

Article

Student Perception of the Social Value of Responsible Management

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Abstract: In responsible management, managerial efficiency and sustainable development meet and influence each other. In order to give meaning to their organisation, to respect and look after their collaborators, a manager must promote a set of values on a personal, organisational and societal level. The purpose of this paper is to study the social value attributed to responsible management by students of a technical university. We have therefore undertaken to study a set of seven values attributed to responsible management and, more precisely, their utility and social desirability on a personal, organisational and societal level. The values have been operationalized with personality descriptors. The 60 participants in this study are students from a Romanian technical university. They had to assess, on four scales of seven points each (two for desirability and two for social utility), the value of a person characterised by one of the seven values attributed to responsible management. The results show us that *efficiency* is the value perceived by the students as being the most desirable for responsible management, and that in terms of social utility, *agility* is the most appreciated value. We found that there is indeed an effect of the context in which these values are perceived. Efficiency, audacity, dedication and integrity are perceived as more useful at an organisational level, while solidarity was perceived as more useful on a societal level. At the organisational level we also found a gender effect, in the sense that women appreciate people who are efficient, have integrity or are humble more than men do.

Keywords: responsible management; social value; social desirability; social utility



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1. Introduction

In terms of sustainable development, large enterprises conduct their activity guided by a major challenge—that of practicing an ethical and responsible management. The corruption scandals linked to large enterprises, as well as the increasingly frequent practices of small enterprises aimed at increasing their advantages to the disadvantage of the community have emphasized the need to find solutions in order to develop an ethical and responsible management strategy. Over time, numerous enterprises, under the pressure of the public opinion, which vigorously transmits values, have understood that they must assume societal responsibility in order to uphold a good image on the market. Certain organisations have understood that values could become a genuine leverage for performance, for the work climate or for the corporate culture. Scientific literature indicates the remarkable success of organisations which, due to responsible management, have succeeded in fulfilling their social responsibilities and have contributed to reducing the negative impact of activities on the environment and society in general [1].

Fifty years ago, on 13 September 1970, Friedman published in the New York Times Magazine an article considered by Girard (2013) to be one of the most cited in the literature

on corporate social responsibility [2]. In this article entitled ‘The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits’ Friedman saw maximizing shareholder profits as beneficial to society as a whole. As Defalvard notes, for Friedman, ‘the social responsibility of capitalist companies came under liberal regulation where laissez-faire, in the sense of the free search by firms for maximum profit for shareholders, was sufficient to make their interests consistent with the interests of society’ [3] (p. 299). It seems that we have now entered a new era. In a statement of 19 August 2019 published on its website, the Business Roundtable (which brings together 181 directors of large American companies) indeed proposes a new definition of the purpose of the company, a definition according to which the social responsibility of the company would become the constitutive element of the 21st century company, with a questioning of the supremacy of the shareholder in the sharing of company’s value [4].

The implementation of responsible management entails responsible managers—that is to say, people (managers) who adopt socially responsible behaviour and a fair attitude in terms of business ethics. A responsible leader ‘pays attention to ethical rules and norms, to the manner in which responsibilities are shared and executed, to critical inquiries, to evaluations and to value judgments, to encouraging participation in the decision-making processes and to finding solutions for all the members of the organisation’ [5] (p. 294).

The perspective of approaching ethics in the organizational field has undergone a transition from business ethics understood as ethical behaviours involved in a business, to an ethical leadership that crowns organizational ethical management.

The organization is no longer understood as a place where certain activities are carried out and remunerated, but is instead seen as a place of personal development and achievement, as a place where personal values intertwine with organizational values. The ethical model put into practice by a responsible leader is intended to be assumed by the members of the organization at different decision-making levels, up to a personal, individual level.

Ethical conduct is primarily value-based conduct, but people appreciate these values differently. Measuring values, several authors have observed variations in their hierarchy according to culture and, within the same culture, inter-individual variations according to age, sex, professional status or level of education [6–8]. This variability is also not without posing some problems (see for example, in terms of artificial intelligence, the cultural and inter-individual differences in responses to moral dilemmas offered to so-called intelligent machines, such as autonomous vehicles [9]).

We live in a moment of a value crisis, of a collapse of traditional values, of a relativization of any value hierarchy [10]. For this reason, the need to restore values, to re-discuss and renew them, is an increasingly acute problem.

In this sense, we set out to conduct an empirical study on how the values of responsible management are perceived by a group of students of a technical university.

Values are considered a key factor in the development of responsible behaviours. The study of values is important because it provides useful information on how people can be motivated in order to actively contribute to the transition towards a sustainable society. Values are also a key factor in determining how people’s attitudes can be transformed into positive attitudes regarding the changes imposed by globalization and by climate change.

Approaching values from the perspective of perceiving their desirability or social utility provides information on group values and on the standards that can guide the actions of group members. Identifying the values of a group can give us information about the normativity of these values and their power of influence at a group level.

Our study provides information on the social values that students perceive as a priority within their group; in this case, a set of seven values associated with responsible management: efficiency, integrity, dedication, audacity, solidarity, humility and agility. The more students perceive the values related to responsible management as a priority within their group, the more they will tend to show responsible attitudes.

