization," **Lars L. Larson** (with Wayne G. Stone). Published in: Proceedings of the Association of Management 13th International Conference.

Although the concept of charismatic leadership has produced a wealth of theories, there has been very little testing of those theories. This research tested two concepts underlying Conger and Kanungo's theory of charisma, risky and unconventional behavior in perceived charismatic leaders, in an Air Force organizational setting. Results indicated charismatic leaders are perceived as being less risk-taking and less unconventional in exhibited behavior than noncharismatics. Implications for future research are discussed.

"The West Michigan International Business Survey," Carol Sanchez. In Progress.

Business activity in the West Michigan area is becoming increasingly international, with export sales from West Michigan totaling almost \$2 billion in 1993. In this study, the international business activity of West Michigan firms is being studied to help SSB better design and target its international business seminars, programs, and technical assistance services to the local business community. The study will examine to what extent firms in Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon, and Allegan counties are involved in international business, and what resources firms might seek to help them expand international business. A preliminary report of the results of the study is expected in May, 1996.

"Employer Search and Worker-Firm Match Quality," **Paul Sicilian**. Forthcoming Publication in the Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance.

This paper uses data from a 1982 national survey of employers to estimate the effects of strategies employers use to fill a vacancy. Hiring through informal information networks, such as references from friends, relatives or current employees,

results in better employer-worker matches than hiring through formula networks, such as employment agencies or newspaper advertisements.

"Minimum Wages, On-the-Job Training and Wage Growth," Paul Sicilian (with Adam J. Grossberg). Under Review.

This paper investigates the impact of legal minimum wages on training opportunities and wage growth. Minimum-wage workers, like other low-wage workers, receive less training than workers in higher-wage jobs. Male workers in minimum wage jobs experience lower wage growth than males in other low-wage jobs. For women, being in a minimum wage job is unrelated to both the amount of training received and wage growth.

"Local Measure Service Revisited: A Southern Wisconsin Test Case," Paul Isely (with Matthew Roelofs). Under Review.

We examine new data containing observations of residential and business calling patterns to determine which users benefit by a switch from measured to flat-rate telephone service. Overall, costs for residential customers decrease and costs for high-use business customers increase.

"Estimates of the Relationship Between Sale Price and the Time New Houses Remain on the Market," Paul Thorsnes. In preparation.

Data from sales of houses in new subdivisions are used to disentangle the effects of two factors that influence the time new houses spend on the market the quality of the house and the price of the house relative to that of other houses of similar quality. Both are found to increase time spent on the market.

"Some New Evidence on Determinants of Foreign Direct Investment in Developing Countries," Hari Singh (with Kwang Jun). Working Paper - World Bank.

An empirical analysis of 31 countries over two decades reveals that the important conditions in developing countries that attract sustained foreign capital inflows are the degree of export-orientation, market size, optimal business conditions and political stability. Particularly, manufacturing exports are a strong magnet for foreign direct investment.

"Black-White Housing Price Differentials: Recent Trends and Implications," **John W. Reifel**. Published in: **The Review of Black Political Economy**.

Black-white housing price differentials consistent with racially discriminatory practices are rarely found by the studies that have used post-1970 data. Instead, those studies report price differentials consistent with the theory that whites buy segregation by

bidding up the price of housing in certain neighborhoods. Unfortunately, the specifications used in most of these studies have been flawed. Here, a properly specified model is estimated using Annual Housing Survey data, augmented with objective measures of neighborhood conditions, from Grand Rapids, Michigan. The price differentials found support the trend found by the improperly specified models.

"The REA Accounting Model: Intellectual Heritage and Prospects for Progress, Cheryl L. Dunn (with William E. McCarthy). Under Review.

This paper clarifies the intellectual heritage of the Resources-Events-Agents (REA) accounting model and highlights the differences among the terms *events accounting*, *database accounting*, *semantically modeled accounting*, and *REA accounting*. Speculations are made as to potentially productive directions for accounting information systems research.

"An Abstraction Hierarchy as a Database Interface: Does it Control Complexity?" Cheryl L. Dunn. Under Review. The suppression of detail irrelevant for a given decision has long been believed to control complexity. Database accounting systems have been criticized for their complexity. This study hypothesized how an abstraction hierarchy interface to an accounting database would control complexity, enhancing user performance. Results indicate a need for further study of situations in which abstraction will or will not control complexity.

"Blending Quality Theories for Continuous Improvement," **Donald Klein** (with Harper Roehm and Joseph Castellano). Published in: **Management Accounting**.

Grand Rapids Spring & Wire Products Inc. is a company that has resisted such labeling in its efforts to become more customer focused and globally competitive. It has successfully blended many of the current quality philosophies and approaches and retained those ideas that the managers believe contribute to its flexibility and responsiveness in meeting customers' needs. The success of its approach provides a blueprint for other companies to consider.