

THE CSR RESILIENCE PATTERN

Ion STEGĂROIU¹
Gabriel CROITORU²
Laurențiu BARANGA³

ABSTRACT

The general aim of the article is the assessment of the impact that the various components of the corporate strategy based on CSR have upon corporate behavior. Thus, the article refers to the relationship with the community, the employees, the respect for the environment, the quality of services and products. The scientific approach of this article is to show the manner in which individuals are attracted by an organization and convinced by its organizational reputation. We wish to emphasize the answer to this question by suggesting the MS2 CSR pattern, which is consistent with the current trend of the organization's increasing efforts to become more and more responsible. The main problem is to identify the manner in which an organization performs this action by using an econometric pattern.

KEYWORDS: *CSR, organization, corporate strategy, resilience.*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: *M14*

1. INTRODUCTION

The knowledge society of today has a fundamental characteristic: human resources are regarded as a competitive advantage because they provide not only the achievement of goals, but also the organization's domination on a particular market. Therefore, the necessity to promote a new set of best strategies meant to help the organization detach itself from another already competitive organization and to encourage attractiveness for the potential beneficiaries of the organization's products. From this perspective, the concept of corporate social responsibility has a great importance, if we consider assessing its two dimensions: internal (employees, shareholders, trade unions, employers) and external (suppliers, customers, local communities, NGOs). This proves that CSR is a complex concept which refers to an organization's obligations to shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, stakeholders and to the environment.

The concept of responsibility has influenced the manner of governing an organization in order to achieve its goals (efficacy) at the lowest costs (efficiency).

Each of us should envision an adequate behavior of this logical control approach, and rethink the decision making. In this respect, we need to reconsider what professional life means, which involves a continuous improvement of skills and compliance with the specific ethics. Furthermore, we must all be responsible, because every individual acts as a party in a complex context of (economic, social, legal, environmental, patrimonial etc.) responsibility.

For many decades of the last century, businessmen have been more preoccupied by the economic aspects of the organization and less by the social aspects.

The background of the CSR concept is the dramatic break during 1970-1980 with the glorious years that followed the second World War. Management needed to find new solutions to overcome this

¹ Valahia University of Târgoviște, Târgoviște, România, stegaroiuion@yahoo.com

² Valahia University of Targoviste, Târgoviște, România, croitoru.gabriel2005@yahoo.com

³ Valahia University of Targoviste, Târgoviște, România, barangalaurentiu@yahoo.com

impasse, by emphasizing the social role it has gained and by making profound changes in the theory and practice of management. Organizations become human beings with their own self-consciousness (citizen organization, self-organization). On a global scale CSR represents practice whose utility and permanence are demonstrated by the successful organizations, aware of the fact that, besides gaining profit, they are responsible for the environment and the society in which they exist. CSR is perceived as a moderating factor for the employees, having as result a great operational effectiveness (Murray & Vogel, 1997). Other specialists state that the corporations which practise such a responsible administration have in this a competitive advantage (Rynes & Barber, 1990) which improves their competitiveness (Appelbaum et al., 2000). CSR can be considered a strategic stake for the organizations that wish to maintain their competitiveness, in at least three directions: encouraging innovation, obtaining high productivity of the employees and improving organizational performance.

The structure of this article has started from a minimal requirement imposed by its beneficiaries (managers, professors, students, practitioners) in the attempt to ensure and reconcile all the social values with the purpose of achieving all the established goals:

- creating and showing the sense of belonging to an organization and of the organization to the environment in which it exists;
- understanding the aims of the organization in order to join them;
- improving internal and external communication;
- the implementation, inside the organization, of a sense of introspection by identifying the obstacles in the personal and professional evolution;
- the achievement of a high degree of autonomy through self-inspection and self-regulation;
- establishing a favourable environment for teamwork;
- guiding the organizational management towards meeting the needs of training and personal development.

The question which we want to answer is whether the suggested resilience pattern, MS2CSR, is attempting to describe, in terms of management practice, the actual steps made by an organization in its approach to become responsible. Therefore, the field of investigation of this approach lies in CSR management and the interest that the organizations see in the application of CSR is the image that they can acquire with direct implications in providing management performance.

Three directions have been established for the achievement of CSR strategies, seen from three perspectives: the relationship of sustainable development and CSR; the impact of CSR on the behavior of organizations and their employees; the peculiarities of each CSR component (economic responsibility, social responsibility, corporate social responsibility).

In order to have a perspective over the current promotion of the CSR concept by the Romanian organizational management, the results of field research have been used.

2. METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MS2CSR PATTERN

The structure of the pattern is formed of four parts that are interdependent and make up a continuous network of responsibilities at different levels of decision making (picture 1).

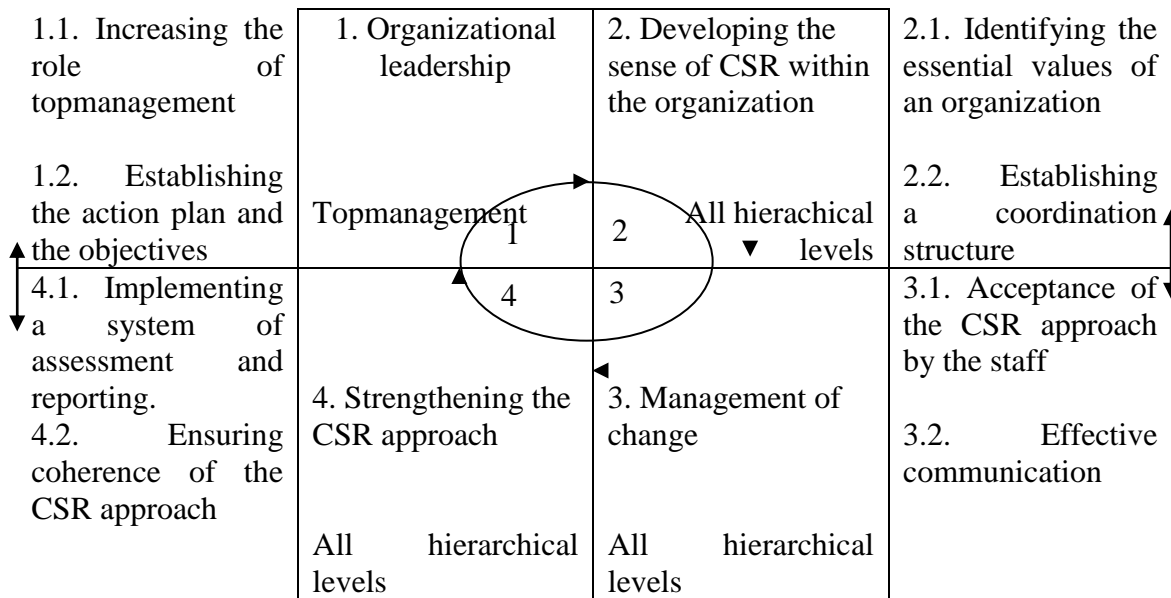


Figura 1. The components of the MS2CSR pattern

Organizational leadership is the first component of the MS2CSR pattern and its central feature is the fundamental role that the leaders of an organization must have in their triple steps towards a responsible organization (socially and environmentally). Institutionally speaking, this part overlaps the topmanagement. For the success of a CSR strategy, topmanagement must voluntarily engage, on a long-term, taking into account the context in which it operates:

- changes in both national and international EU legislation;
- the evolution of prices for resources that are necessary for the achievement of the organization's activity;
- the interests of the parties: customers, employees, suppliers.