The results obtained highlight which of the values associated with responsible management represent a priority within the group of technical students and the manner in which the appreciation of these values varies depending on gender, context or type of judgement.

Before presenting the method and the results, we present the main data from the literature showing the importance and topicality of this issue.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

The concept of value is used in many disciplinary fields: in philosophy (from Plato), in sociology (with Weber and Durkhem), in anthropology (Margaret Mead), in economics (where we can distinguish a value exchange and use value), in psychology, etc. However, if this concept is thus situated at the crossroads of different social sciences, its meaning is nevertheless far from achieving consensus [11]. In psychology, one of the most common definitions is that of Rokeach: 'Values are abstract ideals, positive or negative, not tied to any specific attitude, object or situation, representing a person's beliefs about ideal modes of conduct and ideal terminal goals' [12] (p. 124). Or again Rokeach: 'A value is a constant belief that a specific mode of conduct or end (ultimate) state of existence is personally and socially superior to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end state of existence.' [13] (pp. 4–5). However, once that has been said, it is clear that the list of these values varies not only between authors but also within the work of the same researcher over the years. Thus, drawing inspiration from the work of Rokeach [12], Schwartz reported seven values in 1987 [14], ten in 1992 [15], then eleven [16], even nineteen in 2012 [17].

2.1. Values and Responsible Management

Values are considered a key factor in the development of sustainable behaviours. They are motivating factors that can influence the beliefs and actions of those involved in the development of a sustainable society.

People who adopt sustainable behaviours are people oriented towards an environmental approach, acting in accordance with their personal values and principles. Motivational factors, and especially values, participate in the decision-making process in terms of identifying the efforts that a person is willing to undertake, but also in terms of the costs and benefits of a sustainable behaviour.

Many researchers studied the relationships between human values and environmental behaviour [18–20]. A large number of these studies are based on Schwartz's Value Theory that proposes a general classification of 56 human values into 10 motivational clusters: benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity and tradition [15].

Steg and her collaborators identified four types of values as being involved in the development of a sustainable environment: hedonic values that orient people towards pleasure and comfort, egoistic values that focus people on safeguarding and personal resources, altruistic values that orient people towards the welfare of others and of society, and biospheric values that focus people on the consequences for nature and the environment [21,22]. Katz-Gerro et al. (2017) used four value types (biospheric value, universalism, benevolence and conformity) to explain the engagement in different forms of environmental behaviours, including environmental philanthropic behaviour [23]. Zverinová and her colleagues found that biospheric and egoistic value orientation is useful for examining preferences for healthier and more environmentally friendly scenarios [24].

An axiological approach to responsible management is provided by Luc Audebrand, who identifies seven key values that constitute the core of responsible management: efficiency, integrity, dedication, audacity, solidarity, humility and agility [25–27]. According to Audebrand, 'responsible management is not a method that can be applied by following a recipe; it involves rethinking our habits and prejudices and reflecting on the values guiding our actions' [25] (p. 7).

The Management Board of the University of Aix-Marseille established a responsible management charter that its personnel follow, where they included eight values: the sense of responsibility, fairness, integrity and ethics, loyalty, respect, solidarity, trust, transparency [28].

In this article we are interested in the social value attributed to responsible management behaviours, values that guide the behaviours that support the sustainable development of an organisation and of society. Our research is situated in a social-cognitivist perspective, in which the social value is analysed according to its two components, desirability and social utility. Many studies refer to this two-dimensional conception of social value [29–31]. Social desirability in our case refers to the appealing nature of a behaviour that may generate positive or negative feelings in others, while social utility corresponds to a person's probability of success *versus* failure within the society in which they operate.

The theory on the two dimensions of social value (social desirability and social utility) has been studied and validated in several contexts. In an organisational context the theory of the social value of persons was studied within the assessment of a manager's value, within recruitment of managers or workers, within recruitment of handicapped persons and within occupational analysis [32–35]. Some results show that the best traits for a production job differ from the best traits for a maintenance job. In production posts, candidates with socially useful traits are preferred, while in the maintenance sector socially desirable candidates are preferred regardless of the job status (high or low) [32,33]. Other research shows that people are evaluated according to the utility of their professions or the economic consequences of their behaviour or that they are the focus of the investigation of the social value conveyed in organizations [32,36].

In accordance with the theories that support the two-dimensionality of social values, we formulate the first hypothesis of the research claiming that:

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *There are differences in the appreciation of the traits of responsible management depending on whether the nature of the value is judged as desirable or useful.*

2.2. Values and Context

The managers' assumption of values is not enough if it is not coupled with an ethical organizational context. A manager must constantly ensure the cohesion between personal values, organizational values, employee values and the values of the community and the society in which the company is developing [10].

The interest in taking into account the context has been highlighted in evaluative contexts where the judgment of others is based on the detection of characteristics related to social utility [36]. Not all of the traits have the same value when it comes to assessing a person's social position [33,37] or a person's salary [38].

In a situation of self-evaluation, social utility predicts self-esteem much better than social desirability, while in a situation of hetero-evaluation, evaluation of others, it is social desirability that better predicts self-esteem [39].

Other studies have shown that the economic objectives of the contexts determine the register of traits used. For example, the studies by Miraucourt [36] have made it possible to specify that the valuation of a type of trait depends on the presence or absence of an economic objective. Therefore, in a specific context, certain traits have greater social utility than others.

