

Stakeholders` Perception and Attitude Based Framework for Developing Responsible Management Education (RME) Program

Abdalla K. A. Mohamed

Tatweer Holding Education Company, Saudi Arabia, drattaya@yahoo.com

Saud Ben Khadir

CEO, EAA Company, Saudi Arabia

Abuzar El Jelly

Khartoum University, Sudan

Ilham Mansour

Khartoum University, Sudan

Abstract: This paper is attempted to contribute in the effort to foster business postgraduate students' development towards becoming responsible business leaders. Specifically, this paper is seeking, in Sudan, to examine the state of responsible management education in business postgraduate programs, examine the perception and attitude towards responsible management and responsible management education among MBA and DBA students, and construct a comprehensive framework appropriate for developing responsible management education program in under- developing countries. The data for this study had been gathered through a structured questionnaire. In total, 106 postgraduate business students answered the survey from the largest four business schools or faculties in Sudan. The students are distributed among management, finance and marketing specializations. It is worth mentioning that none of the schools covered is a signatory to the principles of responsible management education developed by UN Global Compact. The students exhibited positive CSR perception and attitude, with a heightened focus on acting ethically and a diminished focus on financial considerations. One of the key lessons learned from this study is the need for continued evolution and development of CSR and ethics more generally across business schools' curriculums in Sudan. The students are seeking the knowledge, skills, exposure and experience they need through responsible management education to be as effective as possible in the real world. Hence, business schools can foster the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large. To that end, this paper proposed a co-created and shared value framework conceptualized to develop and implement an effective responsible management education program in business postgraduate programs.

Keywords: Responsible management education, Sustainability, Corporate social responsibility, Business ethics, Business schools, Perception, Attitude, Sudan

Introduction

The business and education world are changing rapidly in response to the needs of the various stakeholders. Companies are facing new challenges and risks due to the increase in the level of awareness among those stakeholders regarding the issues of sustainability and corporates social responsibility (CSR). Indeed, stakeholders are less and less tolerant if companies continue to focus only on profit-maximization while neglecting their expected contribution to society and the environment. Companies` future leaders (MBA and DBA students) are, in turn, expected to realize and appreciate the new challenges and risks facing business organizations. In fact, business and management schools play a key role in shaping the skills and mindsets of future business leaders, and can be powerful drivers of sustainability and CSR. An increasing number of businesses and non-business organizations are engaged in demonstrating that they are being good to the world, socially and environmentally. Up to 2018 worldwide 13,420 large organizations expressed their readiness to be part of this trend. Of these organizations, 7813 are active across 160 countries in 2018. 18 of them organizations are in Sudan.

Recognizing the vital role of education in achieving the SDGs, the UN in 2007 during the UN Global Compact Leaders' Summit in Geneva, launched the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME). The

PRME initiative has become the largest organized relationship between the United Nations and business schools. The mission of PRME is to transform business and management education, research and thought leadership globally, while promoting awareness about the SDGs and developing the responsible business leaders of tomorrow. The PRME are categorized as: purpose, values, methods, research, partnership and dialogue. By the end of 2018, the initiative counts over 745 business and management-related higher education institutions across 85 countries. PRME is governed, alongside the UN Global Compact, by a Steering Committee comprised of the major accreditation bodies, specialized and regional associations. PRME works with UN Global Compact participants to help advance the SDGs in academia, and connects responsible businesses with higher education institutions to help recruit talent with sustainability mindsets, skills and capabilities. Recognizing the pressure from the community, on August 2019, the US Business Roundtable announced the release of a new statement on the purpose of a corporation signed by 181 CEOs of the largest business corporations in US. The CEOs committed to lead their companies for the benefit of all stakeholders – customers, employees, suppliers, communities and shareholders. The CEOs committed themselves to: delivering value to customers, investing in employees, dealing fairly and ethically with suppliers, supporting the communities and generating long-term value for shareholders. The new statement supersedes previous statements and outlines a modern standard for corporate responsibility.

Research Problem

It is evident that business schools cannot just take a spectator’s role towards sustainable corporate responsibility but have to thoroughly prepare their students to take over responsible leadership as soon as they enter the business world. Due to the rotating circle of economic crises, universities – and especially business schools – have come under pressure to reconsider their concepts of management education. Goshal, (2005) and Navarro (2008) argue that business schools do more harm than good and that they ignore the human dimension of businesses and their responsibility towards the social and ecological environment . Business school graduates are regularly characterized as cold-blooded technocrats lacking interpersonal skills, intercultural abilities, emotional and ecological intelligence, trustworthiness or social responsibility (Mintzberg, 2004). With regard to Sudan, despite the huge natural resources available to Sudan, Figure 1 and due to irresponsible and mismanagement of these resources , indicators reveal that Sudan is far behind many counties with regard to the sustainability development goals (SDGs), Figure 2 which , in turn, reflect the living conditions and quality of life in the country.

Particulars	Amount
Population	44 Million
Gum Arabic	80% of the world production in Sudan
Ground nuts	40% of the world production in Sudan
Agricultural land available	228 Million acres
Forest	54 Million acres
Water	50 Billion cubic meters annually
Livestock	102 Million (fed from natural grass)
Copper	150 Million tones
Gold	140 Tones annually
Oil	115 thousand barrels daily

Figure 1. Sudan National Resources

Particulars	Sustainability Development Indicators*
Poverty	47% Of Population Lives Below Poverty Line, Jumps To 58% Outside Urban Areas
Education	According To UNICEF Nearly 3 Million Children Between The Age Of 5 And 13 Are Kept Out Of , One Of The Highest Rate In The World.
Food & Hunger	In 2019 6.3. Million Suffered From Food Insecurity, Around 40% Of The Population Are Malnourished. 87% Of Women Ages Of 15 And 49 Have Been Forced To Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
Global Peace Ranking 2018	153 / 180 (Longest Deadliest Civil Wars In the World, 2.35 Million People Displaced).
Crude Death Rate	7.44%

Figure 2. Sudan Socio-economic Indicators

(Sources: <https://countryeconomy.com>, <https://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/data/collection/epi>, <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>)

Can RME helps in hindering such deterioration in Sudanese quality of life and, in turn, contribute in fostering the achievement of the SDGs in this country? The answer to such a question requires an in-depth research and studies in Sudan and in other countries in the world covering various types of stakeholders particularly business postgraduate students. Understanding the MBA and DBA students` perception and attitude towards responsible management and CSR aspects and issues would help constructing appropriate approaches and frameworks for developing effective RME programs that fit and align with the concerned stakeholders needs and expectations.

