Contribution of CEO's Image to Organization Performance: A Survey of COYA Awards Nominees in Kenya

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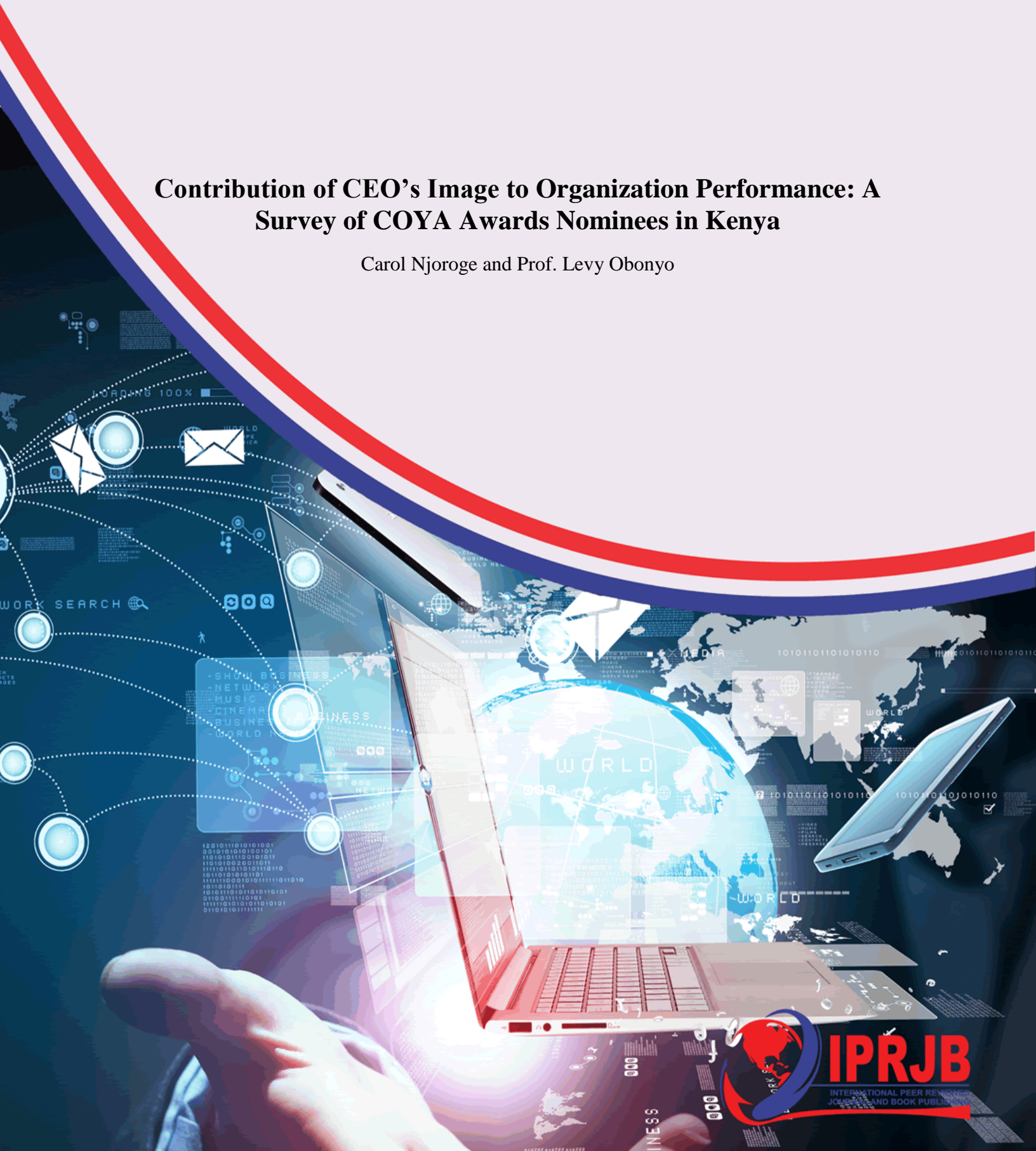
Contribution of CEO's Image to Organization Performance: A Survey of COYA Awards Nominees in Kenya

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to investigate the contributions of CEO's image to organization performance, a survey of COYA awards nominees in Kenya.