In 2009, Teste identified an effect of context on the valorisation of internal causal explanations in work-related judgments [40]. The results of this study indicated that the differentiation between the profiles and the interjudge agreement were stronger in the liberal context than in the authoritative context. In another study, Teste (2012) examined the link between the social value assigned to targets expressing internal vs. external explanations and to individualist vs. collectivist contexts. The results showed that the effect of the targets' internality on recruitment judgments and perceived social utility was stronger in the individualist context than in the collectivist context [41].

Starting from the results of the above-mentioned research, we formulate the second hypothesis of our research.

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *There are differences in the appreciation of desirability and social utility of responsible management depending on individual, organizational or societal context analyses.*

2.3. Values and Gender

Studies have established value differences across age and gender groups within the same or different cultures. In a study carried out in 70 countries, Schwartz and Rubel observed that men placed more importance on power, success and autonomy, as compared to women, and less importance than the latter on benevolence and universalism [42]. Likewise, in their comparative study of the values of students in Estonia, Finland and Sweden, Verkasalo, Daun and Niit observed that, by comparison to women, men valued power more, and that, unlike men, women favoured universalism and benevolence [43].

The differences between men and women in terms of the importance they assign to various values are generally explained by stereotypes and gender roles, because girls and boys, under a different normative pressure, develop a different self, more instrumental in boys [44–46] and more relational in girls [47].

Regarding the type of value, men are significantly more likely to hold materialistic and egoistic values, whereas women are more likely to hold altruistic values [48].

Some authors [49–51] explain their results, and claim that men are less honest, less altruist and less compliant than women through their social value orientation [52]. A higher percentage of men are more individualistic, while women are more prosocial, and this social value orientation mediates honesty and compliance behaviours. D’Attoma, Volintiru & Malezieux consider that the differences in prosociality between men and women seem to be context dependent, but differences in tax compliance are indeed much more consistent [53].

In terms of the importance assigned to professional values, women’s assessments often differ from those of men. While men value material success, earnings, promotion and power more and prefer working with things, women appreciate interpersonal relationships, helping others and respecting colleagues [54,55]. The results of Chen, Ong and Sheremeta suggest that women place a higher value on winning than men [56]. Other researchers have found that the values they studied differ significantly in importance between males and females. When it comes to excitement, warm relationships with others, being well respected, security and self-respect, the appreciation of women is higher compared to that of men [57].

Mazilescu and Gangloff found gender differences between representations of masculinity and femininity: girls see beauty as a characteristic of femininity, but few boys share this appreciation. Boys, on the other hand, associate courage and dignity with masculinity, while girls emphasize optimism and confidence in the future [58]. The analysis of the characteristics associated with masculinity and femininity, from the point of view of their social value (desirability and utility), also shows that the characteristics of femininity are generally regarded as desirable, those of masculinity being appreciated as more useful. When it comes to the social value characteristics attributed to people from different professional groups, other researchers obtained a greater social valuation (in terms of social desirability and utility) of the characteristics of persons involved in industrial projects (which were given masculine features) as compared to those involved in educational projects, who were given female characteristics and a valuation in term of social desirability [59].

Studies have shown that women evaluated themselves more on the social desirability dimension than on the social utility dimension [60] and that they were also judged by others more in terms of desirability than social utility [61].

According to these findings and the preceding theoretical discussion, we propose:

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *There are differences in the appreciation of desirability and social utility of traits of responsible management depending on genre of participants.*

The decision to adopt a sustainable behaviour reflects a person's attachment to certain principles, values and beliefs.

We are interested in the social value attributed to responsible management behaviours, values that guide the behaviours that support the sustainable development of a group, an organisation and of society.

3. Materials and Methods

The seven social values that constituted the interest of our study (efficiency, integrity, dedication, audacity, solidarity, humility and agility) have emerged from a qualitative study conducted by the Department of Management of the Faculty of Administrative Sciences of Laval University on close to 35 professors. The results of this study led to the elaboration of a conceptual framework in order to better understand responsible management [25]. Each of the seven values attributed to responsible management is presented from three angles of analysis: individual (or micro-level), organisational (meso-level) and societal (macro-level). Audebrand [25] offers definitions and pertinent examples for each value and for each level of analysis in order to better represent the values of responsible management and in order to facilitate their operationalization.

We opted for this model of Audebrand [25] because it offers a detailed presentation of values in individual, organizational and societal contexts. This allowed us to perform a comparative analysis based on the contextual level.

The research that we conducted was exploratory. In our study, we relied on the social values associated with responsible management and on their definitions (see Appendix A) established by Audebrand for the individual, organisational and societal level [25,26]. We have operationalized these values into personality traits since traits are more of a socially accepted tool used to communicate the social value of individuals [36,62,63]. Thus, we have changed the analysis of values of responsible management from an axiological orientation to a socio-cognitive perspective. We have therefore studied the social value of people having one of the following seven characteristics/traits: efficiency, integrity, dedication, audacity, solidarity, humility and agility.

3.1. Work Instrument

According to Beauvois and his collaborators [64–66], the social value of people is dichotomized, with utility on the one hand and desirability on the other.