The behavior of managers who support and change the organization is based on these elements. This behavior is achieved in three directions:

- regarding the CSR efforts as referential in organizational culture (values, rules, regulations);
- ensuring coherence and consistency of CSR strategies with these values;
- showing the will of the parties to use responsible methods in their activities.

This occurs through an integrative process of CSR into the organizational culture, which depends on the way of communication with all the parties involved, thus, ensuring the transmission of the same message concerning the vision and the values adapted by the internal and external parties. The purpose of efficient communication is to raise the awareness of the parties on CSR. Therefore, the leader of an organization needs to make sure that his CSR message has been received by each and every employee and that they have continuous access to information.

Practically, in order to determine this, we have made some research in Muntenia, the south region of Romania, for the CSR Strategic Orientation Committee. The research was based on a questionnaire

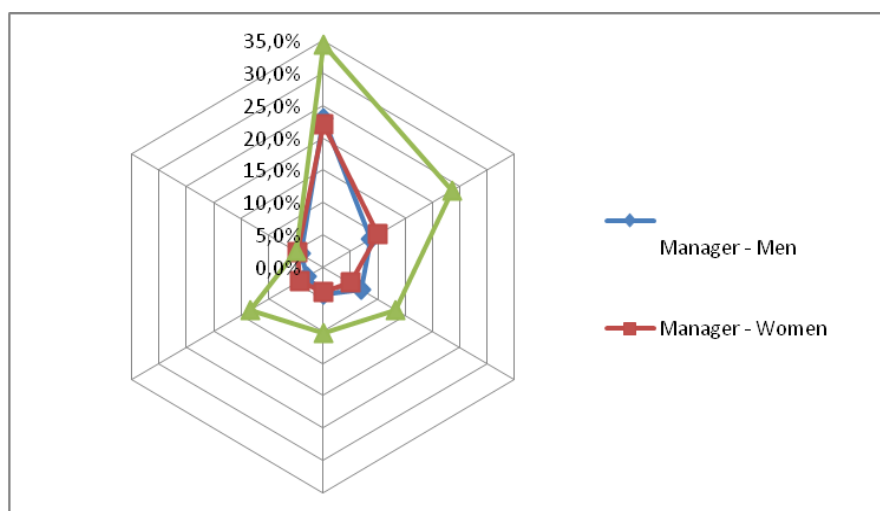
with 100 managers and over 75% wanted the organizations to be more concerned with the social aspect and the working environment. 76 out of the 100 managers are also shareholders. There is a discrepancy between statements and facts. Thus, given this criterion, only 53% wished to use a part of the profit for responsible management. We noted the shareholders' high susceptibility for the latent costs of a strategy based only on short-term profit. The motivating agents in this respect would be the adoption of laws meant to identify the crimes against environment and human rights, as well as increasing the government support for those organizations which obey the CSR rules. The research assumptions allow us to find the answer to the scientific problem of this article, in the upstream, and to confirm the validity of the hypothesis through research, in the downstream. The central hypothesis of the research is: „A socio-economic engineering management contributes to the efficient application of CSR strategic management”.

This central hypothesis has been delineated in 19 descriptive hypotheses – DH (given in the form of a series of statements, i.e. items, in the questionnaire used for gathering information). Each of these descriptive hypotheses confirms or denies the central hypothesis. They have been formulated as verifiable assertions in practice or using special literature.

The 19 hypotheses (items of the questionnaire used for the business survey) have been grouped into four major themes (T) of analysis, that allow us to solve our scientific problem, namely:

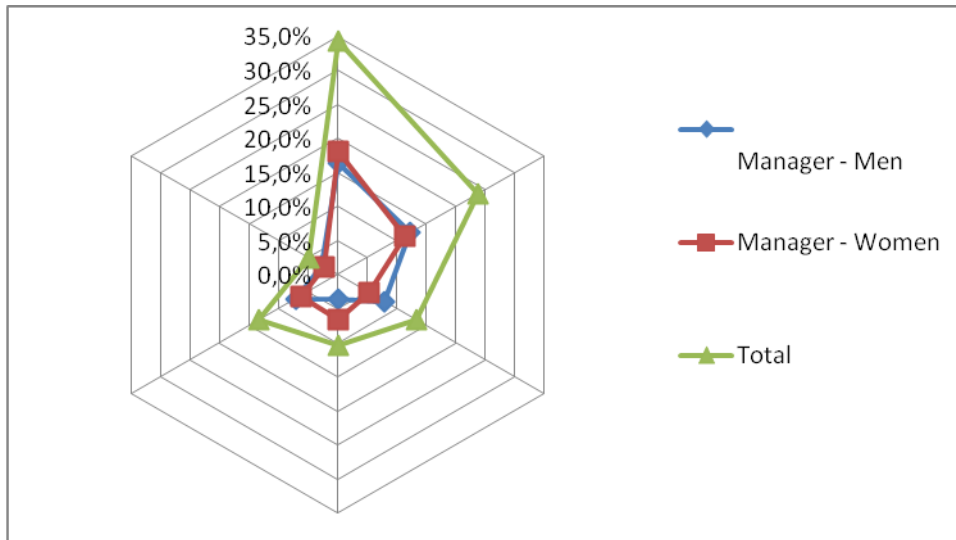
- T1: the human resource management practice and policies promoted by the organizations included in the business survey;
- T2: meeting the organizational need for human resources;
- T3: the organizational image and reputation;
- T4: the possibility of access to the particular organization.

As Romania does not have a CSR culture to determine the organizations to report on their CSR performances, this explains the insufficient amount of information that would be able to provide relevant and generalizable conclusions. The information was grouped according to the three directions of the scientific research and incorporated into a centralized database (the synoptic). It was grouped by type, the SPSS program was used for the processing of the 300 questionnaires containing 19 questions. Likert's method was used, because it allows the research of attitudes and it contains a set of favorable or unfavorable statements on the research theme. The statements were assessed on a fixed scale with 6 possible values (Likert Scale). Each answer was encrypted according to the 6 possible values, namely: 1 for Strongly agree; 2 for Agree; 3 for Neither agree nor disagree; 4 for Disagree; 5 for Strongly disagree and 6 for No answer.



