

1 Introduction

The role of corporate disclosures in today's business and financial life is enormous. Companies that need to refinance their operating activities make efforts to reducing information asymmetries. For investors, disclosures provide an opportunity to assess potential risk and return connected to investment opportunities. The proper functioning of financial markets relies on a balanced situation of information distribution and corporate disclosures can be considered as the instrument that regulates this setting. This explains their outstanding role for the capital market mechanism.

The aim of this study is to connect both: corporate disclosures and the financial risk assessment of investors. In order to reach this objective, multivariate models are elaborated theoretically and analyzed through the application of statistical procedures. The integration of tailor-made scoring models and established scenario techniques as well as the quantitative model setting guarantee innovative results from a methodological point of view. With regard to contents, this is the first study connecting the quality of corporate disclosures, the individual decision making level of investors and the impact on overall market data. However, the ambition of this study is not limited to its academic output. The practical pertinence of the results with reference to publishing companies, investors and regulating state authorities is pointed out.

The following lines provide an outline of the structure of this work. In the second chapter, the underlying theories with reference to information asymmetries and corporate disclosures are introduced chronologically. Additionally, previous research approaches and the results of corresponding studies with reference to determinants and consequences of corporate disclosures are summarized. The conceptual framework of corporate disclosures related to voluntary elements is described in the third chapter. As a preparation for the following substudies, the research approach of this work is derived in this context.

The following two chapters are very comprehensive and provide the two quantitative substudies. The first study focuses on the relationship between the quality of corporate disclosures and their impact on overall market data, in particular unlevered beta factors as risk related indicators. Additionally, determinants that drive the disclosure quality as well as credibility factors are tested empirically. In addition to different statistical procedures, scoring models set the basic technical element of this first substudy.

In the context of the second substudy, the financial decision processes of investors with reference to corporate disclosures are researched more detailed. Through the application of scenario techniques and multivariate statistical analyses, the role of corporate disclosures on the individual level is investigated. In order to simplify the understanding, the two substudies are organized identically. The main ideas are summarized in the framework section of each study. The tested hypotheses are developed in the theoretical development parts. The research design chapter covers technical aspects as well as the elaborated quantitative models. The results are presented with reference to the hypotheses grouping and are finally discussed concerning their limitations. The sixth chapter provides a synthesis of the tested econometrical models of the two substudies and summarizes their quantitative results. Finally, this work closes with a synopsis.