In order to assess the social values of responsible management, we have used the four scales used by Le Barbenchon et al. [67] to operationalize social utility and social desirability: two items (which refer to professional success and salary) are used to assess social utility, and two items referring to one's ability to have friends and to be loved are used to evaluate social desirability. Each evaluation is conducted on a 7-point scale (1 = minimum value and 7 = maximum value). More precisely, for desirability, it was asked if the person to whom we attributed a trait 'has everything in order to be loved' (versus 'has nothing in order to be loved') and 'has a lot of friends' (versus 'has few friends'); and for utility, if the same target 'has everything in order to succeed professionally' (versus 'has nothing in order to succeed professionally') and 'has a high salary' (versus 'has a low salary'). This operationalization of the concepts of desirability and utility from people having everything/nothing necessary in order to be loved or having everything/nothing necessary in order to succeed was first done by Gallay [68] and afterwards by Cambon [69] and Gangloff and Mazilescu [70,71].

For example, one of the items used to measure the utility of an efficient person at the organizational level was the form:

A person who is efficient and helps to achieve the objectives of the company and stakeholders is more likely a person who:

has a low salary (1) has a high salary (7)

We grouped the characteristics to be analysed into three questionnaires, each referring to the seven characteristics. The first questionnaire analysed the characteristics from a

personal point of view and the other two from an organisational and, respectively, a societal point of view. Each questionnaire was made of 28 items (2 desirability scales \times 2 utility scales \times 7 characteristics).

3.2. Participants

The participants in our study were 60 students (23 boys, 37 girls; average age: 19.7) from a technical university of Timisoara, belonging to 4 technical faculties. The students enrolled in an optional psychology class voluntarily participated in this survey. The survey was conducted in three different weeks, in order to avoid a possible halo effect. We believed that if conducted from week to week, the students could not remember their previous answers. Each student completed three questionnaires, one per week, each questionnaire referring to the personality descriptors valued within an ethical and responsible management (individual, organisational and societal level). The participants had to assess, on 4 scales, the value of a person characterised by one of the 7 characteristics attributed to responsible management. We have also informed the participants that there was no right or wrong answer, but only a matter of opinion.

4. Results

In the analyses carried out, we took into account, on the one hand, the contextual level in which the traits were perceived (individual, organisational and societal), and on the other hand, the two components of a social value: desirability and utility.

The answers collected were analysed by using ANOVA and, for the size of the effects, we used Cohen's *d*, in which, conventionally, we took into consideration the following 3 levels: negligible effect (0 to 0.35), intermediate effect (0.35 to 0.65) and notable effect (over 0.65). Only the statistics leading to significant results ($p < 0.05$) are listed below.

4.1. Analysis of the Values of Responsible Management According to the Contextual Level

We established hierarchies of values starting from their means, on the one hand for the desirable component and on the other for the useful component. In the appendices we list the results of the descriptive analysis of the social desirability and social utility of the values associated with responsible management, on an individual, organisational and societal level (Appendix B). The hierarchies of the responsible management values appreciated from the point of view of desirability and utility, analysed on an individual, organisational and societal level, are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Hierarchies of the useful and desirable values of responsible management.

	Target Traits/Values					
	Individual Level		Organisational Level		Societal Level	
	Desirability	Utility	Desirability	Utility	Desirability	Utility
1.	Efficiency	Agility	Efficiency	Agility	Efficiency	Agility
2.	Solidarity	Dedication	Audacity	Audacity	Dedication	Audacity
3.	Dedication	Efficiency	Agility	Dedication	Humility	Solidarity
4.	Integrity	Audacity	Solidarity	Efficiency	Audacity	Dedication
5.	Agility	Solidarity	Integrity	Integrity	Integrity	Efficiency
6.	Audacity	Integrity	Dedication	Solidarity	Solidarity	Humility
7.	Humility	Humility	Humility	Humility	Agility	Integrity

I = individual level; D/U = social desirability/social utility.

For the values perceived as being the most appreciated, the results are congruent regardless of the contextual level of analysis: individual, organisational or societal.

Therefore, the value perceived by the students as being the most desirable for a responsible manager is efficiency, the quality a person must possess in order to produce the expected results. It may seem a little surprising that efficiency is not perceived as the most useful value for responsible management. One explanation may be that, in

order to implement responsible actions, a manager does not focus predominantly on the organisation's results and productivity and they must balance those demands with the needs of the people, in order to ensure trust, justice and the integrity of individual, social and economic life within the enterprise, as well as with the effects that the enterprise may have on a societal level.

The students perceived agility, the ability to adapt to the complexity and to the changing conditions of an environment, as the most useful value for a responsible manager.

The results are also congruent in terms of the value perceived as the least appreciated for responsible management: humility. The students overwhelmingly agree that it is the least useful and the least desirable value for implementing responsible management on both an individual and an organisational level, as well as in terms of utility on a societal level.

4.2. Comparisons between the Two Components of Social Value (Desirability and Utility)

In order to compare the effect of the type of judgement (desirable or useful) passed on the values studied, we performed an Anova analysis. The obtained results highlight the statistically significant differences between the means of appreciating the values in terms of desirability and social utility. The measurement of the effect size used was Cohen's *d*. These results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Means and effects of the type of judgments (desirability and utility), considered globally.