Aim of the Study

This paper is attempted to contribute in the effort to foster business postgraduate students` development towards becoming responsible business leaders. Specifically, this paper is seeking to:

- Examine the state of RME in business postgraduate programs in Sudan.
- Examine the perception and attitude towards responsible management (RM) and RME among MBA and DBA students in Sudan.
- Construct a comprehensive framework appropriate for developing RME program in developing and under- developing countries.

The study focuses on business postgraduate students as main stakeholders because their expectations and desires are the most important aspects to be considered in designing or developing RME curriculum or programs. As such, if we were to conduct stakeholders analysis and mapping of business schools, students would receive high priority because they possess, to a greater or lesser extent, the three characteristics that validate their role as major stakeholders, namely, legitimacy, urgency and power ,Mitchell et al.(1997).

Albaum and Peterson (2006) also argued that students, especially business students who collectively constitute the future leadership of corporations, should be highly prioritized as a stakeholders group. By studying the ethics attitude of present business students, it may be possible to predict the future ethical behavior of business leaders and perhaps even influence that behavior through appropriate responsible business education. As students are major stakeholders of business schools, it is essential to capture their attitude and perspectives on RM, RME, sustainability and CSR to understand their views on their education in these areas and what changes they would like to see in their business education to be more responsible.

Literature Review: Previous Studies

Macquarie Graduate School of Management (MGSM) Studies

MGSM conducted 3 surveys during the current decade to examine the state of PRME. The surveys were conducted in 2011, 2013 and 2016 with the support of PRME signatory schools. The purpose of the PRME survey was to examine responsible management attitude amongst postgraduate students enrolled in business and management programs. The studies involved students from around the world (North America, South America, Europe, Asia and Australia) but not the Middle East or African countries. These surveys will be referred to, in this paper, as (the worldwide studies).

There are several major findings of these studies. In 2011 study, the respondents demonstrated strong social values and showed a commitment to the community through their volunteer work and donation of money. Students exhibited positive CSR attitude and, in contrast to Carroll's (1991) pyramid, indicated that ethical, rather than financial considerations, are the primary responsibilities of a business. When asked about RME, the students reported that their school is preparing them well on issues of business ethics and social responsibility, and that they feel well equipped to apply RME knowledge in real life. In addition, it is found that in a number of areas, responses varied significantly by gender and type/stage of program.

The results of the 2013 study on RME provide some key recommendations for the future. It is suggested that academic institutions offering postgraduate business programs would be well served by maintaining and increasing the scope of RME in their curricula. This will require the involvement of a number of key groups: business schools, business sector, students and third party initiatives (e.g. PRME). The studies proposed specific role to be played by each group to foster the development of RME.

2016 study provide further insights which call for a shift towards human- and planet- centered paradigm of management. This would require new competencies. It would also require a pedagogy that exposes students to the tensions between business and society so that students are better prepared to make judgments in complex situations. The competencies should help future leaders to act with responsibility towards human and planet. That is covering the CSR and sustainability aspects (i.e. economic, social, environment and governance). The study emphasized that school need to reconsider changing the way the courses are delivered by applying more practical strategies. Students learning needs to occur within complex learning environments to provide active problem-based and self-directed acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude. Professors are to be encouraged to introduce more applicable case studies in classes and experiential and field learning. In addition, 2016 study encourages faculty members to emphasize more active—rather than passive—learning. They could tap into the experiences of students on live projects or simulations to bring home the interdependence between business and society and illustrate the complexities of responsible decision-making.

Approaches and Frameworks to Develop RME

Didactic Model for Responsible Management Education

This study provides recommendations about how to foster students’ development towards becoming long-term thinking, responsible business leaders. Referring to the PRME, the following five -element model is suggested to realize responsible management education (see Figure 3).

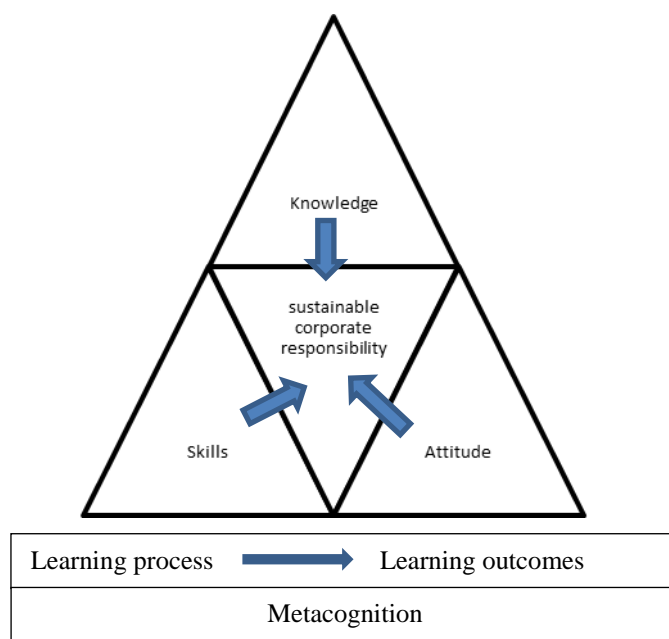


Figure 3. Didactic Model for Responsible Management Education

Wilson, Lenssen and Hind Study (2006) Framework

This study identifies the knowledge, skills and attitude as generic competencies need to be covered by business leaning program to enhance sustainable corporate responsibility.

