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Paper Abstracts

The Strategic Evolution of Japan’s Software Industry
From the User, Industry, and Government Viewpoints

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The paper analyzes Japan’s software industry and MITI’s support policy failure using an evolutionary paradigm, while demonstrating that failure to quickly adopt best practice or a culturally determined U.S. advantage are not appropriate models. The analysis indicated the industry’s failure to become competitive expect in games is due to users’ experience and preference for customized software despite expense. Resulting fragmentation has combined with historically different operating platforms to frustrate MITI initiatives, even though following the time-tested development model. Given large users and systems suppliers’ preference for the present situation, foreign software developers in new high growth sectors like network servers and workstations have successfully pursued a hub and spoke strategy that builds user bases and improves their economies, further undermining the local software industry. The paper forecasts this evolution favoring intra-industry software development over inter-industry development will continue.

Integrating the American Manufacturer in Japan through Socialization and Shared Norms: An Empirical Look at Parent and Subsidiary Training Practices

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This paper takes an empirical look at training practices in American manufacturers in Japan in relations to parent firm control and coordination by the American headquarters through socialization and representation. Socialization and shared norms of American manufacturers in Japan is examined in terms of: 1) the nationality of the subsidiary head and subsidiary HRM head; 2) the number of expatriate managers in the Japanese subsidiary; 3) the experience of the subsidiary head and the subsidiary HRM head in the American headquarters and other subsidiaries of the American parent; 4) the orientation training of the expatriate; 5) the tenure of the HRM head in HRM, and; 6) the communication frequency between the subsidiary head, the subsidiary HRM head and top management in the American parent’s headquarters as well as in the American parent’s HRM unit.

This paper explores the concept of "Keiretsu" of Japan’s corporate governance, focusing on profitability versus corporate social responsibility, intra-group business, and inter-group business, profitability of family-owned and non-family-owned businesses, and the role of political and social factors, including the relationship between the state and the corporate sector. It is argued that the concept of "keiretsu" is a manifestation of two competing corporate governance models: the "Japanese model" and the "American model."