Target Traits	Social Desirability		Social Utility		F [Snedecor] and <i>d</i> [Cohen]
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	
Efficiency	5.972	0.964	5.311	1.165	F[1, 358] = 34.394; <i>p</i> < 0.01; <i>d</i> = 0.62
Integrity	5.25	1.108	4.889	1.199	F[1, 358] = 8.807; <i>p</i> < 0.01; <i>d</i> = 0.31
Solidarity	5.308	1.281	5.058	1.077	F[1, 358] = 4.017; <i>p</i> < 0.05; <i>d</i> = 0.21
Humility	4.728	1.429	4.169	1.436	F[1, 358] = 13.670; <i>p</i> < 0.05; <i>d</i> = 0.39
Agility	5.227	1.210	5.756	1.069	F[1, 358] = 19.314; <i>p</i> < 0.05; <i>d</i> = 0.46

We noticed from the start, for all the data, an effect of the type of judgement: desirability and utility do not lead to identical judgments for 5 out of the 7 values assessed. Of the 5 values, agility is considered more useful than desirable, the other 4 are perceived as more desirable than useful.

If we look at the analysis for each contextual level, we notice that on the individual and societal levels, the values associated with responsible management are deemed more desirable than useful, while on the organisational level the values analysed are perceived more useful than desirable (Table 3).

Table 3. Means and effects of the type of judgments (desirability and utility), differentiated according to the individual, organisational and societal level.

Level	Target Traits	Social Desirability		Social Utility		F [Snedecor] and <i>d</i> [Cohen]
		Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	
I	Efficiency	6.083	0.8790	5.458	1.2188	F[1, 118] = 10.38; <i>p</i> = 0.0016; <i>d</i> = 0.59
I	Integrity	5.283	1.2500	4.833	1.1523	F[1, 118] = 4.20; <i>p</i> < 0.05; <i>d</i> = 0.37
I	Audacity	4.575	1.4404	5.142	1.1165	F[1, 118] = 5.81; <i>p</i> < 0.05; <i>d</i> = 0.44
I	Solidarity	5.575	1.3175	5.008	0.8757	F[1, 118] = 7.71; <i>p</i> = 0.0064; <i>d</i> = 0.51
O	Dedication	5.150	1.0097	5.592	1.0271	F[1, 118] = 5.65; <i>p</i> < 0.05; <i>d</i> = 0.43
O	Humility	4.367	1.3304	3.775	1.3729	F[1, 118] = 5.75; <i>p</i> < 0.05; <i>d</i> = 0.44
O	Agility	5.467	1.1270	5.950	0.9238	F[1, 118] = 6.59; <i>p</i> < 0.05; <i>d</i> = 0.47
S	Efficiency	5.933	0.9935	4.942	1.0935	F[1, 118] = 27; <i>p</i> = 0.000; <i>d</i> = 0.95
S	Integrity	5.217	1.0471	4.542	1.1096	F[1, 118] = 11.74; <i>p</i> = 0.0008; <i>d</i> = 1.26
S	Humility	5.450	1.2779	4.850	1.3094	F[1, 118] = 6.45; <i>p</i> < 0.05; <i>d</i> = 0.46
S	Agility	4.942	1.2924	5.658	1.0476	F[1, 118] = 11.11; <i>p</i> = 0.0011; <i>d</i> = 0.61

I = individual level; O = organisational level; S = societal level.

4.3. Comparisons between the Components of the Values According to the Contextual Level of Analysis (Individual, Organisational and Societal)

We performed an ANOVA analysis in order to identify the differences in the appreciation of the seven values associated with responsible management in an individual, organizational and societal context. We note a differentiation according to the contextual level of analysis, more in terms of utility than in terms of desirability (Tables 4 and 5): we observe that the highest appreciations for the values associated with responsible management are noted in the organisational environment, both for the useful and the desirable components, with only one exception in the case of humility, which is perceived as more desirable on a societal level than on an individual and organisational level.

Table 4. Means and effects of context on social desirability.

Target Traits	Social Desirability						F [Snedecor]
	Individual Level		Organisational Level		Societal Level		
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	
Audacity	4.575	1.4404	5.708	1.2395	5.350	1.1472	F[2, 177] = 12.259; $p = 0.000$;
Humility	4.367	1.4138	4.367	1.3304	5.450	1.2779	F[2, 177] = 13.035; $p = 0.000$;

Table 5. Means and effects of context on social utility.

Target Traits	Social Utility						F [Snedecor]
	Individual Level		Organisational Level		Societal Level		
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	
Efficiency	5.458	1.2188	5.533	1.1080	4.942	1.0935	F[2, 177] = 4.778; $p = 0.009$;
Integrity	4.833	1.1523	5.292	1.2292	4.542	1.1096	F[2, 177] = 6.321; $p = 0.002$;
Dedication	5.550	0.8911	5.592	1.0271	5.083	1.3441	F[2, 177] = 3.922; $p = 0.021$;
Audacity	5.142	1.1165	5.875	1.0681	5.358	1.0337	F[2, 177] = 12.259; $p = 0.000$;
Solidarity	5.008	0.8757	5.025	1.1732	5.142	1.1684	F[2, 177] = 7.392; $p = 0.0008$;

Our data support hypothesis H2 for five traits-values in what concern social utility and for two traits-values in what concern social desirability, which states that social valuation of traits of responsible management differs in individual, organizational and societal contexts.

