OPTIMISING STAKEHOLDER INTEREST THROUGH POSITIVE CORPORATE BEHAVIOR AND STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT: *Positive Corporate Behavior (CB) and Stakeholder Management (SM) are relevant concepts that call for responsibility towards those within and without corporate entities. Hence, positive corporate behavior and stakeholder management should take into account both present and future needs of businesses and society. This therefore, demands managers who will not only aim at increasing profits for only shareholders, but those who will give equal attention to the needs of other stakeholders including present and future members of society, since their actions or inactions have implications for both present and the future. These (Positive Corporate Behavior and Stakeholder Management) concepts border on values, attitudes and behavioral trends that reveal the cultural practices of an organization. They also border on probity and integrity, honesty, human rights, diligence, fairness and impartiality, respect, trust, consistency and transparency, conflict of interest, fraud, theft, corruption, value for money, inappropriate use of position, compliance with legislative obligations and government policies, openness and accountability, and above all, the ability of the leader or management to apply these standards. This, if done well, will engender assurance and trust in public and business administration. This study is about how the inculcation of effective stakeholder management and positive corporate behavior could inure to the maximum benefit of all stakeholders. Through the use of questionnaires, we sought to identify some traits of negative corporate behavior from the perspectives of managers and business students as future business leaders. Not only that but also, we sought to find out whether employers are able to identify and satisfy the interests of different stakeholders. Implications for management are then finally drawn based on the conclusions and suggestions made for future research.*

KEY WORDS: Positive Corporate Behavior, and Stakeholder Management

INTRODUCTION

Good decision making remains a key function of managers. This means managers must give due consideration to the implications of their actions or inactions on various stakeholders (Post el al., 2002). Therefore, understanding good corporate behavior, and how that relates to stakeholder management has become very important for today's managers. Corporations that exhibit good corporate behavior must have certain traits (i.e. role models, corporate credos and codes of conduct, reward and evaluation systems, policies and procedures) to be worthy of ethical organizations, and these traits must be visible, and must also be reinvigorated from time to time to bring about the desired corporate behavior (Dess, 2003). Negative corporate behavior and stakeholder management concern poor business actions or inactions within organizations and towards internal and external stakeholders (managers, employees, customers/clients, shareholders, immediate business community/society at large, suppliers, government) whilst ignoring the ramifications of business activities on the environment. Thus, the influence of stakeholders on businesses can be immense, and if not managed correctly, could lead to problems (e.g. resource drain, political intervention) for the organization. It is however important to note that, stakeholder management is relevant to any type of organization: business, public or civil society (Bourne, 2007). It is particularly important in the context of running an organization responsibly; and is also integral to the concept of corporate behavior and corporate responsibility for stakeholder value.

Understanding what is important to employees is usually the first priority because of the many interrelated business benefits that can be derived from increased employee engagement (i.e. loyalty, improved recruitment, increased retention, higher productivity (Freeman, 1984). Other key external stakeholders whose needs are also considered include customers, consumers, investors, the communities in the areas where the corporation operate, regulators, and the media**.** These stakeholders have expectations about the behavior and responsibilities of businesses beyond the provision of jobs and products or services (Carroll, 1991). This paper sought to elicit the views of practicing managers and business students as potential managers as follows:

1) To identify important traits of negative corporate behavior from the perspectives of MBA Students and managers.
2) To find out whether employers are able to identify and satisfy the interests of different stakeholders.

In next to follow, we review the literature on corporate behavior and the benefits of engaging or managing relevant stakeholders to put the study in perspective. This is followed by the methodology through which data was collected to illuminate the research. Then, we present our findings, discussions and conclusions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Corporate Behavior

Corporate behavior plays an important role in the management of businesses. It is that field of study which finds out the impact that individuals, groups and structures have on behavior within an organization and it applies that knowledge to make organizations work more effectively (Robbins & Judge, 2009). Ethics and probity constitute a major concern in corporate behavior. "Probity is defined as complete and confirmed integrity, uprightness and honesty. A good outcome is achieved when probity is applied with common sense." (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005: 6).