Other Studies

Several studies were conducted to examine the question of social responsibility education and its components, especially ethics. Porter and Kramer (2011) suggested a new paradigm for the relationship between the business sector and society. To address social problems, the authors suggested moving from CSR to creating shared value (CSV), which are about businesses acting as businesses (based on their competitive advantage and resources) and not as charities. In this case, financial value and social value can be created simultaneously. As CSR and

CSV gain importance, it follows that the RME of future business leaders is essential for the effective performance of business graduates in the rapidly changing business world. Business schools have a responsibility to provide current and future practitioners with training in the basics of ethics, which would ideally act as a catalyst to stimulate socially and ethically managed business organizations, Cornelius et al., (2008).

Brown (2009) suggested business schools need to acknowledge their role in integrating CSR throughout the entire curriculum to allow students to understand its complexity and to highlight the interconnection between the different business aspects. Baruch (1996) argue that CSR and ethics need continually be adapted in both content and structure of the RME program to meet the needs of the business world, as well as address the view of the students and lecturers. Rizvi (2009) mentioned that the learning environment provided by the academic institutions and educators must adapt to new ways of thinking about social and political conditions. Leveson (2014) argued that in preparing the curriculum it is important to investigate generational values, as allowing our knowledge base to be built on the values and perception of previous generations can be misleading to current generations. Leveson (2014) added that as with any learning environment it is imperative that the curriculum acknowledges and incorporates students' views and opinions, in an effort to create an authentic learning experience with relevance and meaning. Leveson (2014) also emphasized that at the classroom level understanding and appreciating students' CSR views and attitude will improve the facilitator's ability to frame the delivery in ways that the students can relate to and engage with. Leveson's view is in line with Cotton's (2006) who stated that and beyond the students there is also a need for the curriculum to also bear in mind the facilitators beliefs to ensure it is implemented in its intended format.

Leveson (2014) argued that in addition to the generational perspective to the different approach to CSR, there is also a cultural dimension which needs to be taken into account. He mentioned, as examples that in most European countries employees, environment and service are the most important aspects of CSR reporting, while in Australia it is product quality, management and financial performance, and in the USA it is employee relations (diversity), financial performance and philanthropy are the most important aspects. In this regard there are ongoing challenges to be met and significant effort required to truly integrate CSR into the business school curricula. According to Bishop (1992), it is likely this there will be an area of continued focus for most business schools in the next decade. However, there is no one size fits all solution and the learning environment needs to be authentic and support the attainment of knowledge and experience that can be applied to real life situations (Herrington, (2010). It is imperative that both the educators and curriculum encourage an authentic learning approach to best engage students utilizing real-world case studies and situations faced as future business leaders (Herrington, (2010). The notion that knowledge and skills are best learnt in contexts to be useful in real life (Collins, 1991) further supports the need to integrate components of CSR and ethics in all business subject. By utilizing authentic tasks likely to be faced by the students, the curriculum has an influence that beyond the classroom allows the students to become emotional stakeholders in addressing real-world problems (Rule, 2006).

To conclude, the literature reviewed above indicates that there is a lack of studies assessing perspectives and attitude towards responsible management of a very important stakeholder group (i.e. business management students). The few studies that have focused on this group have yielded mixed results with some showing students are indifferent to responsible management, while others, especially women, demonstrate a growing interest in CSR. As well, there is a shortage of comprehensive frameworks to be adopted to design and implement an appropriate RME program which take the surrounding environment into consideration. In other parts of the world, emerging and developing, the picture can be completely different. To the best of our knowledge, The PRME surveys, so far conducted, not covered any of the African or Middle East Countries and, as well, not included non PRME -signatory business schools.

Methodology

The Approach

The research problem will be addressed as a socio-economic educational problem which affects multiple stakeholders with different needs and expectations. Accordingly, the RME program will be looked at as a process in which social and economic values are co-created in a win – win fashion. That is equally considering business, society and the environment aspect when conducting business activities. Hence, economic and social value can be created simultaneously. To that end, the approach adopted in this study will mainly employ

concepts, tools and methods developed in the fields of education, CSR, sustainability, and stakeholders analysis for gathering data, analysis, interpretation of results and conclusion drawing.

The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is constructed around students' attitude towards CSR & sustainability, Figure 4.