4.4. Gender Differences in the Social Valuation of Traits

The results obtained following the One Way ANOVA analysis that we conducted in order to identify the differences between the assessments made by women and those made by men for the traits analysed within an organisational context show differences only for the social utility of the traits and no differences in terms of desirability. Table 6 lists male and female means for the differences found to be significant.

Table 6 highlights that three out of the seven traits analysed were assessed in a considerably different manner by men and women: efficiency, integrity and humility. In spite of these significant differences, women scored higher than men. Therefore, these traits are more important to women than to men, meaning that in an organisational context, women attribute more social utility value than men to people who are efficient, integer and humble. Regarding our hypothesis H3, data support H3 for three traits-values in what concern social utility. There was no significant gender difference in terms of social desirability of the analysed traits. Our hypothesis is only partially verified.

Table 6. Means and effects of gender on the social valuation of traits.

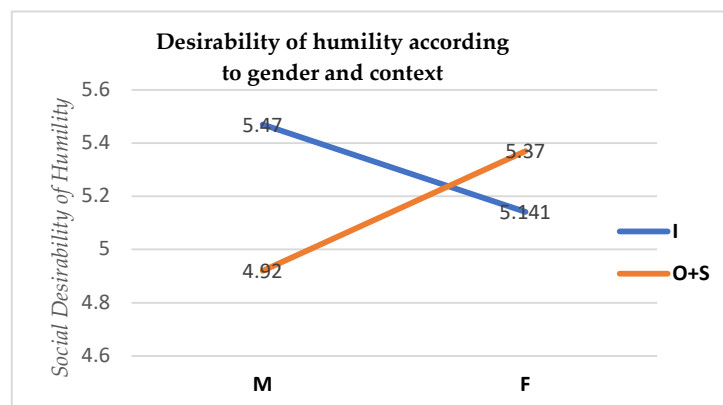
Level	Target Traits	M		F		F [Snedecor] and <i>d</i> [Cohen]
		Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	
O	Efficiency_U	5.0652	1.2368	5.8243	0.9221	F[1, 58] = 7.37683; $p < 0.05$; $d = 0.70$
O	Integrity_U	4.8913	1.2243	5.5405	1.1807	F[1, 58] = 4.16925; $p < 0.05$; $d = 0.54$
O	Humility_U	3.3043	1.213	4.0676	1.4002	F[1, 58] = 4.65454; $p < 0.05$; $d = 0.58$

O = organisational level; U = social utility; M = male; F = female.

4.5. Interactions

We were also interested in identifying possible interactions between the desirability/utility of the analysed traits-values and the context and gender variables.

In Figure 1 we represent a Context x Gender interaction for Social Desirability of Humility, $F(1, 179) = 4.09$, $p = 0.045$ in a sense that men, unlike women, value Social Desirability of Humility more in an individual than collective context (organizational O and societal S contexts considered together), while women value Social Desirability of Humility more in a collective context than in an individual context.

**Figure 1.** Desirability of humility according to gender and context.

5. Discussion

The organisation is considered an appropriate space for developing an axiological pluralism [10]. Values have the power to guide actions, to change situations, to develop an organisational culture based on social responsibility and the social responsibility of each individual involved in the life of the organisation.

Studies conducted in different countries highlight a different appreciation of values associated with management or entrepreneurship, differences determined by psychological, sociocultural and economic factors.

Gasse, Camion and Chamgui studied the values, attitudes and behaviours of students in France, Tunisia and Canada and the manner in which such values have left their mark on their entrepreneurial intentions [72]. The results show that entrepreneurial intention is higher among Canadians than among French students and the differences are explained by the influence of different national cultures. In a comparative study conducted on students from Canada, Tunisia, France, Romania, United Kingdom, Columbia and Germany, Gasse and Tremblay show how national culture plays a role in the perception of entrepreneurship [73]. This study shows that France has a less developed business culture, with lower entrepreneurial intentions, while Romania and Tunisia have an entrepreneurial culture that appears to be under development.

In terms of responsible management, both common values (e.g., integrity and solidarity) and different values (such as loyalty, respect or humility and agility) have been highlighted in the French and Canadian culture [25,28]. In a Romanian national context in which there is a high rate of students who intend to start a business [73], and in which

students value Machiavellianism more than French students [74], we chose to analyse in an exploratory study the perception of seven managerial values. The values are taken from a Canadian model and we intend, in the future, to carry out a comparative study of the perception of these values in the three countries: Romania, France and Canada.

Numerous empirical studies have attempted to highlight the involvement of values in the organizational environment by using conceptual theoretical models in which values were related to one or more variables that influenced organizational performance.

Efficiency and agility, two essential values in an organization, are a point of interest in many current studies focused on organizational behaviour. While efficiency is defined as the degree and level of attainment of the company's goals, agility is related to the ability to make unexpected changes and take advantage of a change and consider it an opportunity [75,76]. For a long time, management thinkers assumed that there were inevitable trade-offs between efficiency and agility, and ultimately came to the conclusion that it is possible to design the work of an organization in a way that offers both agility and efficiency [77]. Based on responsibility, competence, flexibility, innovation and speed, agility has increased in value in a turbulent environment, due to the ability to cope with unexpected changes, the ability to take advantage of environmental changes, as well as the ability to refer to these changes as an opportunity for development [78,79].