Corporate behavior is important for company success both financially and in terms of its relationship with stakeholders. It is important as it reflects the values of the business and the extent to which it is ethical. Corporate behavior entails legal, ethical code of conduct and social

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responsibility principles (Conley, 2000; Dess, 2003). The social responsibilities of businesses are those responsibilities that arise in the context of corporate-stakeholder relationships. The term corporate social responsibility has been variously defined in various ways from the economic perspective of increasing shareholder wealth, to the legal, ethical and discretionary strands of responsibility, and to good corporate citizenship (Carroll, 1979; Friedman, 1962; Hemphill, 2004). In this direction, businesses are seen as having an obligation to consider society's long-run needs and wants, which implies that they engage in activities that promote benefits for society and minimize the negative effects of their actions (Barry, 2000). Increasingly, businesses are motivated to become more socially responsible because their most important stakeholders expect them to understand and address the social and community issues that are relevant to them (Freeman, Velamuri, & Moriarty, 2006).

Corporate behavior is important in strengthening relationships within organizations, between individuals, teams, and in the organization as a whole (Dess, 2003). It is important as it reflects the values of the business and the extent to which it is ethical (Robbins & Judge, 2009).
Positive corporate behavior and stakeholder management concern the actions within organizations towards the satisfaction of internal and external stakeholders (managers, employees, customers/clients, shareholders, immediate business community/society at large, suppliers, government) (Conley, 2000). Portraying positive corporate behavior within an organization facilitates strong brand image creation. Consequently, branding then strengthens the importance associated with corporate behavior (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004). It can provide solutions, as well as, insights towards solution to many challenges which are faced by the organizations as follows (Robbins & Judge, 2009):-

1) Globalization- Organizations are no longer confined to one particular country due to globalization. The Manager's job is changing with the expansion of organizations across the national borders.
2) Managing work force diversity- Organizations are a heterogeneous mix of people in terms of age, gender, race etc. Managing the workforce diversity has become a global concern. Managers have to deal with individuals and groups belonging to different ethnic groups and cultures. They have to exercise control and behavior in the desired direction.
3) Improving quality and productivity - Industries are facing the problem of excess supply, which implies an increase in competition. The need therefore, for managers to confront the problem of improving productivity, quality of the goods and services is imperative.
4) Improving customer service - Customer needs are becoming more diverse and demanding. The attitude and behavior of employees affects the customer satisfaction. Managers have to ensure that the employees do everything to satisfy the customers of the organization.
5) Improving people skills – CB helps in better management of business by providing insight into the skills that the employees can use on the job such as designing jobs and creating effective teams.
6) Innovation and Change - CB helps in stimulating innovation and change. Employees can either be a hurdle or an instrument of change. It is CB which fosters ideas and techniques to promote innovation and change by improving employee creativity.

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7) Work life balance - Organizations that do not help employees to achieve work life balance will not be able to retain their most talented employees. CB helps in designing flexible jobs which can help employees deal with work life balance issues.
8) Promoting ethical behavior - An organization can be in a situation of ethical dilemma where they have to define right and wrong. It is CB which plays an important role by helping management to create a work environment which is ethically healthy, and increases work productivity, job satisfaction and ethical organizational citizenship.
9) Creating a positive work environment - CB helps in creating a positive work environment. It is however, the manager's job to model the behavior he or she wants to see in the organization.

Also, businesses, be they profit oriented or not, are seen as having an obligation to their stakeholders. A stakeholder is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives (Freeman, 1984). These stakeholders have expectations about the behaviour and responsibilities of businesses beyond the provision of jobs and products or services (Carroll, 1991). Businesses who adopt the stakeholder theory are likely to appeal more to their stakeholders as they show their care and commitment towards them. In addition, businesses need to consider society's long-run needs and wants, which imply that they engage in activities that promote benefits for society and minimize the negative effects of their actions (Barry, 2000). Understanding the interests of different stakeholders therefore, (e.g., employees customers, consumers, investors, the communities, regulators, and the media) is very critical for corporate governance (Freeman, 1984; Carroll, 1991).

Also, a firm that manages in the interest of stakeholders seeks to identity and understand how the welfare of its stakeholders is affected by the actions it takes (Jeffrey et al., 2012). Such a firm also seeks to act in a way that demonstrates to stakeholders that it understands and respects how their welfare is affected.