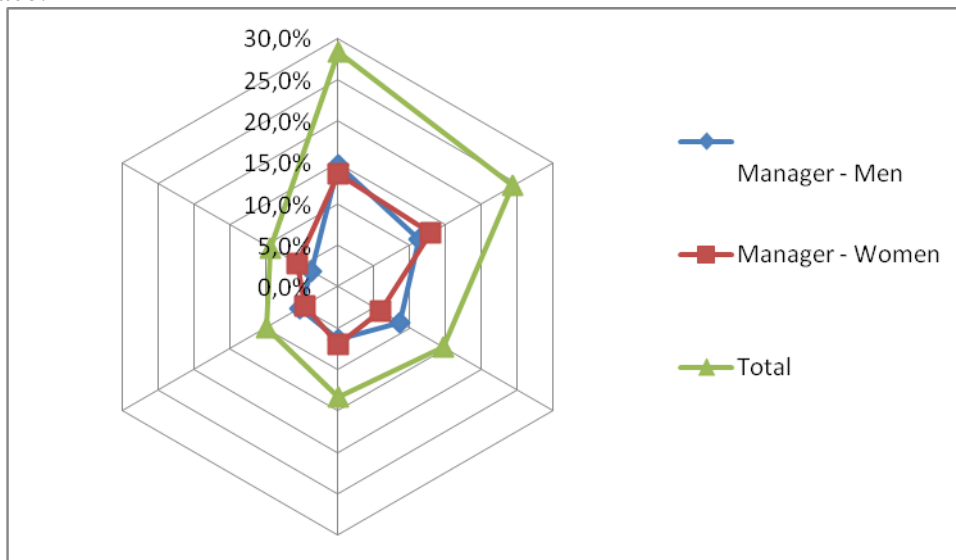
Picture 2. T1.1. Do you think there are correlations between the job requirements and the skills of the person who wants to get the job?

The scoring for question T1.1. is the closest (0,94) to agreement (1) – 45,0% of the respondents strongly agree that there are correlations between the job requirements and the skills of the person who wants to get the job. If we add 18,67%, those who agree, we can notice that more than half of the respondents (191 out of 300) are in favor of those who want to obtain the job. At the same time, this motivating factor for vocational training continues to perform the above mentioned correlation.



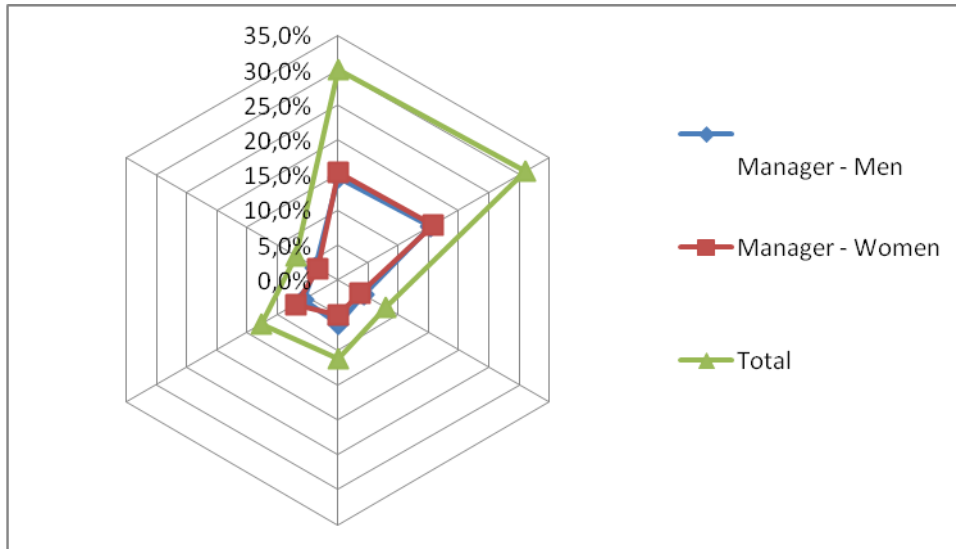
Picture 3. T1.2. Do you have the ability to adapt to the new job requirements and to face new challenges?

The result of 0,58 indicates a medium agreement (58% of the respondents agree that people who want to obtain a job have the ability to adapt to the job requirements). The answers Neither agree nor disagree and Disagree (37%) represent the fear of risk-taking in accomplishing the tasks for a new workplace.



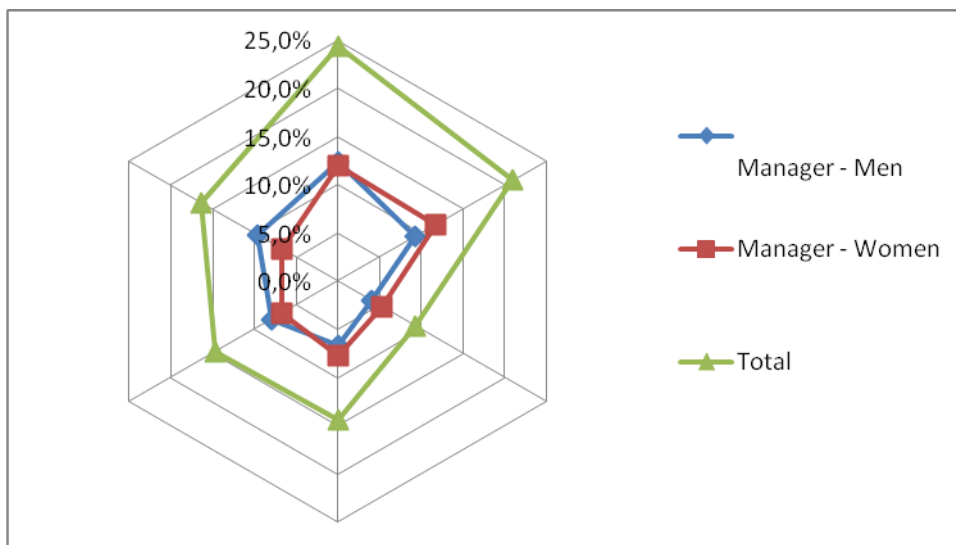
Picture 4. T1.3. Do you think that the information obtained from other people, about the organization where you want to work is enough?

The balanced score between Strongly agree and Strongly disagree (19%) indicates that the target-group has a certain reluctance about the sufficiency of the information obtained from other people concerning the organization where they want to work. The evolution of the Agree – Neither agree nor disagree zone(10-14,67%) is different from the Agree – Strongly agree zone (24,33-28,33%).