Methodology: The current research adopted both quantitative and qualitative approach (mixed method) using the survey research design. The researcher used self-administered questionnaires and in cases where this is not applicable due to time constraints the questionnaires was sent via email as well as interviews with selected CEO's. The entire population in this research was all corporate companies that have participated in the COYA awards in the last five years. However, the sample population in this study was selected Public Relations departments and selected CEOs whose organizations had successfully been recognized as either top- ranking or bottom ranking the COYA annual awards in the last five years. The sampling approach that was used in this study is non-probability sampling, and the researcher used purposive sampling.The process of data analysis included organizing, analyzing and summarizing all the findings. Data organizing and coding was done by the researcher in the following ways. Quantitative data from the questionnaire was analyzed by the use descriptive statistics and presented in form of frequency tables, charts, and graph.

Results: Results led to the inference that CEOs nomination and positive image positively contributes to the performance of an organization. Specifically, the positive CEOs image may lead to financial successes of the organization, contribute to gaining competitive advantage in today competitive markets, affect the overall company reputation and directly influences the stakeholders.

Recommendations: The study recommends that since there seems to be appositive relationship between organization performance and the CEOs positive image, then PR departments and CEOs should seriously emphasize on the important role of PR department in shaping the CEOs image.

Keywords: *CEO's image, organization performance, COYA awards*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Across the globe, in Africa and in Kenya there is a marked increase in annual award schemes recognizing successful corporate organizations. Forbes 'top 100 CEO's' is probably the world's most notable and since 1997 Fortune/Hay group has been conducting global survey of corporate reputations. The top executives and directors from these eligible companies, with the help of financial analysts, "aim at identifying companies that enjoy the strongest reputation within their industries and across the board so as to be recognized by this awarding body" (Mathews, 1997, p.8). In Africa, there are a number of awards that recognize successful corporate organization and Investor Index award is one such example. This award recognizes "the continent's institutions for good management and innovative ideas", while exploring investment partnership in the developing countries (Sun, 2009, p. 4).

Kenya is no exemption when it comes to the annual awards that are held during gala nights that are presided in a ceremony that is full of pomp and color (Karangi, 2009). Most of these awards seek to recognize successful organizations in different capacities, and they include: The Company of the Year Award (COYA) by the Kenya Institute of Management (KIM), the African Aviation Award (AAA) run by a UK publication magazine, Public Relations Awards of the Year (PRAY) run by the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) and the 'Top 100 companies' by KPMG and Nation Media Group (Onyango, 2009).

The numerous awards seek to recognize different factors in a given organization; the COYA award recognizes excellence in management in the corporate sector (Karangi,2009)

In every race, it is inevitable that there must be a winner and a loser, the same applies to the annual COYA or other awarding bodies. When it comes to COYA awards, "integrity in handling issues and a positive external professional influence almost comes to mind" (Karangi, 2009, p. 3) and it is a result of this integrity that many companies nominate their CEO's for the 'CEO of the year' category award. Though this category was only introduced five years ago, it has since been won by several people who include: Linus Githahi (Nation Media group, 2010), Julius Kipng'etich (Kenya Wildlife Services, 2009), Vimal Shah (Bidii Company, 2008) and James Mathenge (Magadi Soda, 2007) (Karangi, 2009).

The COYA award uses different criteria as a measure of success for the overall participating companies (Karangi, 2009). However, a common thread runs through the organizations that have been nominated: it is the initiative on the part of these companies to be nominated or recognized in these awards. Secondly, most of the companies participating tend to work alongside the Public Relations department so as to nominate their CEO to be awarded and thirdly, is that as long as an organization is awarded, it serves as an indicator of how successful the organization has been at corporate sector (Onyango, 2009).

1.2 Problem Statement

Conger & Kanungo (1987) argue that leadership plays a big role in how the organization is perceived by the public and this perception helps in improving the corporate image and brand of that organization. Collins (2001) seems to hold the same opinion as Conger & Kanungo; he

identified a typical pattern of leadership behavior in those large organizations as "stunningly transforming from being good performers to great performers" (p. 65).

It is important to understand that leadership is not the only factor that influences the image of an organization. Key factors include: the direct experience of the products from the consumers, work place environment, word of mouth and news communicated by the mass media, the organization visibility and the emotional appeal by the public (Burson- Marsteller, 2003). In addition, Black (1972) argues that crafting the strategy that shapes the image of the organization is one of the most important responsibilities of a PR officer (Black, 1972, p.5). Thus, the superseding deductions that can be derived from the different scholars is that the image of the organization is influenced by several factors and the public relations practitioners in any organization contribute to how these factors are perceived by the public.