Stakeholder management

Stakeholders are defined as individuals or organizations that stand to gain or lose from the success or failure of a system (Nuseibeh & Easterbrook, 2000). The stakeholders of any firm are "those groups who can affect or are affected by the achievement of an organization's purpose" (Freeman, 1984: 49). Corporate sustainability, that is the capacity of a firm to continue operating over a long period of time, depends on the sustainability of its stakeholder relationships (Perrini & Tencati, 2006). According to Holtbrügge, Berg, and Puck (2007) the success of an organization does not depend primarily on the efficient coordination and control of its operations, but on the establishment and maintenance of a cooperative dialogue with all relevant internal and external stakeholder groups that may influence its activities in positive and negative ways.

There are five major stakeholder groups (internal and external of the firm) that are recognized as priorities by most firms: owners (shareholders), employees, customers, local communities, and the society-at large (Carroll, 1991). The stakeholder theory is a theory of organizational management and business ethics that addresses morals and values in managing an organization (Freeman, 1984). The theory posits that corporations can gain competitive advantage by addressing important stakeholder demands. Instead of focusing on the needs of the owners of the business, the theory argues that there are other parties involved - including employees, customers, suppliers, financiers, communities, governmental bodies, political groups, trade associations, and trade unions (Freeman, 1984).

The idea of stakeholder management, or stakeholder approach to strategic management, suggests that managers must formulate and implement processes which satisfy all groups who have a stake in the business (Freeman & McVea, 2002). Stakeholder management includes the processes required to identify the people, groups and organizations that could affect or be affected by the operations of the organization, to analyze their expectations and impact; and to develop appropriate strategies and tactics for effectively engaging in a manner consistent with the stakeholders' interest and involvement in a project (Morris, 2012).

On the other hand, stakeholder engagement management is the process of communicating and working with stakeholders to meet their needs and expectations, and to address issues as they occur (Morris, 2012). It is the process to systematically foster appropriate stakeholder engagement in project activities throughout the life of a project. The key benefit of this process is that it allows the manager to increase support and minimize resistance from stakeholders, significantly increasing the chances to achieve project goals (Bourne, 2007).

A key task for management is then, to identify their stakeholders and understand their salience for the strategic future of the business. The stakeholder theory is a theory of organizational management and business ethics that addresses morals and values in managing an organization (Freeman, 1982). A common way of prioritising stakeholders is by their power, urgency and legitimacy (Barry, 2000). A stakeholder approach was also used by Longo, Mura, and Bonoli, (2005) in the context of Italian SMEs as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The grid of values (Longo et al., 2005)

Stakeholder	**Expectations divided into value classes**
Employees	Health and safety at work, development of workers' skills, wellbeing and satisfaction of worker, quality of work, social equity.
Suppliers	Partnership between ordering company and supplier, Selection and analysis systems of suppliers.
Customers	Product quality, safety of customer during use of product, consumer protection, transparency of consumer product information.
Community	Creation of added value to the community, environmental safety and production.

In this regard, organizations are constantly interacting, managing or engaging with their stakeholders, some of whom can be more or less positively or negatively disposed to the organization and will have greater or lesser power over the organization (Jeffery, 2009).

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Additionally, corporate stakeholder responsibility requires a commitment to a stakeholder approach to management on the following four levels (Freeman, Velamuri, & Moriarty, 2006):-

- Level 1 - Basic value proposition: At this level, the entrepreneur or manager needs to understand how the firm can make the customer better off, and simultaneously offer an attractive value proposition to employees, suppliers, communities, and financiers.
- Level 2 - Sustained stakeholder cooperation: The competitive, macro-economic, regulatory, and political environments are so dynamic they necessitate constant revision of the initial stakeholder arrangements. Each revision upsets the delicate balance struck in the basic value propositions to various stakeholders. Managers must have a deep understanding of how these trade-offs affect each stakeholder, the amount of sacrifice a given stakeholder will accept, and how these current sacrifices can be compensated.
- Level 3 - An understanding of broader societal issues: Today's managers must recognize and respond to a rising number of international issues, without the moral compass of the nation, state or religion as a guide. Managers may need to take positions on issues that apparently are not purely business related. A pro-active attitude is necessary towards all stakeholder groups, both primary, i.e., those that have direct business dealings with the company, and secondary, such as NGOs and political activists, who can affect the operations of the company.
- Level 4 – Ethical leadership: Recent research points to a strong connection between ethical values and positive firm outcomes such as sustained profitability and high innovation. Proactive ethical leadership is possible only if there exists a deep understanding of the interests, priorities, and concerns of the stakeholders.

