



Accounting Professional Certifications: Are they worth the investment?

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ABSTRACT

The national and international economy is changing at a very rapid pace. This requires both, accounting business schools and the accounting professions to ensure that their degree holders and members of the profession have the competency, knowledge, skills and abilities to help organisations, and companies to sustain economic growth and compete successfully domestically and globally. For centuries the accountancy profession played a major role in shaping and supporting organisations and businesses. It always helped in shaping the economies of all types and sizes. For it to continue to make a difference and add value, the accounting profession and the university accounting programs, and professional bodies must work to anticipate current and future demands, and meeting current and future needs. It is generally accepted that one path to achieve this is through obtaining Professional accounting memberships and certifications from internationally recognized international accredited bodies. Sacrificing time, efforts, and money and opportunity costs to pursue those certificates is however worth the investigation to determine whether investing in those certifications is lucrative. Through a critical review of the scarce available literature on this area and the analysis of the outcome of semi structured interviews with accounting certified professionals, Accounting Professors, and Certification students, this study explore the cost and benefits of those certifications. Empirically this study differentiates between the various accounting certificates and recommends one over another based on graduates competencies, efficacy, and perceived outcome.

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