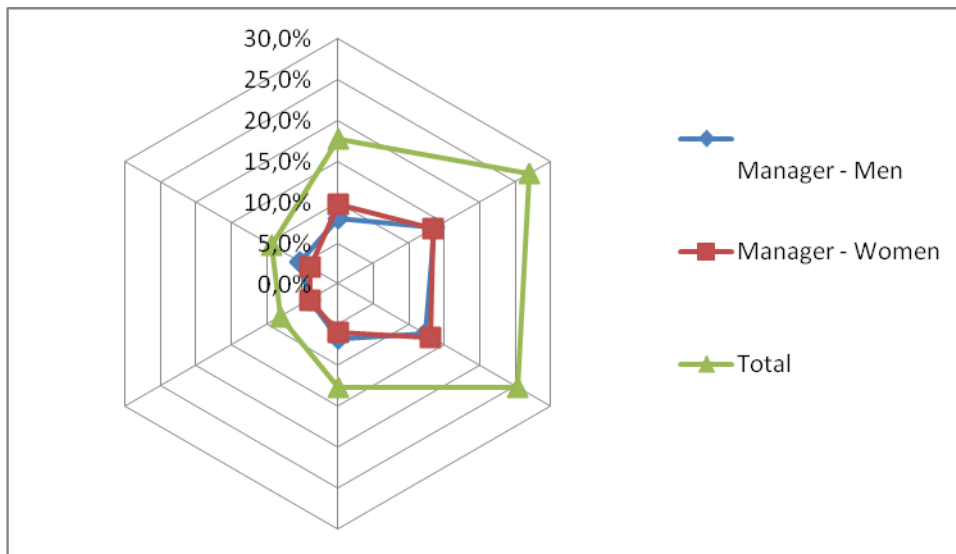
Picture 5. T1.4. Do you think that the workplace you want must have thr proper working conditions?

The score of 0,58 reflects a medium tendency to agree (1). There is a 23% difference between the values of Niether agree nor disagree and Agree.



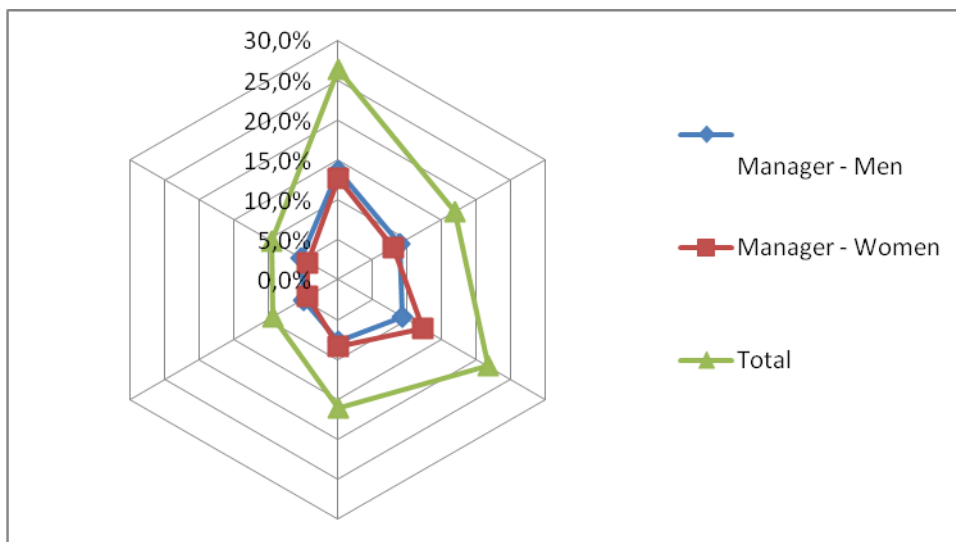
Picture 6. T1.5. Is the company the only source of information capable to offer a fair and detailed description of the workplace?

The answers to this question prove that the values Neither agree nor disagree and Disagree are above the Agree value. (54% versus 46%).



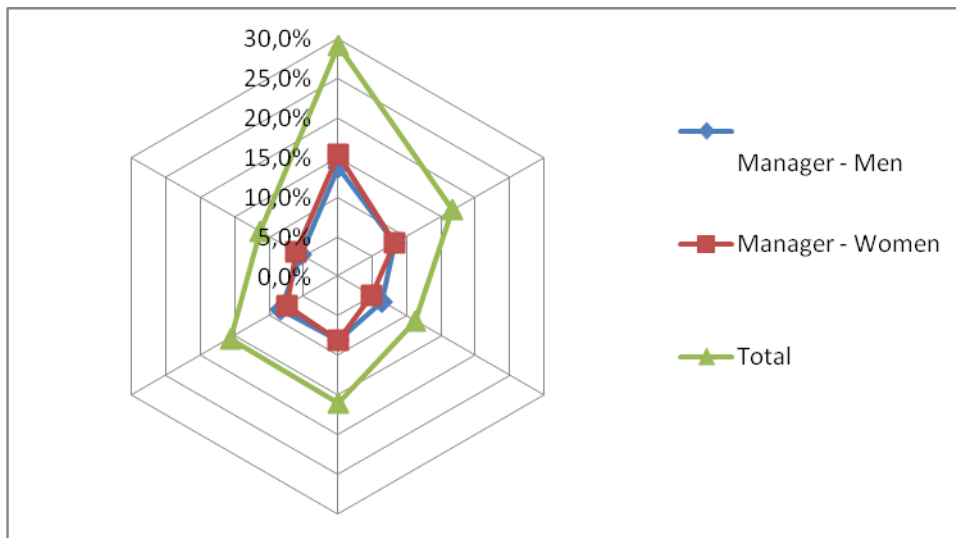
Picture 7. T1.6. How do you appreciate organizational honesty and transparency in job offer?

We can observe the same tendency as in question T1.5. regarding the evolution of the score to 1. We identify a higher percentage of Neither agree nor disagree.(25,3% of the respondents).