Additionally, effective identification, understanding and management of organizational stakeholder expectations can improve the ability to reduce risk, tailor mitigation measures and deliver successful projects (Freeman et al., 2006). Five strategies that can be helpful in managing stakeholders are as follows (Bourne, 2007): 1) Stakeholder mapping: The first step to conduct a thorough stakeholder analysis to identify organizational stakeholders. Stakeholder mapping is a collaborative process of research, debate, and discussion that draws from multiple perspectives to determine a key list of stakeholders across the entire stakeholder spectrum. This will also include an identification and examination of key factors of their demographics, interests, needs and concerns, and expectations. 2) Influence: Understanding levels of influence can enable the prediction of how a particular stakeholder may interact directly with the organization and its functional teams. 3) Identify the triggers: Stakeholders will react in different ways to different organizational actions. Therefore, by identifying triggers and mitigation measures, one can avoid preventable complaints. 5) Proactive mitigation: With a solid understanding of your stakeholders, their influence and triggers, the next step is to develop a mitigation plan. This step details the risks one is prepared to accept, share or avoid and outlines how to reduce their impact.

METHODOLOGY

The Research Approach

The methodology, methods of data collection and analysis are the processes that inform an approach to research (Cohen et al., 2007). Research is commonly viewed from the lenses of the quantitative and qualitative paradigms (Bracken, 2010). The research process of this study is quantitative since it involves primary data collection through the use of a questionnaire, and numbers; and the findings are presented in the form of graphs and tables, to convey a sense of solid and objective research.

Sampling Procedure

The sample is derived from students of the Maastricht School of Management (MsM); both MBA students and past students who are practitioners in the business world. The Maastricht School of Management (MsM) is a globally networked management school (Annual Report, 2007). Every year, students of MSM are exposed to major corporate scandals through annual seminars and workshops. During such seminars, major corporations (DSM, Shell, Heineken, Rabobank, and Dow Chemical) are invited to make presentations, so to expose the students and staff to new developments regarding implementation of CSR issues.

In order to get samples for the various categories of participants, two different techniques of non-probability sampling were used (i.e., Saunders et al., 2007). The email addresses of all the MsM MBA alumni were collected from the Alumni office, and each manager invited through a letter to participate. On the other hand, convenience sampling was used to select the MBA students, since only the email addresses of the Maastricht campus MBA students were readily available. In all, 160 respondents (80 MBA students and 80 managers) were selected for the study. The response rate was 41(51%) for MBA students and 72 (90%) for the managers; totaling 113 (71%). In terms of gender, whereas 21 (51%) of the MBA students were male, 20 (49%) were female. Also, whereas 49 (68%) of the managers were males, 23 (32%) were female. As far as age is concerned, majority of the participants for both groups were between the ages of 30 and 49 years old. Also for both categories of participants, 11(27%) of the students and 10 (14%) of the managers were between 18 to 29 years old.

Data collection and analysis

The study made use of both primary and secondary sources of data. Online surveys using questionnaires were administered to the students and managers. The data was checked for accuracy and completeness. The IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to obtain frequency distributions because of its clarity in expressing quantitative analysis between variables (Leech et. al., 2005).