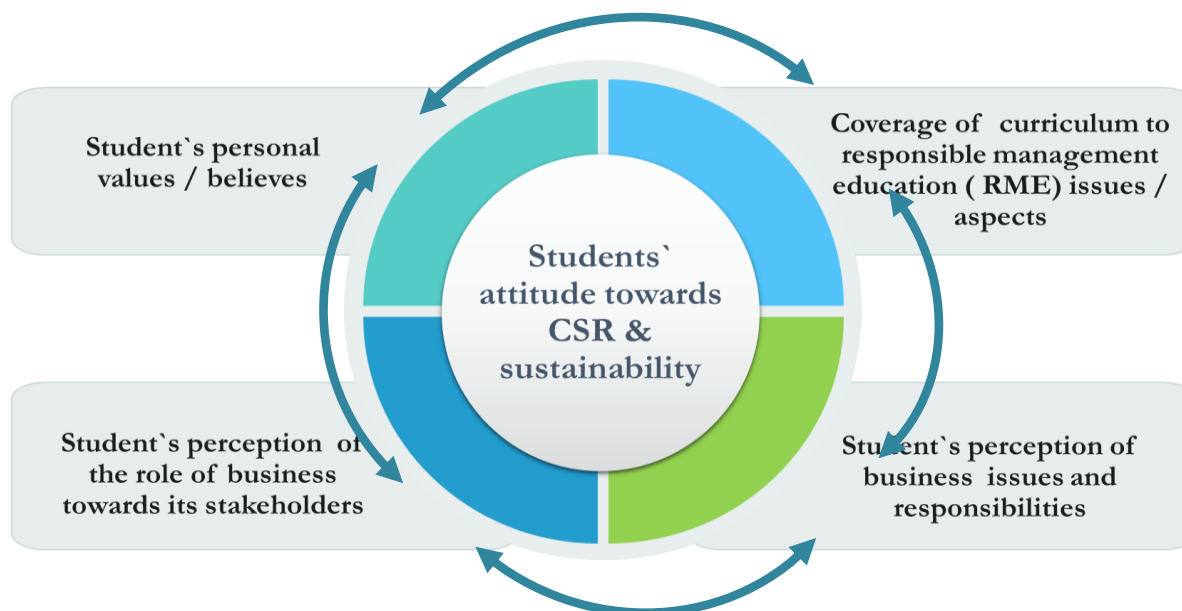


Figure 4. The Conceptual Framework

Data Collection

The data for this study had been gathered through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire largely borrowed from the questionnaire designed for the second study conducted by MGSM in 2013 to examine the attitude of MBA students around the world towards RM and RME. The survey took about 20 minutes to answer, and included 90 items that were grouped into 8 main constructs as follows:

- background questions (university, school / faculty, program, specialization, stage of study, gender, working status), 7 items;
- knowledge of UN Global Compact and PRME, 2 items;
- values and lifestyles, 9 items;
- RME curriculum, 38 items;
- attitude towards business issues, 9 items;
- attitude towards business responsibilities, 9 items;
- attitude towards business stakeholders, 9 items and
- attitude towards CSR and sustainability, 7 items.

In addition, the grouping of the items in the questionnaire is intended to help achieving the main aims of the study. All items, except for student background, were in Likert-scale format using a five-point response scale. Data were collected manually and were analyzed using SPSS. The collected data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively in order to comprehensively assess students' responses.

Participants

In total, 106 postgraduate business students answered the survey. The respondents were distributed among the largest four business schools or faculties: El-Nielin University, Gezira University, Khartoum University and Sudan University for Science and Technology. 65% of the participants are MBA program students. 35% are

DBA program students. The students are distributed among management, finance and marketing specializations. The females represent 63% and males 37%. It worth mentioning that none of the schools covered is a signatory to the PRME.

Results and Discussion

The State of RME in Sudan

Offered Responsible Management Education (RME)

The survey asked participants about their current RME: what does their schools offer them and how well prepared do they feel in these areas? Figures 3 shows whether the business schools and departments offered their students particular responsible management units as “core units”, “electives”, “part of another unit”, “not at all” or if the student “did not know”. Table 1 shows that the most common core units in RME were on consumer and marketing (66.3%), followed by ethical decision making (25%) and business ethics (24.5%). On the other hand, environment sustainability (8.7%), followed by conflict resolutions (8.8%) were those least taught as core units. This study shows that the most common elective was stakeholders management (8.6%) followed by environment sustainability (7.7%). 14.4% and 13.7% of the students, respectively, indicated that ethical decision making and business ethics were not at all taught in their business school, and only 8.7% indicated so for CSR.

Table 1. Responsible Management Units Offered

Management issues covered by the program	Please indicate how the following management issues are covered by the curriculum					total
	core units	electives	part of another unit	not at all	did not know	
Business ethics	24.5	2.0	52.9	13.7	6.9	100.0
Corporate Social Responsibility(CSR)	9.6	3.8	69.2	8.7	8.7	100.0
Ethical decision making	25.0	5.8	50.0	14.4	4.8	100.0
Legal aspects of management	21	3.8	48.6	20	6.6	100.0
Environmental sustainability	8.7	7.7	39.4	26.9	17.3	100.0
Consuming and marketing	66.3	2.9	23.1	5.8	1.9	100.0
Stakeholder management	15.2	8.6	53.3	14.3	8.6	100.0
Conflict resolution	8.8	4.9	51.0	16.7	18.6	100.0
Social entrepreneurship	13.6	6.8	41.7	24.3	13.6	100.0
Diversity management	15.5	6.8	49.5	20.4	7.8	100.0
Fair trade	12.7	3.9	36.3	27.5	19.6	100.0
Green Economy	17.3	4.8	26.9	29.8	21.2	100.0
Human Rights	14.3	3.8	36.2	36.2	9.5	100.0

Students Perception How Equipped to Apply Knowledge on Real Life

The students were then asked how well equipped they felt to apply the knowledge acquired in these subjects in real life, Table 2 shows that (55.8%) felt very well equip with “consumer and marking”, (40.8%) with “ethical decision making” and (41.3%) with “business ethics”. On the other hand, (36.5%) felt not equipped with regard to “corporate social responsibility”, “conflict resolution” (32.4%) and “business ethics” (30.8%).

Change required in the Curriculum towards RME

We asked the students how their school or department could most effectively change the curriculum towards RME. 15 optional changes were proposed. Table 3 shows the levels of agreement to each of the proposed changes towards RME. The statements that, “Encourage professors to introduce more applicable case studies in classes”, “Provide students with internships related to corporate responsibility / sustainability”, “Experiential and field learning and “Bring in experts and leaders as guests speakers on these topics” gained the highest level of agreement (strongly agree and agree) with (97.1%) , (96%) and (93.3%), respectively. 7.9% of respondents thought that no changes were required.