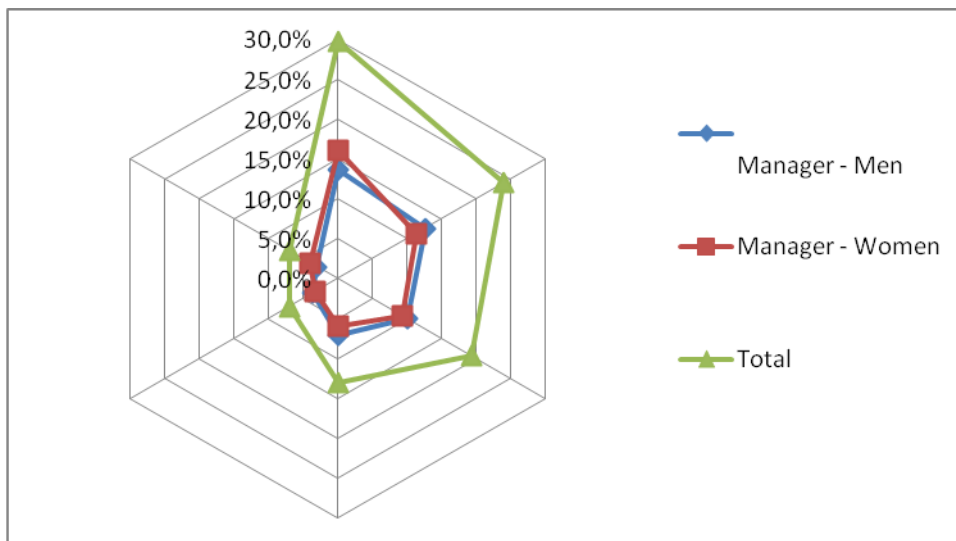
Picture 8. T2.1. Is salary a decisive factor in searching a workplace?

There is a sinuous evolution of responses to this question. But there is also a paradox in the fact that, during economic crisis, the salary represents a decisive factor for only 43,3%, and 21,67% responded Neither agree nor disagree. We believe that these answers are not honest, probably a part of the target group did not want to disturb the management of the organization, in order to keep their jobs.



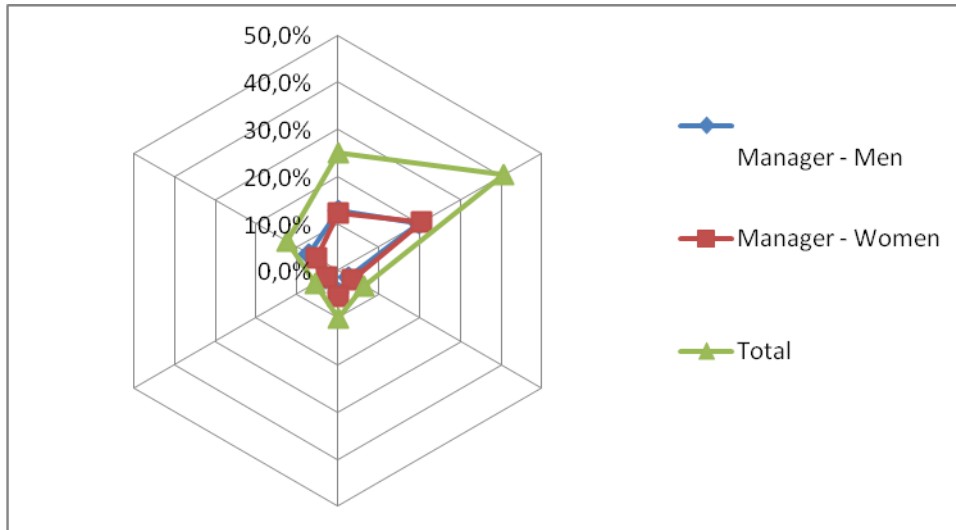
Picture 9. T2.2. Do you agree that safety at work is one of the factors taken into account in employment?

The score obtained for this question (0,31) reflects a high degree of the level Neither agree nor disagree. At the same time, the lowest score is for Disagree (31,67%) and No answer (11,33%).



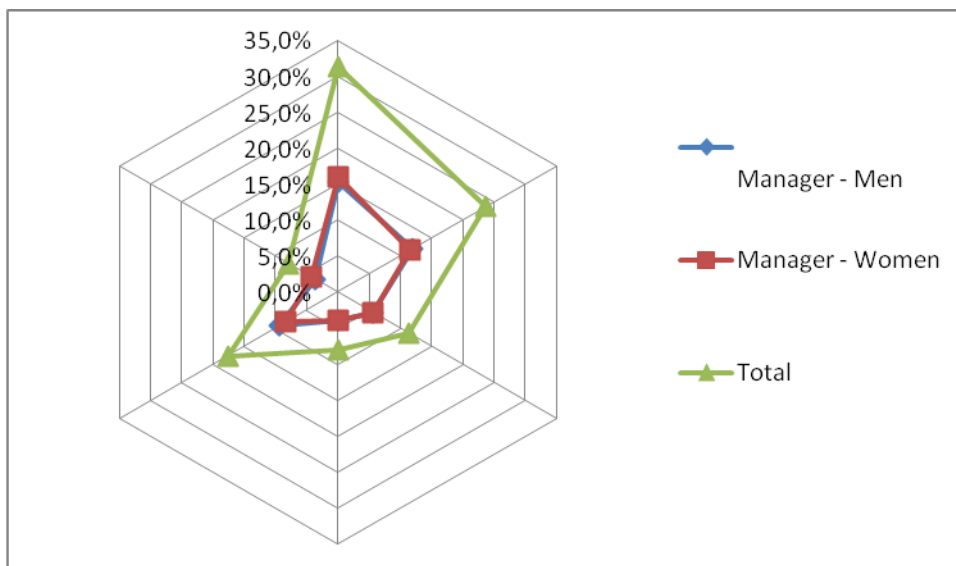
Picture 10. T2.3. Information on the work climate and the facilities offered by the managers' behavior, work program – are these decisive in finding a job?

There is an ascending evolution of the answer Agree (with a 7% gap). In this case, the score is 0,61.



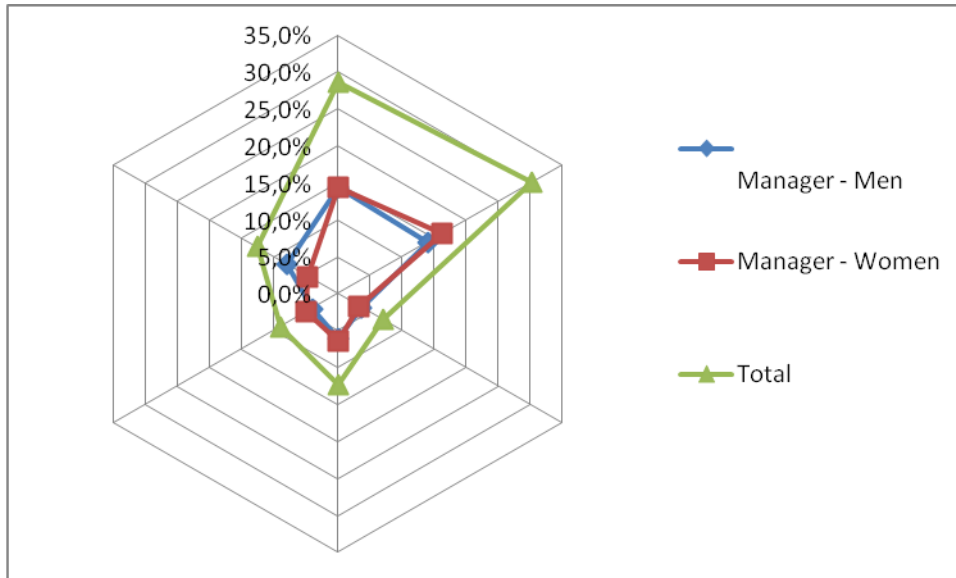
Picture 11. T3.1. Are the organizational image and reputation decisive in choosing a job?