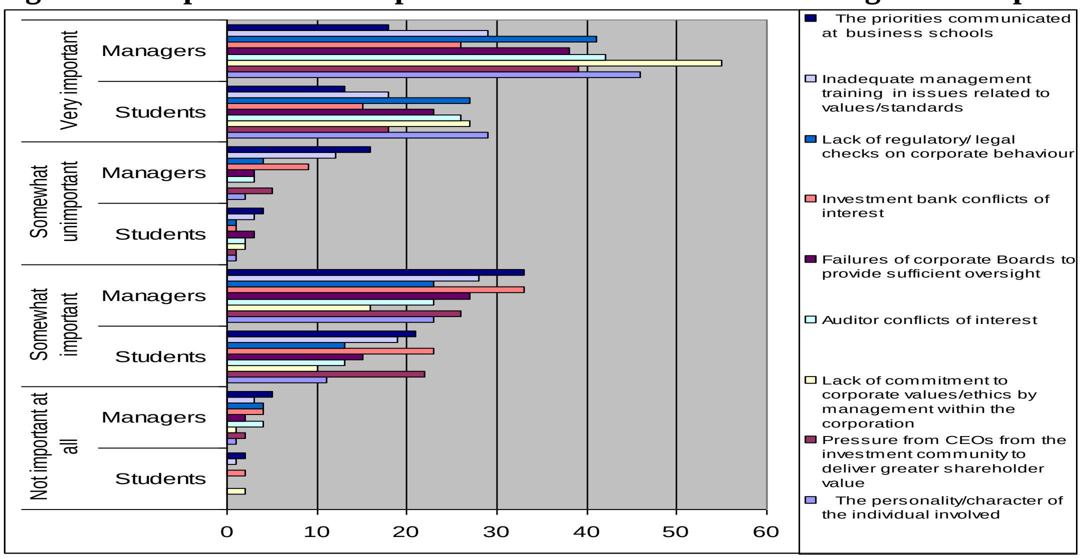
RESULTS

The findings are summarized, discussed and placed in context. First, we identify the opinions of the students and managers regarding some traits of negative corporate behavior. Second, we try to find out whether their employers are able to identify and satisfy the interests of the different stakeholders.

1) Opinions of respondents on some traits of negative corporate behavior

Figure 1 below presents the extent to which respondents think the under-mentioned factors are important traits of negative corporate behavior. Majority 29 (71%) of the students identified the personality and character of the individual involved as very important in identifying traits of negative corporate behavior. However, 2 (5%) of the students think lack of commitment to corporate values/ethics by management within the corporation; investment bank conflicts of interest; and the priorities communicated at business schools are not important at all in identifying traits of negative corporate behavior**.** On the other hand, most of the managers, 55 or (76%) identified lack of commitment to corporate values and ethics by management within the corporation as very important in contributing to negative corporate behavior. However, like the students, 5(7%) of the managers think the priorities communicated at business schools are not important at all in contributing to negative corporate behavior.

Figure 1: Opinions of respondents on some traits of negative corporate behavior



Author's Construct

2) Opinions of respondents on their ability to identify and satisfy the interests of different stakeholders

Figure 2 below presents the extent to which respondents will agree that management of their organizations understand the interests of the different stakeholders, and that they try to satisfy such interests. As can be observed from the figure, about 17 (41%) of the students agree that management of their organizations understand the interests of the different stakeholders and that they try to satisfy such interests; whereas 2 (5%) do not agree at all. On the other hand, 27 (38%) of the managers agree that management of their organizations understand the interests of the different stakeholders and that they try to satisfy such interests; whereas 3(4%) do not agree at all.

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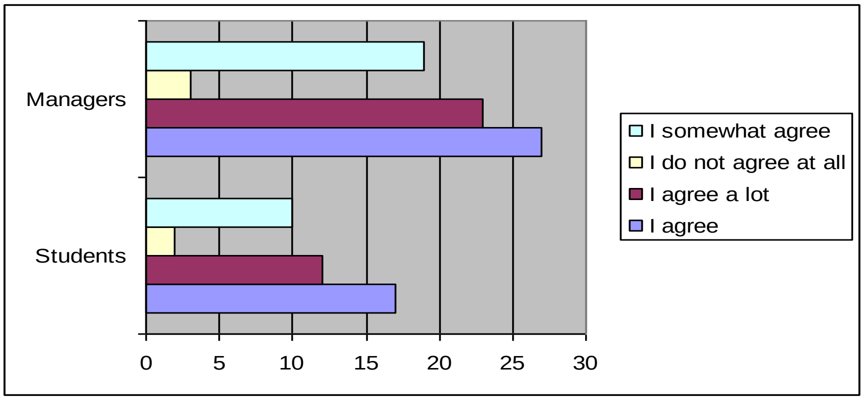
Figure 2: Opinions of respondents on the ability of their organizations to identify and satisfy the interests of different stakeholders

