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Foreword by Nealia Sue Bruning

The present report deals with values and thereby addresses a top item on today's agenda in management research and practice. The authors examine management professors' perspectives on values in two primary ways. First, they summarize professors' opinions on the values manifest within the corporate environment and second, and even more importantly, they provide an empirical perspective of management academics' perception of values in the context of their own profession.

As a general result, the study shows that in spite of controversy and cultural differences, globally there is a prevailing understanding of a need to balance economic and social values. The necessity of promoting this balance underlines the relevance of values as an issue in higher education. These data may constitute a basis for further discussions on how we as a business academics community approach, promote and teach values in research and teaching.

For IFSAM, the International Federation of Scholarly Associations in Management, as a global association of national and regional academies of management, the topic of values has particular importance. Values constitute a central pillar of intercultural exchange of knowledge and ideas. Therefore IFSAM understands itself as a focal point for such discussion in an international context.

Established in 1991, IFSAM has served as a platform for exchanging knowledge. With this first global research project, supported by IFSAM, the organization utilizes its broad academic base to create knowledge useable to both academics and practitioners. The method used to conduct the study, a global web-based survey targeting management academics was only feasible through the support of IFSAM's member associations. As a result, this study is an indicator of the strength, value and reliability of the IFSAM network. The interest and participation in the survey supports IFSAM's mission – to provide assistance, set standards and encourage the development of management research and education throughout the world.

The study has been financially supported by the 'Bertelsmann Stiftung' in Germany which has proven a strong and reliable supporter of research on values in recent years. Especially, I want to mention our colleague and former CEO of the Bertelsmann Stiftung, Heribert Meffert for his substantial input into the project. Finally, this project would not have been conducted without the persistent and continuous leadership of Ursula Hansen. She has contributed to IFSAM as a Council Member for many years and we thank her for initiating this project and for seeing it through to completion. Also, integral to the research team were Dirk Moosmayer, Matthias Bode and Ulf Schrader. They provided valuable assistance to the project and their contributions enhanced the quality and the outcomes of the study.

Winnipeg, Canada, May 2007

Prof. Dr. Nealia Sue Bruning

President 2007/08 of IFSAM, the
International Federation of Scholarly Associations of Management

Foreword by Heribert Meffert

The process of internationalization and globalisation is associated with wide-ranging changes in the spheres of politics, economics and society. In view of the breaking down of national, economic and legal borders, together with increasing competition for globally scarce resources, not only economic, but also social issues relating to the management of businesses are increasing in significance. This is testified by the current debate in both theory and practice, on the relative importance, objectives and manifestations of so-called corporate social responsibility. The debate touches on cross-border reforms and spills over into the value-orientation and value-transfer within the university sector.

Against this background, as an international umbrella organisation of national and regional professors in the field of business administration, the IFSAM has, for the first time, conducted a comprehensive research project at a global level on the issue of the value base itself and the conveying of values. The research project on "Academics in Management Studies Shaping Future Corporate Values" led by Professor Dr. Dr. h.c. Ursula Hansen and her research team, deals with the question of what values are conveyed in reality by university professors and the extent to which this is influenced by universal as opposed to cultural factors. In order to find answers to this question, on the basis of a theory-driven framework, 1741 professors from 18 countries in 6 different languages, were surveyed. The global sample was structured carefully according to the countries, disciplines and demographic characteristics of the respondents. The survey referred to the value base and environment of the professor on the one hand, and to his/her evaluation of the potential for and objectives with respect to influencing corporate values through teaching, research and consulting, on the other.

As the former CEO of the Bertelsmann Stiftung, which promoted this study to a great extent, it was particularly important for me to ensure more transparency in the context of value-based business-administration research and teaching in the international university sector, and to combine this with the activities of the project "Corporate Culture in Global Interaction" of the competence centre on "Management/Culture" of the Bertelsmann Stiftung.

This was based on the assumption that professors in business administration play a seminal role, through conventional university teaching, continuing education and consulting, on the values of managers in enterprises. Accordingly, well-founded, empirical findings on the value base and nature of value transfer by university professors can function as an early warning system for value changes in managerial practice.

The present publication provides, for the first time, methodologically grounded insights into the country-specific and international transfer of values, including the patterns of influence themselves. The study makes clear that, in addition to notions of economic value, university professors in the field of business administration also share the view internationally, that enterprises should have and operationalise ethical and social responsibility. The main results were presented at the 8th IFSAM meeting in Berlin in 2006 and were received with considerable interest. It is to be hoped that this book will receive the appropriate attention beyond academic circles in the world of global business.

Muenster, Germany, April 2007

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Heribert Meffert

Former CEO of the Bertelsmann Stiftung

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