In view of the challenges faced by different corporate organizations, the researcher has noted several gaps. Foremost, is that the activities and strategies of the PR department help in influencing the image of the CEO to the public. Thirdly, is that the corporate image of a CEO can be used to enhance the brand of the organization, hence increase loyalty and brand equity of the organization amongst its publics Therefore, the researcher will seek to investigate the contribution of CEO's image to organization performance.

1.3 Objective of the Study

I.   To find out if the CEO's image contributes to the organization performance.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

There has been much research done about corporate image and the role it plays in enhancing the brand image (Gaines-Ross & Cakim, 2002; Burson-Marsteller's 2003; CEOgo, 2002),as well as the role CEOs play in influencing the public opinion of the organization thus the corporate image. One academic study was done by Scott & Lane (2000), who were assessing the role of managers' play in creating a sense of solidarity and shared identity among stakeholder groups. Likewise, Rindova & Fombrun (1999) have also investigated the role of senior management in "how firms imprint their identity on their constituents" and what the overall towards the stakeholders and the internal public within the organization (p. 706).

2.2 Leadership

A survey of scholarship write ups on leadership in the past century reveals different kinds of thinking about leadership. The great man theory of leadership of the 'born leader' concept is still highly ranked among leadership scholars. In this school of thought a leader would be defined as "that man with special in-born leadership characteristics" and this is a person whose belief and behavior amongst his community results in cataclysmic change in the way things are being done (Bass, 1990). Later on, social Darwinist's opposed to this idea of the 'natural leader' proposed that "leadership is both a function of the traits and the emergence of those traits in a given situation or environment" (Rosenbach & Taylor, 1989) and this is when someone at any level within an organization leads by virtue of meeting the needs of his or her team or followers.

Fiedler in the late 1960's advanced the idea of situational leadership. He proposed that leadership is contingent upon several factors: the needs of the would-be followers, the ability of the leader to meet those needs through his natural gifts, his behavior towards the followers and the situation (Bass & Stodgill, 1981; Conger, 1988).

2.3 Defining Organization Leadership

It is easier to define leadership especially within the realm of politics or at the community level, however in an organizational context definition of leadership may present practical difficulties (Eberhard, 2004). This is because organizational leadership entails a number of leadership traits that will vary from one organization to another and at all situations. In the context of this study, leadership is based on the assumption that it involves a process whereby influence is exerted by one person to the rest of the people to guide, structure and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or in an organization (Yukl, 1994). In addition, Adair defines organizational leadership 'as the art of influencing, directing, guiding and controlling others in such a way as to obtain their willingness, obedience, confidence, respect and loyal co-operation in accomplishment of an objective' (Adair, 2002, p. 234).

The role of a leader in any organization is very important and it is to always set the direction of the organization (Hunt & Grunig, 1994). A leader is the first to envision a future position for the organization and first to evangelize that position, while management is always plotting progress towards the post on the horizon (Hackman & Johnson, 2004). Great organizations realize that being good at only one of these two roles is a great feat in itself, but a person who excels at both leadership and management is very difficult, if not impossible, to find. That's why most organizations have a separate chief executive officer and a chief operations officer from the rest of the management team (Adair, 2002).

As noted by Hambrick & Mason leadership function would mainly relate to three variables that can be considered any time they include: the individual traits, the group and the task and the leadership as a function of the whole process (1984). They understand organizational leadership as the relationship between the above three critical factors and it is also a measure of the degree of an individual's ability to influence a group to accomplish a general task (Adair, 2002). In the large perspective, "the study of leadership is important in understanding the organization performance and helping today's PR officer in developing strategies that are in line with the vision, values and mission of the organization which are critical to its success" (Bass, 1990) at the same time it will help in appreciating the impact of these strategies to the overall corporate image of the organization.

2.4 Corporate Image

Many scholars have tried to define the term corporate image to mean different things, Kolter defines corporate image as "the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of an object or an organization" (Kolter 1982, p.57). He emphasizes that in organizations people respond to the image they have of that organization and not necessarily to the reality of actually what the organization is (Kotler, 1990. P.30). He further alludes to the fact that 'the public's who hold a negative image of an organization will avoid it at all cost, while those holding a positive image will be drawn to it and would want to be related to it anywhere and anytime'. He

asserts that this one of the reasons why organizations should be interested in learning about their images in the both externally and internally, and at the same they make sure that these images facilitate rather impede the delivery of satisfaction (Kotler, 1982).