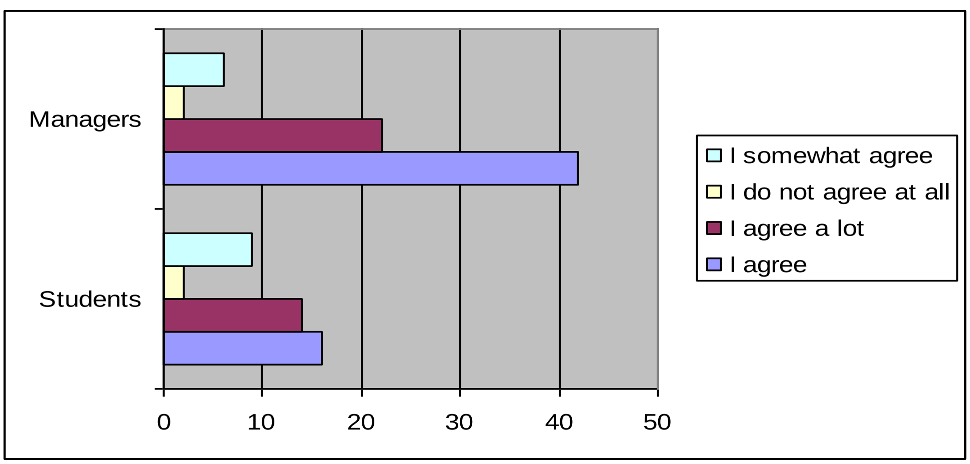


Author's Construct

3) Opinions of respondents on their ability to identify and satisfy the interests owners/shareholders as stakeholders

Figure 3 below presents the extent to which respondents will agree that they are able to identify and satisfy the interests of owners/shareholders as stakeholders. About 16 (39%) of the students agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards owners/shareholders as stakeholders; 2 (5%) of them do not agree at all. On the other hand, 42 (58%) of the managers agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards owners/shareholders as stakeholders; 2 (3%) do not agree at all.

Figure 3: Opinions of respondents on their ability to identify and satisfy the interests owners/shareholders as stakeholders



Author's Construct

4) Opinions of respondents on their ability to identify and satisfy the interests of employees as stakeholders

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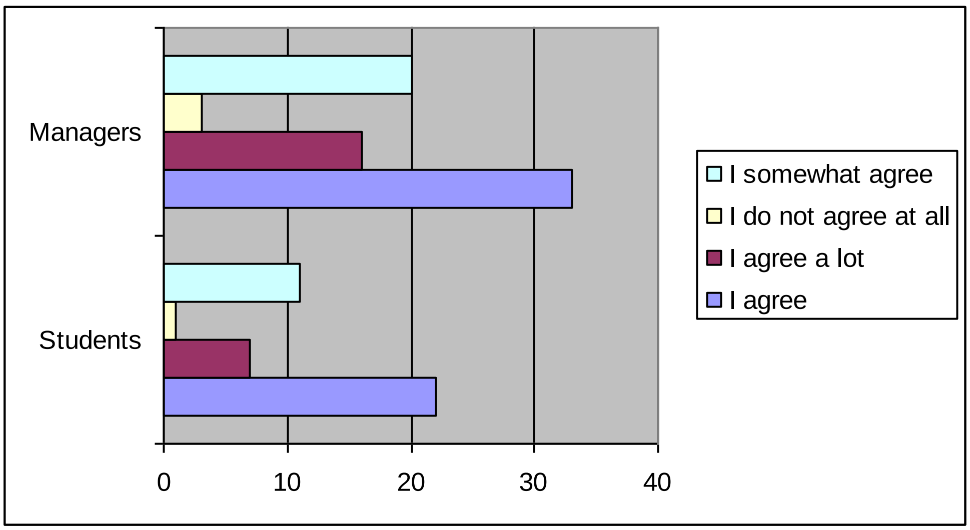
Figure 4 below presents the extent to which respondents will agree that they able to identify and satisfy the interests employees as stakeholders. Majority 22 (54%) of the students agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards employees as stakeholders; 1 (2%) do not agree at all. About 33 (46%) of the managers agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards employees as stakeholders; whereas 3 (4%) of the managers do not agree at all.

Figure 4:Opinions of respondents on their ability to identify and satisfy the interests of employees as stakeholders



Author's Construct

5) Opinions of respondents on their ability to identify and satisfy the interests of customers/clients as stakeholders

Figure 5 below illustrate the extent to which the respondents will agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards customers/clients as stakeholders. About 17 (41%) of the students agree a lot that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards customers/clients as stakeholders; none disagrees at all. On the other hand, most 38 (53%) of the managers agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards customers/clients as stakeholders; 2(3%) of them do not agree at all.