Over 50% of the respondents agree that the organizational image and reputation are decisive in choosing a job, which is reflected in the score.



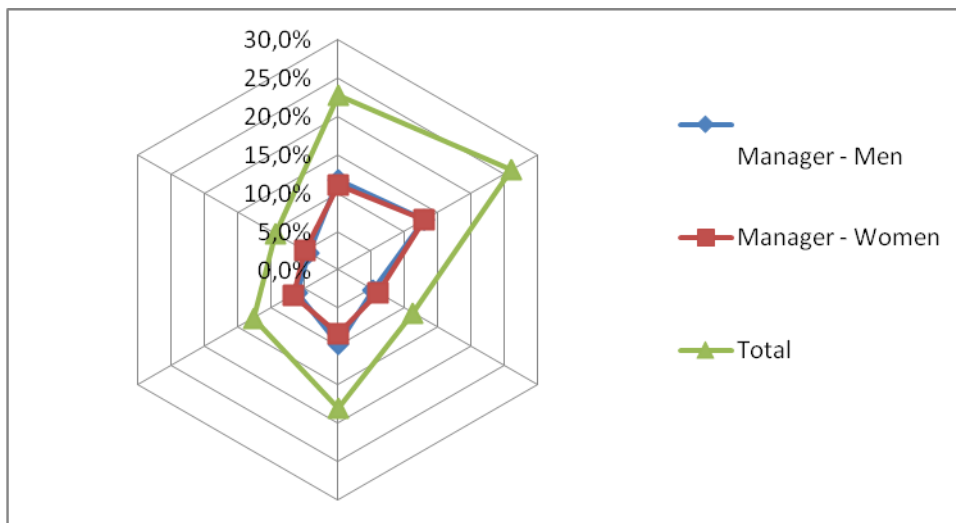
Picture 12. T3.2. Do you think that the organizational financial situation is an important factor when choosing a job?

Compared to question cu T3.1., the score obtained by T3.2. 0,25 units higher, which demonstrates that 59% of the respondents agree with the fact that the financial situation is an important factor when choosing the job. The value Neither agree nor disagree scored 7%.



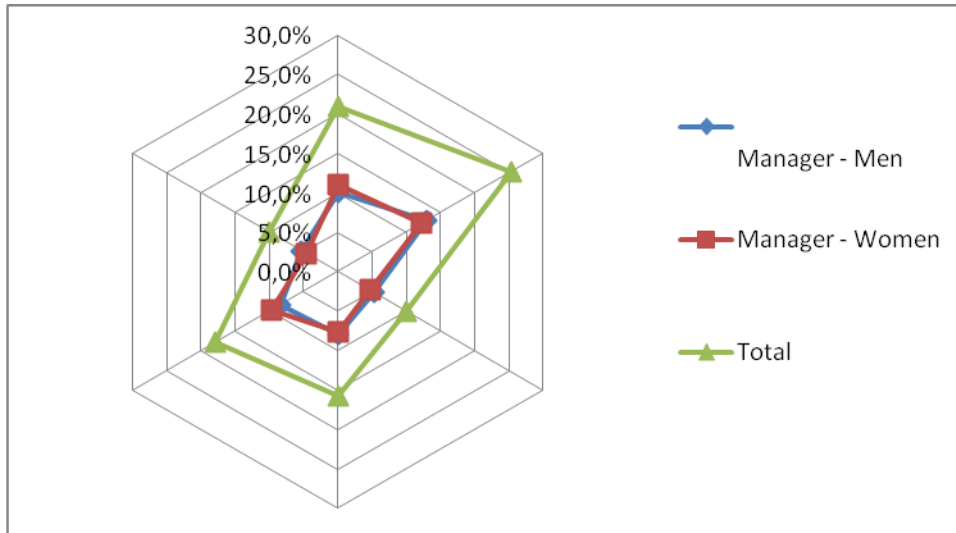
Picture 13. T3.3. Do you believe that efficient organizational management is a guarantee of personal development?

The low score for this question (0,31%) is determined by the number of people who wanted to answer (28), by the Neither agree nor disagree percentage (11,33%) and by the high percentage of people who stated that they disagree (30, 67%).



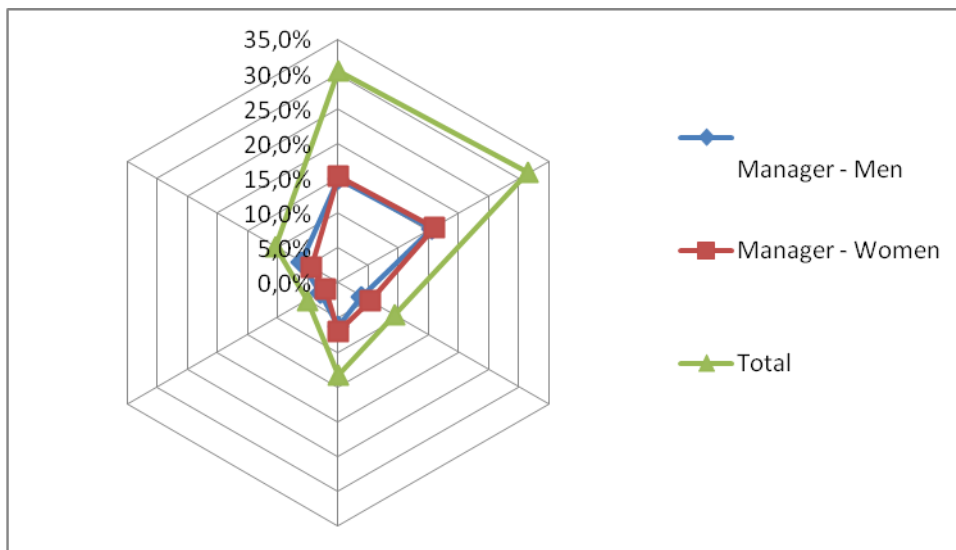
Picture 14. T3.4. Do you believe that companies can provide a healthy work environment for all the employees and harmony in teamwork?