2.5 CEO's Image

The issue of corporate image and corporate branding becomes even more complex when an individual (CEO, company figurehead, or leader) is closely associated with the corporate brand. How strong a CEO's influence has on the organizational brand and corporate reputation will possibly depend on the level of public awareness of the CEO. Lazarus (2003) argues that 'today's brands (corporate and product) are inextricably linked to the CEO's image and behavior' (p. 194). In essence, 'the CEO is often seen as an ambassador or endorser of the corporate brand and the product brand, therefore, brand management of the CEO is now an important task' (Lazarus, 2003, p. 194).

Bruijns (2003) argues that a correlation does in fact exist between CEO image, corporate reputation and corporate performance and that intangible asset (i.e. image, symbolic leadership) are significantly responsible in gaining competitive advantage in today's competitive markets. A Burson – Marsteller study provides research to show that 'the role of the CEO in overall corporate reputation has increased from 40% in 1997 to 48%' (Gaines-Ross & Cakim, 2002). The study concluded by stating that 'the CEO of a corporation directly influences a range of stakeholders including shareholders, potential shareholder, financial and industry analysts, potential employees, customers and naturally bottom line performance' (CEOgo, 2002, p.23).

2.6 Vulnerability of the CEO's image

Fombrun at. el. (2000) argues that a corporate reputation must be distinctive. Potentially, the celebrity CEO could provide that point of difference where products, services, financial performance, etc., were similar. But linking a company's reputation too heavily to a single person is risky in at least two ways. Firstly, Fry (1997) argues that 'a single mistake or wrongdoing by a famous CEO can destroy the company's reputation'. Kartalia (1999) argues that 'it can take 30 years to build a reputation, yet it can be wiped out in only 30 seconds'.

The second risk relates to what happens to a company's reputation when a famous CEO leaves. A good example is that of the former Cadence Design Systems CEO Joe Costello. Collet (1998) argues that 'Costello's image was so entangled with Cadence that nobody could think about a Cadence without him. When Costello left, the stock price fell rapidly, and the newly appointed CEO had problems restoring trust' (Collet, 1998).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

2.7.1 Impression Management theory

Impression management (IM), first discussed by Erving Goffman (1959), describes a central aspect of role theory: how individual actors create, maintain, defend, and often enhance their social identities through assumptions, settings, props, and scripts in a play metaphor (Day & Lord, 1988; Goffman 1959, & Schlenker 1980). IM explains the motivations behind complex human interactions and performances. It further expounds that impression management is the goal-directed attempt to influence others' perceptions about a person, a group, and/or an

organization regarding an object or event by providing self-assessed beneficial information in social interactions.

Van Riel (1986) suggests impression management "is a possible way of creating and protecting image among members of the targeted group in the case of an organization it would be the public's" (p. 24). He says it is the company's policy of presenting itself to target groups in such a way as to evoke in them a favorable picture (image) or to avoid an unfavorable one' (Van Riel, 1995).

2.7.2 Application of the theory

According to Conger (1989), 'the establishment of a shared vision and collective identity coupled with strong follower commitment to the leader and elevated effort can produce high levels of internal cohesion, value congruence, and performance potential which help to promote strong identity leading to a positive image' (p. 143). In the practical relevance of the theory there are some practical implications, some point towards what we might consider in training CEO's to be more effective in aligning followers around an idealized goal worthy of their collective efforts and how to build trust more quickly and to retain it with followers.

Moreover, in designing a training program, PR department which is the one charged with the effect of packing and shaping the image of the CEO should be involved in the strategic planning. Secondly, the PR personnel should be able to strategically train their CEO's to develop leaders' presentational skills as well as non-verbal skills, including their efforts to frame, script, stage, and deliver their message, this could enhance the message's appeal as well as their corporate image to the public's.

Finally, there is need for PR officers to train their CEO's to understand signals emanating from followers, as well as the context. Ideally, the dramaturgy model can provide some additional insight into the areas where leaders can be more sensitive to certain cues and use them to manage more productive impressions with followers. If we take the position of the follower, we believe there is much to be gained by understanding how PR has been used to influence and create the CEO's charismatic image to the public. And how the leader's charismatic image influences the organizational overall corporate image (Frost & Cooke, 1999).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The current research adopted both quantitative and qualitative approach (mixed method) using the survey research design. To this end the researcher used self-administered questionnaires and in cases where this is not applicable due to time constraints the questionnaires was sent via email as well as interviews with selected CEO's.