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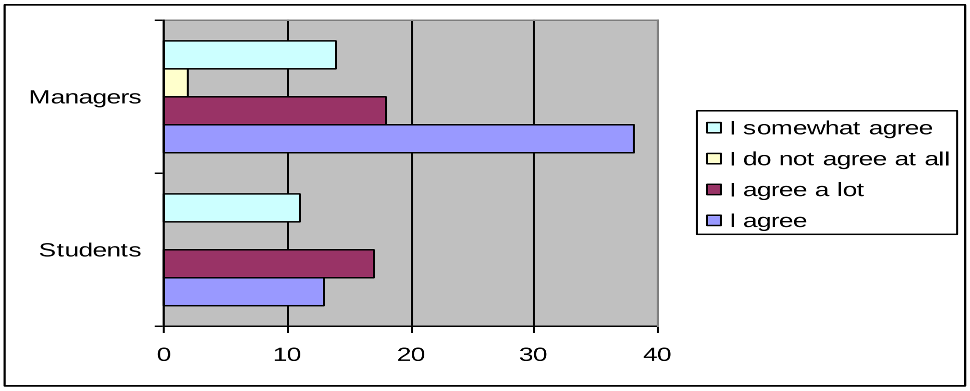
Figure 5: Opinions of respondents on their ability to identify and satisfy the interests of customers/clients as stakeholders

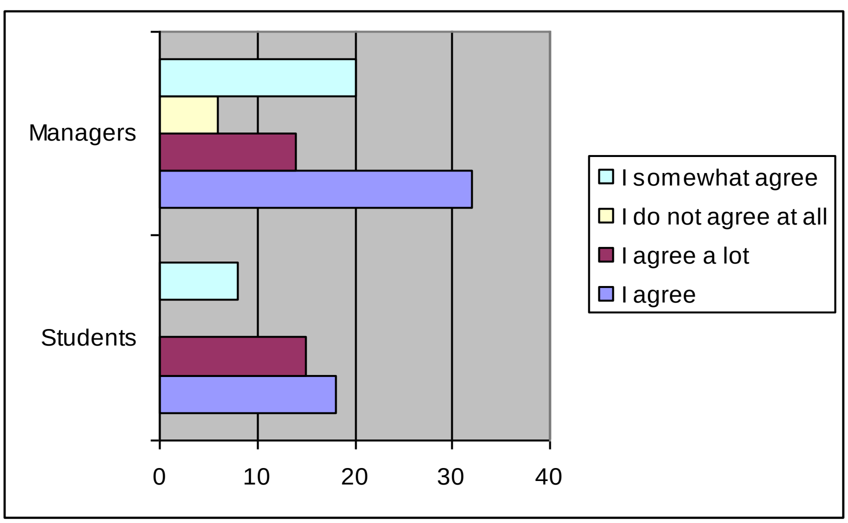


Author's Construct

6) Opinions of respondents on their ability to identify and satisfy the interests of local community as stakeholders

Figure 6 below presents the extent to which the students and managers will agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards local community as stakeholders. While 18 (44%) of the students agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards local community as stakeholders; none of them disagrees at all. On the other hand, 32 (44%) of the managers agree a lot whereas 6 (8%) do not agree at all.

Figure 6: Opinions of respondents on their ability to identify and satisfy the interests of local community as stakeholders



Author's Construct

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DISCUSSION

The results in this study are in line with other studies conducted in other countries (e.g., Bendixen, & Abratt, 2007; Bourne, 2007; Jeffrey et al., 2012; Millman, 2002; Morris, 2012). Bendixen and Abratt, (2007), in a South African study found that the ethical perceptions of buyers by suppliers are driven by the management of corporate identity, through the elements of ethical standards and candid relationships. Similarly, the results of this study also indicates that majority of the students 29 (71%) consider the personality and character of the individual involved as a very important contributory factor to recent corporate scandals. Other very important contributory factors identified are; lack of commitment to corporate values/ethics by management within the corporation; auditor conflicts of interest; failures of corporate boards to provide sufficient oversight; and lack of regulatory/ legal checks on corporate behavior.

Contrary to the views of the students, most 55 (76%) managers think lack of commitment to corporate values and ethics by management within the corporation are very important contributory factors to recent corporate scandals. Pressure from CEOs from the investment community to deliver greater shareholder value; lack of commitment to corporate values/ethics by management within corporations; auditor conflicts of interest; failures of corporate boards to provide sufficient oversight; lack of regulatory/legal checks on corporate behavior are other equally important contributory factors considered by most of the managers.