This question has the lowest gap in the analysis of the collected data (0,18%). The Neither agree nor disagree value is higher (10%). Over 33% of the respondents disagree with this statement. If we compare it to question T1.4, which is similar, but asked from a different perspective (work practice and policies), the scores are contradictory (0,58 versus 0,18), although the respondents had been warned that the questionnaire contains a trick question to check their honesty.



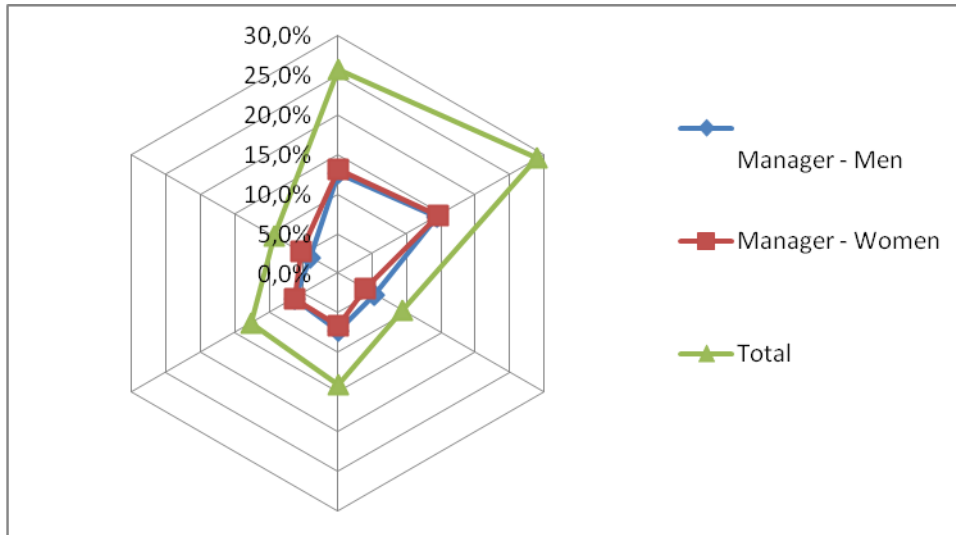
Picture 15. T3.5. Can you state that a particular organization is interested in social responsibility?

The score for this question (0,77) shows that 61% of the respondents agree with the fact that organizations are interested in CSR. The discussion with the respondents show that organizations need to promote CSR.



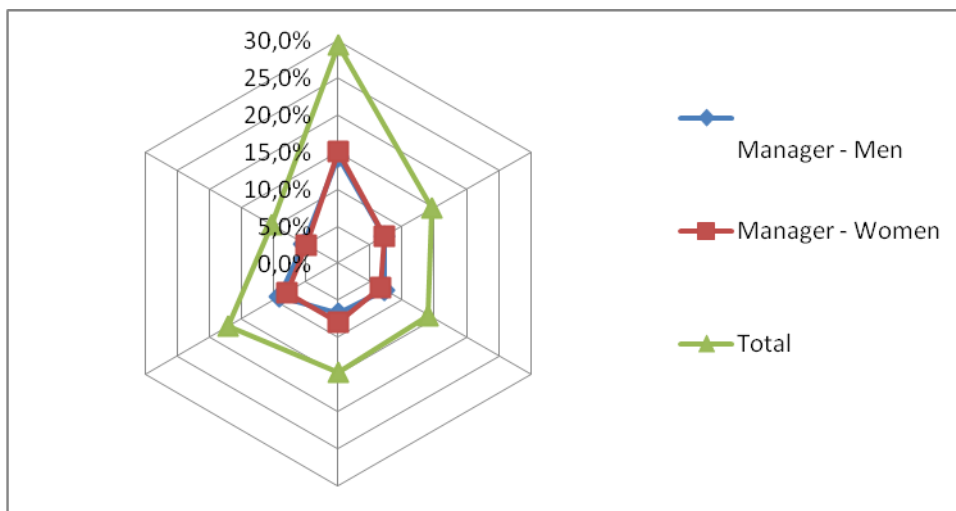
Picture 16. T3.6. Do you want an organization with participatory management, where managers are examples for their subordinates?

The answers to this question have led to a score of only 0,27, which proves the lack of interest for participatory management practice. The number of people who want participatory management (121) is lower than the number of those who do not want it (179).



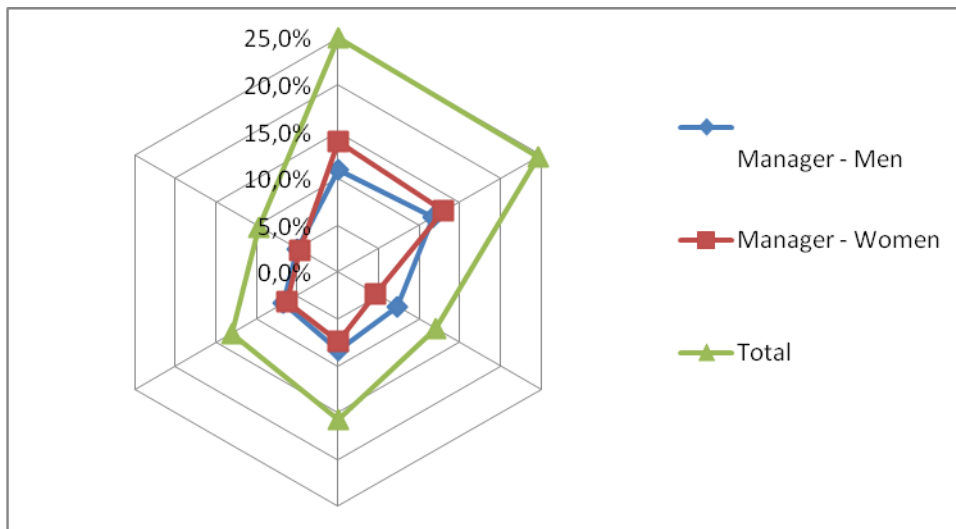
Picture 17. T4.1. Do you think that the distance to the organization where you want to work is an important factor when choosing a job?

The answers to this question showed the same tendency as for question T3.1, where over 50% agree that the distance to the new workplace is decisive in choosing it. 9,33% did not want to answer and the same percent was for Neither agree nor disagree. We obtained a score of 0,49.