The entire population in this research was all corporate companies that have participated in the COYA awards in the last five years. However, the sample population in this study was selected Public Relations departments and selected CEOs whose organizations had successfully been recognized as either top- ranking or bottom ranking the COYA annual awards in the last five years. The sampling approach that was used in this study is non-probability sampling, and the researcher used purposive sampling.The process of data analysis included organizing, analyzing

and summarizing all the findings. Data organizing and coding was done by the researcher in the following ways. Quantitative data from the questionnaire was analyzed by the use descriptive statistics and presented in form of frequency tables, charts, and graph.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 CEO Image after Nomination and Organization Success

In line with study objectives , the study sought to find out if the CEO's image contributes to the organization performance. The findings were given in the figure1 below.

Figure 1:CEO Image after Nomination and Organization Success
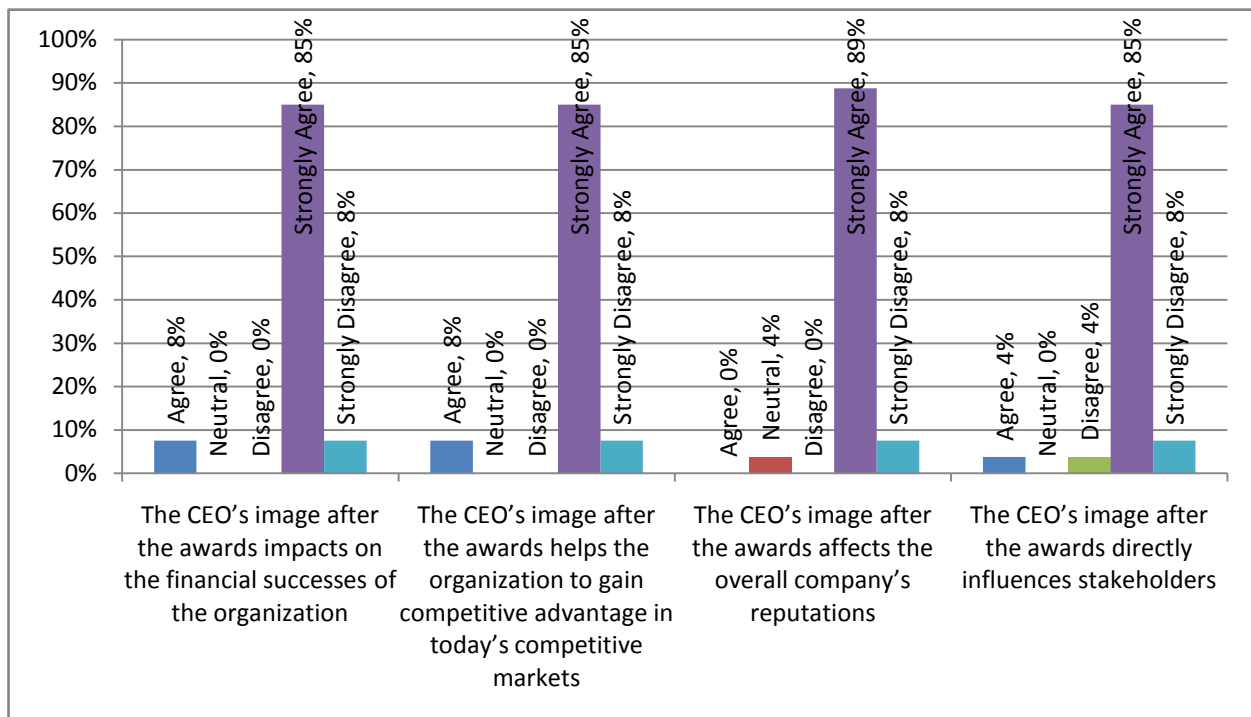
A strong majority (85%) strongly agreed with the statement that the CEO image after the awards impacts on the financial successes of the organization. A strong majority (85%) of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the CEO image after the awards helps the organization to gain competitive advantage in today competitive markets. A strong majority (89%) of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the CEO image after the awards affects the overall company reputation. A strong majority (85%) of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the CEO image after the awards directly influences the stakeholders.The findings agree with those of Bruijns (2003).

Interview results for the 8 CEOs indicated that the CEOs image was inextricably linked to the reputation and performance of the organization. In particular, 7 of the 8 CEOs had positive opinions on the question of the closeness of the link between the reputation of a CEO and the

organization reputation. It was in one instance only, where CEO number 5 indicated that the CEO reputation "is barely linked, because it is common to see lackluster image of the CEO even though the organization image is powerful".

