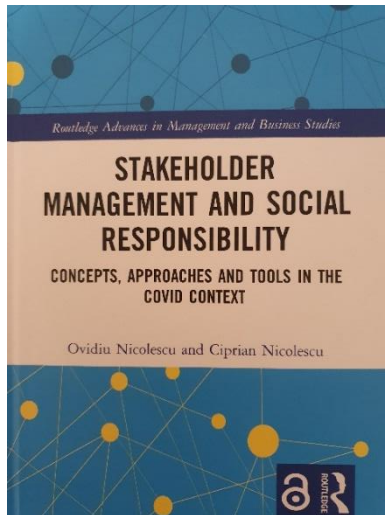


Stakeholder Management and Social Responsibility: Concepts, Approaches and Tools in the COVID Context

The book elaborated by two professors from Bucharest University of Economic



Studies - Prof. Ph. D. Emeritus Ovidiu Nicolescu and Prof. Ph. D. Ciprian Nicolescu - has been recently published by the prestigious publishing house Routledge.

The main features of this book are the holistic and innovative vision and approach of three very updated essential elements: innovative management, company stakeholders and social responsibility. The whole approach is contextual taking into consideration the megashifts developed during the last decades: transition to the knowledge based economy, revolution 4.0 and digital transformation.

In our opinion **the most important innovative contributions** of the research are the followings:

a) Identification among company stakeholders, based on a set of rigorous criteria, of a special category – the relevant stakeholder – which influences significantly the organization’s functionality, development, and performance; the new management approach is centered on the all relevant stakeholders.

b) Replacement of the company management focus from two stakeholders - shareholders and top managers- with focus on all relevant internal and external stakeholders. This means changing the managerial paradigm from the manager–subordinate relationship to a new managerial paradigm - manager–relevant stakeholder- which is more motivational, collaborative, based on the win-win negotiations and centered on the fulfilment of joint objectives.

c) Extension of the stakeholders taken into consideration by management, from large companies to all companies irrespective of size; authors propose this because all companies - despite of their size - depend on the relevant stakeholders, and their functionality, development, and performance are decisively influenced by them.

d) A radical change in the approach of the corporate social responsibility. So far social responsibility have been considered necessary only for corporations. Authors propose the extension of corporate social responsibility to all companies’ despite of their size, elaborating a new concept and approach – social responsibility. They propose this because all companies have obligations and responsibilities towards the local community, region, and country in which they operate, to the

ecological environment and population involved, etc. All companies face the same societal challenges.

e) An extension in the scope of company social responsibilities from the economic, social, legal, and moral aspects to include a fifth element – the ecological aspect – concomitantly with a focus on the relevant stakeholders and reconfiguration of the relationships between the elements of social responsibility. The theoretical background of the change is the replacement of the responsibility pyramid, considered usually by the specialists with the responsibility pentagon, a new concept that respond much better to the present grand societal challenges.

f) Development of the specific approach based on collaboration, motivation, flexibility, etc. - as used in recent decades, especially in large companies, with two relevant stakeholders, CRM for customers and SCM for suppliers - to the other relevant stakeholders. Starting from these very performant best practices, authors have conceived a new concept and mechanism, namely the managerial synapse, which could be used with all relevant stakeholders. A specific managerial synapse should be designed for each internal and external stakeholder category generating higher synergy and performances, beneficial for company and each relevant stakeholder, contributing to the amplification of the company sustainability.

g) Designing a new management system focused on stakeholders – a management system based on company-relevant stakeholders – which integrates the new with the previous elements. This system valorizes to a large extent stakeholders' information, knowledge, and other resources both in the company and in the interests of stakeholders. It motivates internal and external stakeholders to work together more closely and efficiently based on a win–win relationship and encourages the intensive fulfilment by the company of its social responsibilities with multiple economic, social, ecological, moral, and legal benefits for all.

These innovative elements regarding company management, relevant stakeholders, and social responsibility are able to generate huge beneficial effects in the companies and in their economic and social context and to contribute to relaunch the economy after the COVID pandemic. The **beneficial effects** could be grouped into three categories:

- Supplementary resources for the company and each relevant stakeholder (knowledge, information, technical-material, financial, etc.);
- Much better work processes reshaped in the company and its stakeholders, based on the common, convergent and motivational objectives, “humanistic” approach, intensively participative and innovational content, etc.;
- Higher and multidimensional and sustainable performances in the company, community, economy, and society because of the substantial implication and contribution of the relevant internal (managers, shareholders and specialists) and external (customers, suppliers, investors, consultants, researchers, local community, trainers, etc.) stakeholders.

Elements incorporated in this book **represents revolutionary contributions in the development of theory and practice both of management and stakeholders**. In the theory of management and stakeholders we mention the

new concepts regarding relevant stakeholder, social responsibility, managerial paradigm and pentagon of responsibilities.

For the practice of management and stakeholders' approach have been elaborated two new managerial mechanisms – managerial synapse and company - relevant stakeholders - based management system - able to increase substantially the performances of companies and their stakeholders in the VUCA context and to substantially contribute to relaunch the countries economies from Coronavirus economic crisis.

All above mentioned elements take into consideration the recent megashifts in the economy and society and they are able to provide a **much better background to the organizations and their stakeholders, to cope with the increasing grand societal challenges.**