In an attempt to establish what would be more appropriate for a firm to prioritize, efficiency or agility, it was concluded that in a stable and predictable business environment it is more appropriate for a firm to prioritize efficiency, while in a dynamic, risky and unpredictable environment, agility could be a life-saving solution [80].

Both these values are appreciated by the students participating in our study, but the greatest social utility is attributed to agility and the greatest social desirability is attributed to efficiency. This perception of the students may be explained by the fact that, in order to implement responsible management, the manager must be concerned with environmental problems, with work, with the impact of the organisational life on various public categories and on the community. Students consider that *efficiency* is not the solution to all these problems, but rather the *agility* of the manager who must adapt to the complex and changing conditions of the physical, social and economic environment in which the enterprise operates. Being agile can help organizations survive and thrive in an unpredictable and fragile environment like the economic environment.

Humility is one of the most controversial values in terms of its relationship with responsible management and entrepreneurial intentions.

The issue debated was whether humility stimulates or impedes the intentions of responsible entrepreneurs: Is humility an asset or an obstacle for a responsible manager?

For this value, different perceptions were highlighted according to the national cultural context. Thus, US Americans have a positive view of humility and see it as a desirable quality [81]. However, most assessments are uncertain about the usefulness of this trait in leaders. There are also clear positions in which humility is perceived as not beneficial to leaders and is described as self-abasement or unworthiness [82]. In China, humility is seen as a beneficial quality marked by integrity and self-awareness, and is considered to be both useful and virtuous for leaders [83].

Of the seven values analysed in our study, *humility* is the least appreciated trait. The fact of being humble, reserved, of accepting oneself with one's limitations and one's weak points is evaluated by students as the least desirable and the least socially useful for responsible management, in comparison with the other values analysed.

For the differences identified between women and men in terms of value assessment, we found that, on the organisational level, women appreciate efficient, humble people or and those with integrity more than men do. Women appreciate humble people more than men, perhaps because the Honesty-Humility score is significantly higher in women compared to men. [84,85]. Russo and Stol consider that including women in software teams could increase team performance and decrease workplace delinquency such as absenteeism and alcohol abuse [84].

These results may have implications for the personnel selection within an organisation, depending on whether the recruiters are women or men, in the sense that a subjective logic, which is based on information that is not valid in terms of future performance, may influence the decision-making logic of a recruiter [86].

A number of research questions may arise from this study, such as: Are managers who score high in assessing the values of responsible management more involved in social or environmental missions? What would be the consequence of certain managers appreciating these values more or less? Could an effect of these values be highlighted in terms of performance of managers but also in terms of fulfilment of their social and environmental objectives? How do managers view the usefulness and social desirability of these values?

6. Conclusions

The organisation is a context where we encounter the most prescriptions, norms and values, a place where social power is most active and legitimate. The social value attributed within an organisational context may have consequences on people, their behaviours or their image [86,87].

Reconstructing the image of a stagnant organization can be done by starting from the potential for change that the leader of the organization may have and, more precisely, starting from the analysis of values and the importance given by the leaders to these values.

In this paper we approached the study of the perception of the values assigned to responsible management by the students of a technical university, taking into account a set of seven values, found in the interaction of economic, social and ecological dimensions of an enterprise.

Although when it comes to values it is difficult to report results to a common denominator, we found that student participants in our study consider efficiency to be the most desirable value for responsible management, but give greater utility to agility.

The least appreciated value by students, in the context of responsible management, is humility. We also identified an effect of judgment, context and gender in assessing some of the values of responsible management. On the individual and societal levels, we found that the values associated with responsible management are considered more desirable than useful (for four out of the seven values studied), while at an organisational level, three of the values analysed are perceived more as useful than desirable. With regards to the differences between women and men, on the organisational level, women appreciate efficient people, humble people, and those with integrity more than men do. Regarding the influence of the context on the analysed values, we identified that efficiency, audacity, dedication and integrity are perceived as more useful on an organisational level, while solidarity was perceived as more useful on a societal level.

Nevertheless, we must mention that there are a number of limitations to our results. The first concerns the type and number of values involved in responsible management. There are also other values attributed to responsible management. For example, in France, among the eight values that have been attributed to responsible management, we can identify common values with those we have studied (integrity, solidarity) or others that are different, such as a sense of responsibility, loyalty or respect [24]. Broadening the study of values may contribute to better finding the meaning of responsible managerial actions, since values form the basis of managerial action. Another limitation is derived from the academic specialization of the students and from not having management students among our study participants. We envisage a similar study on the perception of students attending management science faculties.

Future studies may analyse or identify other values with implications for the organisational environment, either in order to identify the values preferred by Generation Y, or in order to identify the implications of other values in terms of responsible management.

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Appendix A

Examples of descriptions of the traits used in the evaluation scales, as they were presented by Audebrand [21]:

Table A1. Descriptions of the traits used in the evaluation scales.

