

Presentation

Advances in Research on the Contemporary Global Economy

As the global economy continues to evolve at an accelerated pace, so does the need to understand the complexities and challenges faced by different industries and regions. This special issue of the journal *Apuntes del Cenes* presents a series of articles that explore topics such as internationalization, environmental sustainability, optimization of IT costs, efficiency practices in the services, real estate, agricultural and public sectors, and reflect on the challenges and implications of economic research in a global context. The nine collected articles presented below are the result of novel empirical research.

The Qualitative Impact of Foreign Direct Investment on the Albanian Clothing Industry

The first article in this issue examines the qualitative impact of foreign direct investment (FDI) on the clothing industry in Albania. It studies the development of foreign garment companies and provides insights into improving the quality of textile production and development opportunities for companies. Through analysis, forecasting, and abstraction, the article reveals not only the benefits that Albania receives from actively attracting investors, but also the implications for innovation and sustainable development in an emerging economy.

Internalizing the Investment Environment in International Tourism

This paper employs an adaptive institutional approach to assess the investment environment in the tourism industry and proposes a comprehensive investment capital index. The research sheds light on the way a favorable investment environment spurs internationalization in the increasingly complex and competitive global tourism industry. Furthermore, it elucidates optimal practices and strategies to guarantee effective and sustainable investment.

Increase EBITDA by Optimizing IT Costs

The third article provides a detailed analysis of how IT cost optimization can lead to significant increases in EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amor-

tization) and offers the benefit of cross-company comparisons through replication. The research highlights key strategies for improving operational efficiency and reducing IT costs, providing organizations with the tools to maximize profitability. The study is relevant to organizations seeking to balance technological innovation with the need to maintain tight control over costs.

Customer Attitudes towards E-banking Services: A Survey in Albania

The advent of e-banking has significantly impacted the manner in which customers engage with financial services. Accordingly, this article assesses banking satisfaction in Albania and the constraints affecting the development of e-services. The study reveals the expansion of e-services and the increase in merchants, which requires improved communication with customers and cost reduction. It offers valuable insight for banks seeking to improve their digital offering and adapt to changing market demands. The findings provide a robust basis for the formulation of strategies aimed at optimizing the customer experience in the digital domain.

Environmental Sustainability in South America

In recent years, the proliferation of sustainable development has emerged as a significant global concern, particularly in light of mounting evidence indicating the existence of climate change. The article compares the environmental practices and performance of 12 South American countries, assesses six key components of sustainability, and performs a hierarchical multivariate analysis. The research findings indicate notable discrepancies between countries in the region with regard to the various aspects under analysis.

A Compendium on the Adoption of Environmental Sustainability Management Legislation

This study is essential to understanding how emerging economies are addressing environmental issues. It groups countries with similar behaviors and identifies the best performers on the path to sustainability.

A New Perspective on Thailand's Real Estate Sector in the Post-pandemic Era

In light of the profound impact of the pandemic on the global real estate sector, this article presents a novel perspective on emerging trends in demand and strategies for investors to navigate the market effectively. A scenario analysis is employed to examine the current opportunities and challenges, thereby providing valuable insights for inves-

tors and developers seeking to understand the new real estate landscape and adapt to post-pandemic conditions.

A Comparative Analysis of Mexican Federal Entities to Evaluate the Efficiency of the Stochastic Frontier in Tax Collection (2010-2020)

This article employs panel data to assess the efficacy of the payroll and lodging tax in the 32 states of Mexico. The comparative study across states offers invaluable insight into the management of fiscal resources and the efficacy of policies in disparate regions of the country. The findings have significant implications for the formulation of policy and the optimization of tax collection in a variety of contexts.

The Use of fertilizers in Agricultural Production in the Cunas Valley, Peru

This article analyses how farmers perceive the use of fertilizers, by means of a qualitative approach, the hypothetical deductive method and a sample of 47 farmers. It examines current practices that reveal that farmers face difficulties in obtaining fertilizers and, in light of this situation, proposes implementing government strategies to improve the accessibility and distribution of fertilizers, especially for maize and potatoes, in order to contribute to a more sustainable agricultural development.

A Look at Informal Settlements in the City of Tunja, Colombia

This special issue concludes with an investigation of informal settlements in Colombia, with a particular focus on the city of Tunja. The article examines the conditions and challenges of these settlements, as well as the historical, social, and economic factors that influence the region. It also provides a comprehensive overview of urban policies and infrastructure needs. The study employs a descriptive and explanatory approach to analyze the data. In conclusion, this study is fundamental to the development of effective strategies for addressing housing and urbanization issues in contexts of rapid population growth.

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How to cite:

Urquia-Grande, E., & Hermosa Del Vasto, P. (2024). Advances in Research on the Contemporary Global Economy. *Apuntes del Cenés*, 43(78) Págs. 19 - 21. <https://doi.org/10.19053/uptc.01203053.v43.n78.2024.18111>