Table 2. Students Perception How Equipped to Apply Knowledge on Real Life

Business aspects	Please indicate how well the program equipped you apply the following business aspects in real life					total
	very well equipped	well equipped	satisfactory equipped	not equipped	do not know	
Business ethics	41.3	13.5	1.9	30.8	12.5	100.0
Corporate Social Responsibility(CSR)	23.1	28.8	1.9	36.5	9.6	100.0
Ethical decision making	40.8	22.3	1.0	23.3	12.6	100.0
Legal aspects of management	27.3	22.2	2.0	24.2	24.2	100.0
Environmental sustainability	13.9	28.7		29.7	27.7	100.0
Consuming and marketing	55.8	26.0		12.5	5.8	100.0
Stakeholder management	29.3	27.3	1.0	29.3	13.1	100.0
Conflict resolution	16.7	19.6	1.0	32.4	30.4	100.0
Social entrepreneurship	16.7	22.5	1	28.4	31.4	100.0
Diversity management	26.2	26.2	1.0	24.3	22.3	100.0
Fair trade	14.7	21.6	1.0	23.5	39.2	100.0
Green Economy	13.1	20.2	1.0	22.2	43.4	100.0
Human Rights	22.3	15.5	1.0	26.2	35.0	100.0

Table 3. Suggested Changes Needed in the Curriculum

Suggested change in the curriculum	Please indicate which changes you think needed in the curriculum					total
	strongly agree	agree	do not know	disagree	strongly disagree	
Encourage critical thinking and analysis in the classroom	49.5	38.6	4	5.9	2	100
Bring in experts and leaders as guest speakers on these topics	60.6	32.7	2.9	2.9	1.0	100
Encourage professors to introduce more applicable case studies in classes	73.8	23.3	1	1.9		100
Experiential learning and field learning	66.3	29.7	3.0	1.0		100
Integrate social and environmental themes into the core curriculum	44.7	49.5	4.9	1		100
Provide students with internships related to corporate responsibility / sustainability	52.4	44.7	1	1.9		100
Create a concentration on sustainability and CSR	36.9	55.3	6.8	1.0		100
Educate recruiters on the importance of these themes in the curriculum	37.0	44.0	17.0	2.0		100
Increase the number of electives that focus on social and environmental themes	27.9	48.1	10.6	11.5	1.9	100
Increase the number of core units that focus on social and environmental themes	32.7	47.1	4.8	13.5	1.9	100
Change the timing of these units/course towards the end of the degree	14.9	39.6	14.9	30.7		100
No changes are required	7.9	6.9	8.9	36.6	39.6	100

Students Attitude towards RM, RME, CSR and Sustainability

Students Perception towards Values and Believes

Table 4 demonstrates that the most important (i.e. marked as ‘Absolutely essential’ and ‘Very important’) values or believes for the business students is “being successful in your studies or work”. This value scored (98.1%) . “Living according to religious faith” (97.1%) marked second. On the other hand, “Making a lot of money” and “Helping the community and people in need” are both ranked last in (10.6%).

Table 4. The Importance of Values / Believes

Values / believes	Please indicate how the following values / believes are important to you					total
	absolutely essential	very important	fairly important	not very important	not at all important	
Making a lot of money	10.6	24.0	51.9	6.7	6.7	100.0
Helping the community and people in need	10.6	24.0	51.9	6.7	6.7	100.0
Being successful in your studies or work	81.0	17.1	1.0	1.0		100.0
Making the world a better place	46.2	34.6	15.4	2.9	1.0	100.0
Living a happy and comfortable life	59.6	29.8	10.6			100.0
Being able to do what you want	66.7	29.5	1.9	1.9		100.0
Living according to religious faith	80.0	17.1	2.9			100.0
Living according to your values	59.4	28.7	8.9	1.0	2.0	100.0
Having a good work–life balance	49.5	35.9	11.7	1.9	1.0	100.0

Students Perception and Attitude towards Business Issues

The students were asked: “If you were in a position of power in a business organization how important would the following issues be for you? Students were given a list of 11 items and were asked to rate them from 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Very important). Table 5 shows how the students ranked each item according to its level of perceived importance. (92.2%) of the students agreed that “Consumer satisfaction” should be the most important issue for business leaders, “Treating employees fairly and ethically” ranked second with (85.4%) and, “local and national peace and reduction of violence” (76.5%) ranking third. On the other hand, “The economy and financial markets” (59.4%), CSR practices such as “Employer-supported volunteering and giving” (42.2%) and “Engaging with various stakeholders” (37.9%) are ranked, respectively, as least important business issues to the leader in business organization.

Table 5. Importance of Business Issues

Business issues	If you were in a position of power in a business organization, how important would the following business issues to be for you?					total
	very important	important	somewhat important	of very little important	not at all important	
Consumer satisfaction	92.2		4.9	1.9	1.0	100.0
Treating employees fairly and ethically	85.4		12.6	1.0	1.0	100.0
The economy and financial markets	59.4		34.7	5.0	1.0	100.0
Making a profit for shareholders	52.0	35.3	9.8	2.0	1.0	100.0
Trading fairly with suppliers	47.6	46.6	1.9	1.0	2.9	100.0
Engaging with various stakeholders	37.9	37.9	19.4	2.9	1.9	100.0
Developing the community we operate within	57.4	32.7	6.9	1.0	2.0	100.0
Local and national peace and the reduction of violence	76.5	14.7	5.9	1.0	2.0	100.0
Environmental concerns and climate change	54.9	33.3	9.8	1.0	1.0	100.0
Employer-supported volunteering and giving	42.2	29.4	20.6	6.9	1.0	100.0
Philanthropy and donating to Charity	53.5	24.8	16.8	5.0		100.0

Students Perception and Attitude towards Stakeholders

For their opinions regarding the importance of stakeholders to the business, students were asked to answer how important each of the following stakeholders to them (from 1 'Not at all important' to 5 'Absolutely essential'): "customers", "employees", "shareholders", "suppliers", "environment", "government", "employee's family", "community" and "trade unions". Table 6 ranked "Customers" are the most important stakeholders to them with (81.9%), second "employees", (79%), third "shareholders" (60%). On the other hand, the least important respectively, were "employee's family", (25.7%), "trade union" (32.4%) and "government" (35%).

