Call for Master's or Diploma Thesis

Title: The Consequences of the Balanced Scorecard: A Critical Analysis of the Empirical Evidence

Research Question

What consequences does the use of the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) have for organizations?

Motivation

Since its introduction by Kaplan and Norton (1992), the BSC ranks among the most widely adopted management control instruments. Yet does the BSC effectively shape firm performance, innovative behavior, and reporting quality? Despite an extensive body of research, it remains open what consequences the use of the BSC actually produces. The empirical evidence spans several outcome dimensions. It is methodologically heterogeneous and scattered across four decades of research. A structured synthesis of the BSC's direct effects is still missing.

Objective

The thesis systematically reviews the empirical evidence on the direct consequences of the BSC. It delivers a curated list of studies within defined quality tiers and transfers the included studies into a fully coded research database, based on the coding scheme developed at the chair. Building on this database, you identify robust core effects and open research questions.

Link to the Research Program

The thesis is part of the research program on evidence-based management control initiated at the chair. The program documents the effectiveness of common management control instruments empirically and provides research and practice with a sound point of reference. The BSC is one of its central instruments. The thesis delivers the BSC module of the database.

Requirements

The thesis requires an interest in empirical management control research. You work in a structured and diligent manner. Solid English skills are necessary, as most of the sources are in English.

Supervision and Contact

Dr. Philipp Richter (philipp_clemens.richter@tu-dresden.de) supervises this project at the chair. You can apply by email with a short motivation letter and a current transcript of records.

Literature

Hoque, Z. (2014). 20 years of studies on the balanced scorecard: trends, accomplishments, gaps and opportunities for future research. British Accounting Review, 46(1), 33–59.

Ittner, C. D., Larcker, D. F., & Meyer, M. W. (2003). Subjectivity and the weighting of performance measures: Evidence from a balanced scorecard. The Accounting Review, 78(3), 725–758.

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Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (1992). The balanced scorecard: Measures that drive performance. Harvard Business Review, 70(1), 71–79.

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Kumar, S., Lim, W. M., Sureka, R., Jabbour, C. J. C., & Bamel, U. (2024). Balanced scorecard: trends, developments, and future directions. Review of Managerial Science, 18, 2397–2439.

Tawse, A., & Tabesh, P. (2022). Thirty years with the balanced scorecard: What we have learned. Business Horizons, 66(1), 123–132.