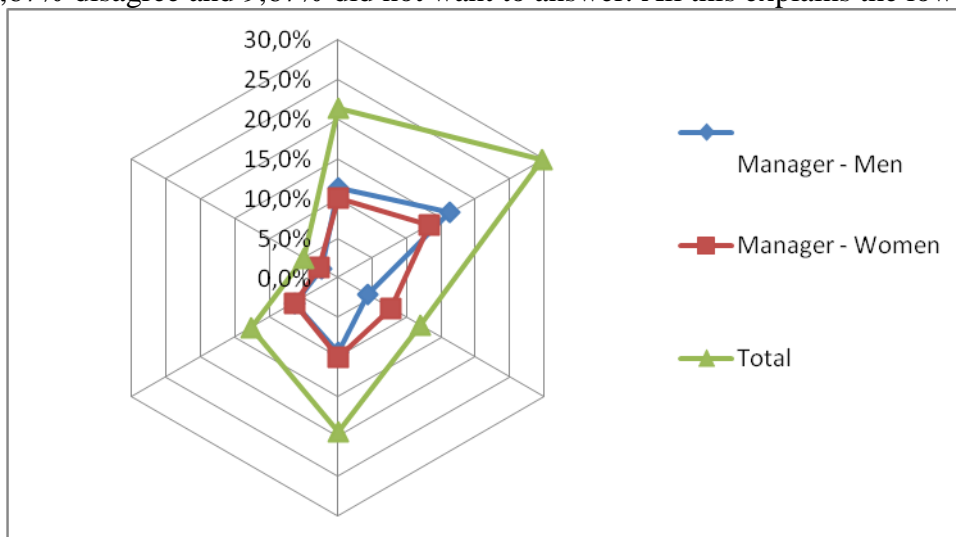
Picture 18. T4.2. Are means of transport decisive in choosing the workplace?

Over 60% of the respondents said that this is an impediment for people who want to find a job in order to earn a salary. Only 29,33% believe that means of transport are a problem. 14% neither agree, nor disagree and this is the highest possible level in this area.



Picture 19. T4.3. Do you believe that the time spent traveling to the organization is detrimental to the family?

The time spent by employees traveling to the organization is a basic criterion in choosing a workplace. Thus, 49,67% of the respondents agree with this statement, 12% neither agree nor disagree, 28,67% disagree and 9,67% did not want to answer. All this explains the low score (0,37).



Picture 20. T4.4. Is the cost for traveling to the workplace a decisive factor in choosing a job?

The transport cost is, along with time, a decisive factor in choosing a new job. Thus, 50% of the respondents agree with this statement. The other half disagrees, the transport cost would affect every person's budget. The score has the same low level (0,30).

All these form together what we call the individual characteristics which are very important for the influence that they have on decision making. Therefore, the socioeconomic character and the values transmitted by the society are decisive in obtaining a job and prove the fact that the management practised is responsible, turning CSR into a competitive advantage, thus, leading to better organizational performance.

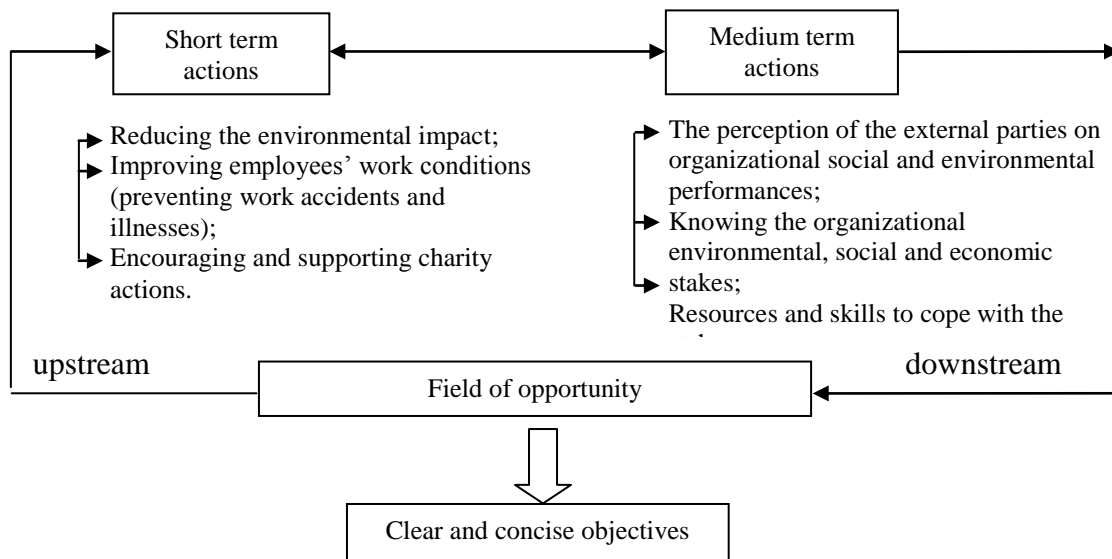
3. CONCLUSIONS

CSR integration in organizational culture must have in view the restrictions imposed by:

- the employees' concerns, the remuneration and reward system, working conditions and teamwork;

- the product-market pair: the quality of the product, the social impact on environment, the expectations of the market;
- the relationships with the external parties: customers, suppliers, the civil society or local community, the environment;
- the distribution systems which must be transparent and allow to take into account the parties involved.

Turning the organization into a responsible one involves the development of an action plan which contains the objectives in terms of CSR. If, on a long term, we consider the achievement of goals, for effectiveness, CSR must have in view short and medium term actions, during which, the global concept of CSR is consolidated. At the same time, taking into account the financial resources, insufficient to cover the CSR costs, we should involve in less expensive actions, but very secure in terms of success. There are two types of actions: short term actions (i.e. measures taken by management on a short term) and long term actions (i.e. The organizational ability to comply with the organization's external environmental demands).



Picture 21. Types of short and medium term actions

The most important element for the success of a CSR strategy is the staff's adhesion to such a strategy. In this respect, the entire staff must participate, regardless of their hierarchical level. The practice of participial management, the use of creative and innovative methods and techniques (brainstorming, the nominal group method, synectics, the Delphi technique etc.) are highly recommended.

The article proposed by us for this conference is characterised by its manner to approach the CSR concept in terms of the way it is perceived by organizations and their involvement in the process. The lack of information, the scarcity of social responsibility actions have limited the scientific approach, but, at the same time, they represented an incentive to create something different than what has already been written, i.e. CSR from the perspective of those who offer it.

The concerns of CSR were at first identified in multinational companies, which, on the eve of winter and spring holidays, were running charity activities, generosity being regarded as a main means of creating a brand. Businessmen do not usually make donations out of generosity, which would mean an active involvement with society.

Businessmen's reluctance towards sponsorship, the fact that those organizations which require sponsorship do not achieve professionalism in the programs presented by them, the lack of vision

and education in this field, the ambiguous legislation are considered factors that have slowed this process.

The research has revealed the fact that, in Romania, the organizations still have not understood CSR as a normal thing pertaining to the mission of the organization itself. Romania is still far away from the developed countries regarding this area, which proves that our country does not have its own culture regarding corporate social responsibility.

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