Table 6. Importance of Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Please indicate how the following stakeholders are important for a business company					total
	absolutely essential	very important	fairly important	not very important	not at all important	
Consumers	81.9	16.2	1.9			100.0
Employees	79.0	16.2	4.8			100.0
Shareholders	60.0	27.6	12.4			100.0
Suppliers	45.7	46.7	7.6			100.0
The environment	52.0	33.3	14.7			100.0
Governments	35.0	40.8	17.5	6.8		100.0
Employees' families	25.7	31.4	35.2	6.7	1.0	100.0
Members of the general community	34.6	41.3	20.2	3.8		100.0
Trade Unions	32.4	37.1	27.6	1.9	1.0	100.0

Students Perception and Attitude towards Business Responsibility

For their opinions regarding the degree of importance of responsibilities to the business, students were asked to answer how important each of the following types of responsibilities to them (from 1 'Not at all important' to 5 'Absolutely essential'): "ethical", "legal", "financial", "social", "environmental", "philanthropic". Table 7 shows how students ranked these responsibilities. "Ethical" responsibility was ranked as absolutely essential responsibility to students (73.1%), "Financial" second (61.5%) and "legal" third (59.6%). On the other hand, the least important type of responsibilities were, respectively, "philanthropic" (39.4%), "Social" (42.7%) and "environmental" (52.9%).

Table 7. Students Ranking of Business Responsibility

Responsibility	Please indicate how important the following responsibility for a business company					total
	absolutely essential	very important	fairly important	not very important	not at all important	
Ethical	73.1	23.1	1.9		1.9	100
Legal	59.6	39.4	1.0			100
Financial	61.5	32.7	5.8			100
Social	42.7	39.8	16.5		1.0	100
Environmental	52.9	29.8	14.4	1.0	1.9	100
Philanthropic	39.4	28.8	25.0	5.8	1.0	100

Students Perception and Attitude towards CSR and Sustainability

To know the attitude towards CSR and sustainability, the students were asked to state their level of agreement with seven statements on social responsibility, both positive and negative, from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Table 8 shows the percentages of agreement. The students agreed most on the "good ethics is often good business" (66%) and second, "companies should do a lot more for society and the environment" (48.5%). In other words, they agreed that being good can help one do well and that it is also the right thing to do. They strongly disagreed that "The most important concern for a firm is making a profit, even if it means bending or breaking the rules" (44.7%).

Table 8. Students Perception and Attitude towards CSR and Sustainability

CSR attributes	Please indicate how do you agree (disagree) with the following statement about CSR and sustainability					Total
	Strongly agree	agree	Do not know	disagree	Strongly disagree	
Social responsibility and profitability can be compatible	29.1	57.3	3.9	8.7	1.0	100.0
Good ethics is often good business	66.0	33.0			1.0	100.0
Business has a social responsibility beyond making profit	15.5	38.8	8.7	25.2	11.7	100.0
Business ethics and social responsibility are critical to the survival of a business enterprise	39.6	45.5	3.0	10.9	1.0	100.0
Companies should do a lot more for society and the Environment	48.5	44.7	2.9	1.9	1.9	100.0
The overall effectiveness of a business can be determined to a great extent by the degree to which it is ethical and socially responsible	26.2	61.2	2.9	8.7	1.0	100.0
The most important concern for a firm is making a profit, even if it means bending or breaking the rules	9.7	5.8	5.8	34.0	44.7	100.0

The Correlation between Students' Perception and Attitude

Figure 5 shows the result of the correlation analysis among the variables covered by the study. students' attitude towards CSR & sustainability found to be significantly correlate (at 0.01 level of significant) with : student's Personal values / believes , coverage of curriculum to RME issues , student's perception of business responsibilities and student's perception of the role of business towards its stakeholders.

variables	Students' believes and values	RME curriculum offered	Required changes in curriculum	Importune of Business issues	Importance of Stakeholders	Importance of Business responsibilities	Application of knowledge	CSR & sustainability
Students' believes and values	1							
RME curriculum offered	-.004	1						
Required changes in curriculum	.168	.095	1					
Importance of Business issues	.339**	-.121	.440**	1				
Importance of Stakeholders	.336**	.194*	.387**	.480**	1			
Importance of Business responsibilities	.299**	.185	.425**	.301**	.380**	1		
Application of knowledge	.213*	.538**	.062	-.004	.178	.215*	1	
CSR & sustainability	.365**	.197*	.316**	.144	.214*	.349**	.323**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Figure 5. The Results of the correlation Analysis

Conclusion, Practical Implications and Framework

The postgraduate business students in Sudan, shortly entering senior management level positions and playing an important role on the decision making processes, appear to have an appropriate level of appreciation for CSR and RM.

- Students exhibited positive CSR perception and attitude, with a heightened focus on acting ethically and a diminished focus on financial considerations. However, one of the key lessons is the need for continued evolution and development of CSR and ethics more generally across business curriculums in Sudan.
- Academic institutions in Sudan play a vital function in this process and it is possible that their real contribution is yet to be revealed. Initiatives such as PRME can assist them in achieving their full potential in making a real difference to the country and the world at large.
- The students are seeking the knowledge, skills, exposure and experience they need through RME to be as effective as possible in the real world. There is a room and need for improvement.
- For this to happen, business schools in Sudan are encouraged, based on students attitude and believes, to introduce more ethical and CSR core and elective units in their MBA and DBA syllabuses which are least taught as core units. Hence, business schools can foster the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large. To the point, ethics must be advanced in its own right as part of a comprehensive curriculum. That is the role of business schools need to be seen as a creator of challenging learning settings which allow the students to not only focus on profit-maximization while neglecting their expected contribution to society and the environment.
- There is a clear call that business schools in Sudan need to acknowledge their responsibility towards sustainable ethical education of their students. Therefore, a shift towards human- and planet- centered paradigm of management appears necessary. This would require new competencies. It would also require a pedagogy that exposes students to the tensions between business and society so that students are better prepared to make judgments in complex situations; (Isler & Teta, 2012b). The competencies should help future leaders to act with responsibility towards human and planet. That is covering the CSR and sustainability aspects (i.e. economic, social, environment and governance) .
- Figure 6 illustrates the targeted learning group of competencies (outcomes) to be acquired by postgraduate business students through an appropriate RME program. The competencies should help future leaders to act with responsibility towards business and society aspects.