Individual level
I1. A person who is devoted shows understanding and empathy and makes themselves available to those around them for their own good, gets involved in volunteering, makes donations in money and food
I2. A person who is integer is honest with themselves and with those around them, does not lie, does not deceive and has an impeccable behaviour
I3. A person who is efficient uses their time, energy and skills well in order to achieve the expected results, to leave a positive imprint on the place where they live
I4. A person who is audacious is courageous, brave, ambitious, willing to take risks, to do acts of heroism in a crisis situation in order to save someone
I5. A person who is in solidarity with the people around them shows gestures of camaraderie, courtesy and collegiality towards the people they live with
I6. A person who is humble accepts themselves as they are, with their limits and weaknesses, admits their mistakes, but does not depreciate or overestimate their qualities and achievements
I7. A person who is agile knows and can manage their own emotions and those of others, is based on flexibility and behavioural complexity that makes them avoid obstacles or resist stress
Organizational level
o1. A person who is devoted to the organization is interested in the well-being of the employees, the community and the environment in which they live and they make a priority of ensuring the health, safety and well-being of their employees
o2. A person who is integer is honest, respects the values, norms and rules of the organization in which they work, does not commit fraud and deception, is not corrupt and does not commit acts of nepotism
o3. A person who is efficient helps achieve the objectives of the company and stakeholders
o4. A person who is audacious is courageous, willing to take risks and make courageous decisions, to make efforts and sacrifices, to overcome obstacles that seem insurmountable in order to better position the organization on the market, to contribute to sustainable development
o5. A person who is in solidarity with the organization is in solidarity with minorities and ostracized groups and supports the initiatives of the organization in terms of solidarity economy (economic activity that serves social purposes)
o6. A person who is humble, appreciates the well-done work of their colleagues and shows gratitude for the help received, learns from their own mistakes, accepts themselves and accepts their colleagues and subordinates as they are and learns from their mistakes
o7. A person who is agile knows how to manage change in an organization, based on flexibility, adaptation and evolution
Societal level
S1. A person who is devoted to society shows understanding and goodwill towards the most vulnerable members of this society and undertakes humanitarian actions
S2. A person who is integer in society respects the environmental and cultural biodiversity of the planet, fights against what destroys the integrity of the environment and of personal life
S3. A person who is efficient brings concrete and relevant solutions and helps meet the needs of the population and those of the planet
S4. A person who is audacious is willing to make courageous decisions, to promote social transformation, social innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainability
S5. A person who manifests international solidarity fights for supporting an equal partnership between peoples and for the establishment of an ecological solidarity with the other living species
S6. A person who is humble in society exerts as little pressure as possible on the environment in which they live, shows their gratitude for what the planet offers them, tries to return to the human species the place it deserves in the terrestrial ecosystem
S7. A person who is agile knows how to manage the constraints of a society inherent within a sustainable development, responds to social or environmental requirements in the absence of immediate financial interests

Appendix B

Table A2. Mean and standard deviation for social desirability and social utility of the traits analysed.

Desirability				Utility			
Values	N	Mean	St. Dev	Values	N	Mean	St. Dev
I_Efficiency_D	60	6.083	0.8790	I_Efficiency_U	60	5.458	1.2188
I_Solidarity_D	60	5.283	1.2500	I_Solidarity_U	60	4.833	1.1523
I_Dedication_D	60	5.517	1.0250	I_Dedication_U	60	5.550	0.8911
I_Integrity_D	60	4.575	1.4404	I_Integrity_U	60	5.142	1.1165
I_Agility_D	60	5.575	1.3175	I_Agility_U	60	5.008	0.8757
I_Audacity_D	60	4.367	1.4138	I_Audacity_U	60	3.883	1.3942
I_Humility_D	60	5.271	1.1638	I_Humility_U	60	5.658	1.2090
O_Efficiency_D	60	5.900	1.0201	O_Efficiency_U	60	5.533	1.1080
O_Solidarity_D	60	5.250	1.0313	O_Solidarity_U	60	5.292	1.2292
O_Dedication_D	60	5.150	1.0097	O_Dedication_U	60	5.592	1.0271
O_Integrity_D	60	5.708	1.2395	O_Integrity_U	60	5.875	1.0681
O_Agility_D	60	5.225	1.2536	O_Agility_U	60	5.025	1.1732
O_Audacity_D	60	4.367	1.3304	O_Audacity_U	60	3.775	1.3729
O_Humility_D	60	5.467	1.1270	O_Humility_U	60	5.950	0.9238
S_Efficiency_D	60	5.933	0.9935	S_Efficiency_U	60	4.942	1.0935
S_Solidarity_D	60	5.217	1.0471	S_Solidarity_U	60	4.542	1.1096
S_Dedication_D	60	5.492	0.9893	S_Dedication_U	60	5.083	1.3441
S_Integrity_D	60	5.350	1.1472	S_Integrity_U	60	5.358	1.0337
S_Agility_D	60	5.125	1.2475	S_Agility_U	60	5.142	1.1684
S_Audacity_D	60	5.450	1.2779	S_Audacity_U	60	4.850	1.3094
S_Humility_D	60	4.942	1.2924	S_Humility_U	60	5.658	1.0476

I/O/S = individual/organisational/societal level; D = social desirability; U = social utility.

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