These findings also corroborates the argument by Millman (2002:16-19) that many organizational members including managers, legal advisors, auditors, accountants and investors have been aligned with the interests associated with the maximization of shareholder wealth. About 12 (29%) and 23 (32%) of students and managers respectively agree a lot while 17(41%) and 27 (38%) respectively agree that management of their organizations understand the interests of the different stakeholders and that it tries to satisfy such interests. Similarly, 14 (34%) and 22(31%) of students and managers respectively agree a lot while 16(39%) and 42(58%) respectively agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards owners/shareholders as stakeholders.

Also, 7 (17%) and 16 (22%) of the students and managers respectively agree a lot while 22(54%) and 33(46%) respectively agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards employees as stakeholders; whereas 17(41%) and 18(25%) of students and managers respectively agree a lot 13(32%) and 38(53%) respectively agree that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards customers/clients as stakeholders; whereas 18 (44%) and 32 (44%) of students and managers respectively agree 15 (37%) and 14 (19%) respectively agree a lot that management of their organizations have a positive orientation towards local community as stakeholders; none of them disagrees at all.

Additionally, whereas most of the students consider a corporation that has positive traits of corporate behavior as one that provides excellent customer service; most of the managers would consider a well-managed corporation to be one that produces high-quality products and services; with only a few according significant importance to a corporation that offers high financial

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returns to shareholders. This suggest that students and managers no more think management should administer the affairs of a company with the condition that the financial wellbeing of the shareholders is a single purpose pursued (Chirelstein, 1974: 60). This finding is in consonance with that of Brenner and Molander, (1977: 54-85), Posner and Schmidt, (1984: 202-216) where managers surveyed considered it unethical to manage solely in the interest of shareholders, and not in the interest of employees and customers.

However, the challenge still, is that a greater proportion of students do not give much consideration to responsible environmental practices; while about 63% of managers would still consider a corporation that offers high financial returns to shareholders as very important. Not only that but also, both student and mangers seem to be customer oriented in their choices with little attention for the other equally important stakeholders. Even though generally both students and managers agree that management of their organizations have positive orientation towards their stakeholders and that they understand the interests of the different stakeholders and try to satisfy such interests; it is also worth noting that priority is still given to shareholders in the case of the managers' organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our findings, the following recommendations can be made: These findings show how both students and managers are customer oriented in their choices. Also, despite the increasing awareness about the quality of the environment, there are still a few students and managers who do not attach considerable importance to responsible environmental practices. Hence, there is the need to give equal attention to all stakeholders, especially the environment. This is because companies practicing stakeholder management will, on equal terms, be relatively successful in terms of conventional performance (e.g., profitability, stability, growth) (Donaldson & Preston, 1995: 67).

Also, each constituency of stakeholders is entitled to be treated as a separate entity by organizations, for which they should be managed or engaged in all aspects of business operations, and the future direction of the company. According to Bourne, (2007), it is important to attach equal attention to all the stakeholders of an organization. Understanding employee needs is usually the first priority because of the many interrelated business benefits that can be derived from increased employee engagement (Freeman, 1984). Other key external stakeholders whose needs are also considered include customers, consumers, investors, the communities in the areas where the corporation operate, regulators, and the media.

CONCLUSIONS

The objective of the study was to determine students and managers perceptions on CSR in relation to stakeholder management and engagement. Corporations are facing increasing demands that they look beyond their own interests and prioritize those of the societies in which they operate (Broomhill, 2007). This is because businesses host their operations within society and in return society expects business to show responsibility for aspects of their operations

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(Bichta, 2003). It is no longer acceptable for a firm or corporation to experience economic prosperity in isolation from the stakeholders such as employees (D‟Amato et al., 2009).
In this view, organizations are constantly interacting, managing or engaging with their stakeholders, some of whom can be more or less positively or negatively disposed to the organization and will have greater or lesser power over the organization (Jeffery, 2009). Additionally, corporate stakeholder responsibility requires a commitment to a stakeholder approach to management and engagement (Freeman, Velamuri, & Moriarty, 2006). Our study is however without limitations. Further research over time with a larger sample of business schools should help us to contribute to this line of inquiry. This may also deploy both the quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. This has the potential to complement any inherent weaknesses that may exist in either approach.

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