The interaction among sustainability aspects and RME co-created and shared values.

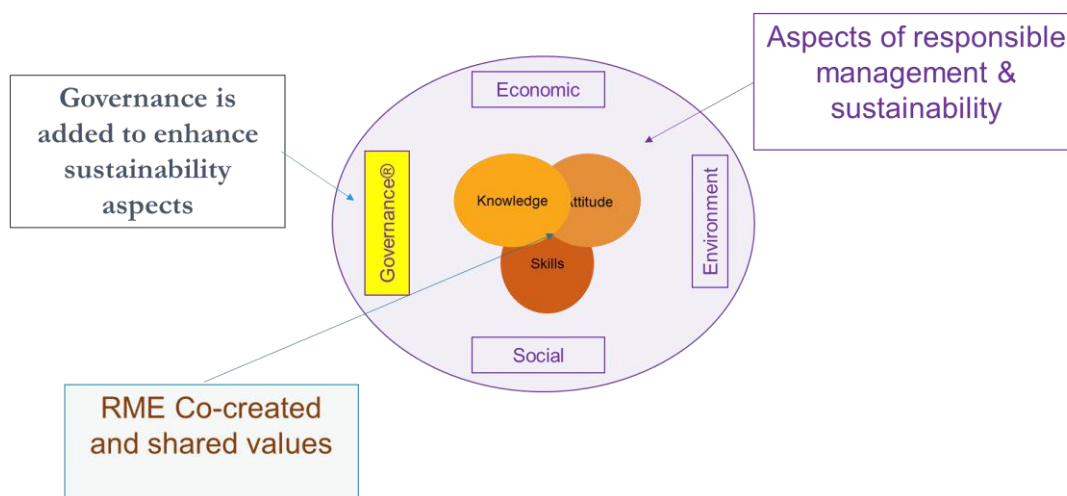


Figure 6. Targeted Learning Competencies (Outcomes) to be acquired by Postgraduate Business

- As students felt not well equipped to apply the knowledge acquired in real life with regard to “ethical decision making” and “business ethics”, business school need to reconsider changing the way the courses are delivered by applying more practical strategies. Student learning needs to occur within complex learning environments to provide active, problem-based and self-directed acquisition of knowledge,

skills and attitude. Professors are to be encouraged to introduce more applicable case studies in classes and experiential and field learning.

- Faculty members need to educate students (change –makers/ agents) deeply to know the value of things rather than their price and be responsible rather than to be rich.
- Faculty members need to emphasize more active—rather than passive—learning. They could tap into the experiences of students on live projects or simulations to bring home the interdependence between business and society and illustrate the complexities of responsible decision-making. Two approaches to create best-practice learning environments are real-life case studies and real-life student projects which both lead to strong buy-in from students, faculty and company partners.
- To that end, business schools need implement responsible management education based on shared values which are expressed in the mission statement of academic institutions and build the foundation of study programs. Students, faculties and companies need to build a partnership to jointly explore effective approaches of sustainable corporate responsibility. As such , a co-created and shared value framework might be conceptualized to develop and implement an effect RME program in business postgraduate programs
- For this to happen, at least four groups of players (enablers) need to be involved. Namely these players are: business schools, business sector, students and international setters of principle and standards related to RME. Figure 7 reflects the relationship between aspects of RM, RME co-created and shared value and the enablers. Technology is added to facilitate the processes.
- Recognizing that we “Get what we measure” and that we “Manage what we measure” A “Socio-economic Value Based” report card might be introduced to assess and report on MBA and DBA students attitude and behavior towards the society and the environment.
- It is no longer enough to state a company’s vision as “to be the best in the world”. Instead they have to be the “best for the world”.

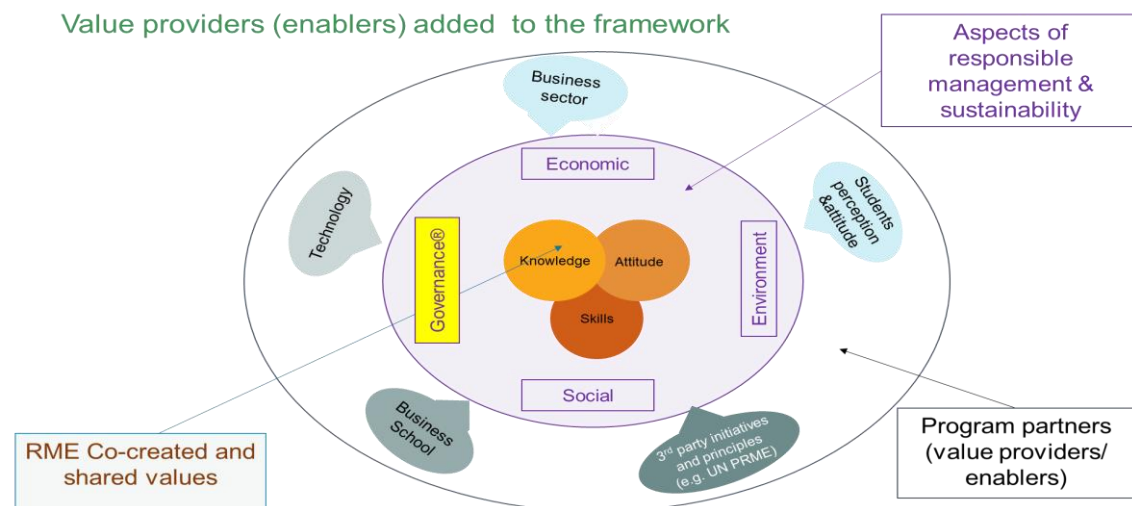


Figure 7. The Relationship between Aspects of RM, RME Co-created and Shared Value and the Enablers

The Framework Put into Context:

The variation among the students’ perception and attitude towards RM , RME, CSR and sustainability in Sudan are remarkable with regard to business aspects and issues covered by the study. These variations could be attributed to the following factors:

The community values. Worldwide, “Living according to religious faith” was ranked last as not at all important whilst rank first in Sudan. According to Jusoh et al (2015), in their study “An Islamic Perspective on Corporate Social Responsibility of Islamic Banks” argue that applying social responsibility by Muslims is rewarded in Islam since most of them fall under the concept of “enjoining good and forbidding evil” and beneficial social works which are considered ‘ibadah (worship)’. Hence, when developing RME program one need to consider community values, culture and believes.

The political and social stability. The students in Sudan thought that as business leaders they should care more about local and national peace and the reduction of violence. In Sudan, socially and security wise, massive population movement represents one of the serious challenges facing Sudan. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM-2011) reveals at least 6.9 million people affected by migration and human displacement in Sudan. With 4.9 million internally displaced people, 750,000 foreign migrants and refugees are living in Sudan.

The importance of local and national peace. According to 2018 global ranking of peace environment index, Sudan ranked 153 out of 169 countries. Therefore, the political and social environment need to be considered when designing and implementing RME programs.

The environment sustainability. Sudan is facing serve problems including desertification and land degradation, water pollution, deforestation, soil erosion and deterioration in biodiversity. The impact of petroleum prospecting, drilling and transport on habitats, especially that of produced water on migratory birds is very disturbing .According to the Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI) 2018, Sudan scored 51/100 and rank 115/180. As such, the country’s foot-print with regard to environmental sustainability as reflected by the cleanness of its eco-system especially when dealing with land, air and water need to be taken into consideration.

The country level of development. According to the World Bank report 2017, Sudan (a developing country) GDP was US M 117,488 , per captia US \$ 2,899 and life expectancy is 64.4 years . This might explain why most students in Sudan ranked “being successful in their studies or work” higher to raise their level of life. Therefore, the students` perception and attitudes are affected by the country`s economic situation. Thus, the development of RME programs need to take this factor into account.

Having accepted that , we put the framework into context to take into consideration the internal and external environmental factors surrounding the business school or institution when attempting to develop and implement an appropriate RME program, Figure 8.

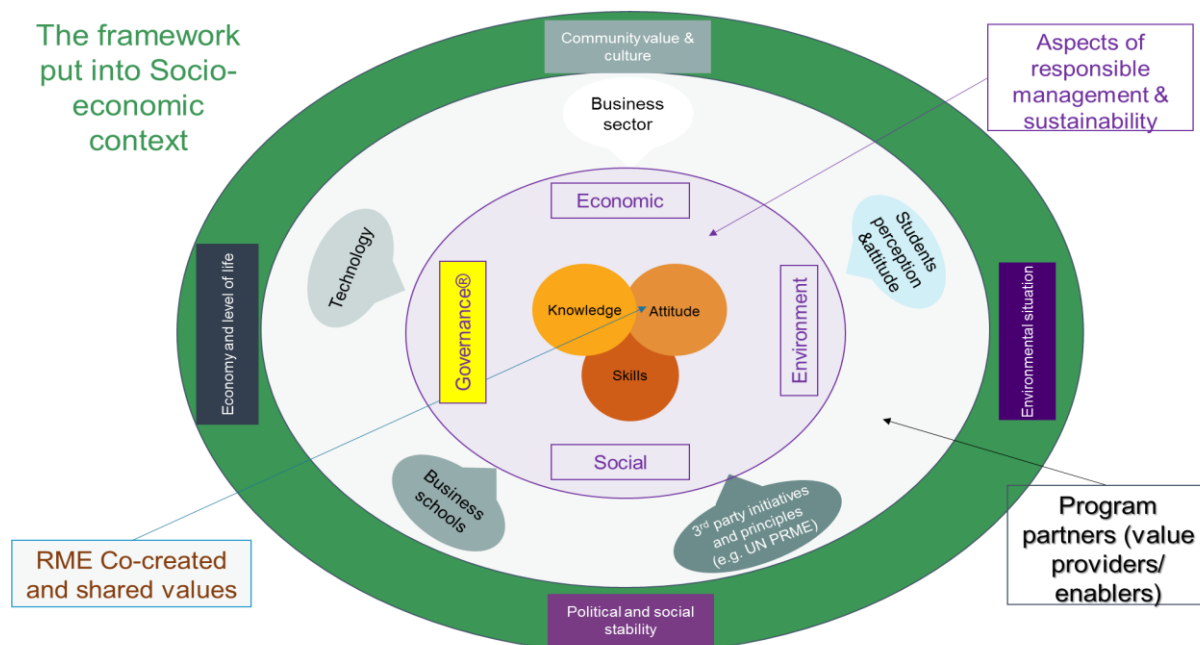


Figure 8. The framework for Developing RME Program Put into Context

Further Research

- Duplicate this study in different setting and countries.
- Test the applicability and usefulness of the proposed framework for developing RME programs.
- Explore and examine pedagogies and learning strategies that exposes students to the tensions between business and society so that students are better prepared to make judgments in complex situations.

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