"In our case, it is highly linked because the performance contract stipulates that if the organization fails to meet its KPI, then the CEO has failed irrespective of the external forces". CEO 1

"In some instances, it is highly linked while in others it is not. For instance, there is allowance for external circumstances which were beyond the control of the CEO that may have been responsible for the poor performance of the organization". CEO 2

"It is linked because the CEO reputation is synonymous with the organization reputation". CEO 3

"It is,because CEOs from highly reputed firms always get appointed to head other firms notwithstanding the latter firm being a poor performance. It is usually hoped that the CEO would use the same reputation to improve the image of the new organization." CEO 4

"It is highly linked because there is a tendency to attribute the positive organization performance to the positive CEO performance and vice versa". CEO 6

"Yes. Because organization reputation is also the same thing as CEO reputation". CEO 7

"Yes. Because CEO reputation   may impact on organization reputation and vice versa". CEO 8

The CEOs also recognized that there is a strong link between the reputation of the organization and the person who heads it and therefore any CEO needs to belief that his organization should reflect these values, beliefs and behaviors. In essence, 'the CEO is often seen as an ambassador or endorser of the corporate brand and the product brand, therefore brand management of the CEO is perceived to be a very important task' (Lazarus, 2003, p.194).

 In addition to what Lazarus states, Bruijns also argue that a correlation does in fact exist between the CEOs image, corporate reputation and corporate performance and those intangible assets (i.e. image, symbolic leadership) are significantly responsible in gaining competitive advantage in today's competitive markets (2003).

Interview results on the question of who ultimately was responsible for the organizations corporate image yielded some interesting responses**.** The data collected indicated that CEOs belief that they are not exclusively responsible for the image of the organization without any assistance from the public relations professionals and other stakeholders. All recognized that corporate image of the CEO is perhaps a very important asset to the company and many went on to say that they are simply the stewards of that corporate image for the period that they are in office. However, they don't seem to understand the various ways of maintaining this image unless they work on the advice of the public relations professionals in their own organizations or outside who are hired as consultants in image and branding. In addition, they also recognized the role of the board, the senior management and other stakeholders in maintaining the organization image.

The interview responses that best   demonstrated this result were;

"Internal Stakeholders, that is both senior and junior management specifically because they are the people who "see no evil, " hear no evil", and therefore speak no evil" of the company." CEO 1

"The CEO and Senior Management, because of their role in performance management". CEO 2

"The board, because a united board portrays a good image, while boardroom fights portray a very bad image to the public." CEO 3

"The PR and Marketing Department because they are responsible for establishing brand names for the organizations." CEO 4

"The Board because it has a strategic role, a dysfunctional board is highly likely to exist in organization with poor image and vice versa". CEO 5

"Senior Management because they execute the decisions of the board and how they perform this role may impact significantly on the image of the organization". CEO 6

"The Ceo and senior Management because everyone watches their every move. In addition, because their decisions may have a make or break impact on the image of the organizations". CEO 7

"The Ceo and Board of Directors because they craft the strategic road map and if the organization get lost in the labyrinths of poor performance, bad publicity and poor image, they may have been responsible for it due to poor mapping". CEO 8

It was also realized that some of the CEOs also turn to PR practitioners for guidance and help in protecting their reputations when there is a crisis, one CEO said 'that the CEO defines by example what the company is all about and most of the times people need to see the right behavior and image coming from the top. This reaffirms what Grunig and Hunt (1984), inform us about corporate image, 'utilizing the CEO's name signals a company's willingness to stake their personality behind their products and services' (p. 25). This also means that that 'brand personification can tap into the human desire of the general public and improve the company's overall image as indicated (Grieder, 2001: Grunin & Hunt, 1984).

On the interview question of who manages the reputation of the company, 2 CEOs indicated that the PR department manages the reputation of the company. 4 CEOs indicated that the Board and or the Board Chairman manage the reputation of the company. In one instance, the HR department manages the reputation of the organization while in another instance; the legal department manages the reputation of the organization**.**

An interview question that sought to clarify the role of the CEO in molding the organization image elicited varied responses. In 7 out of the 8 cases, the CEO acknowledged the crucial role played by CEOs in molding the organizations image. It was only in one instance that the CEO opined that the role of molding the organization image was a share role, and that employees of the company had a crucial role to play in molding the image of the organization.

Some of the responses that best demonstrated these results are outlined below;

"He has a positive role to play because his image is crucial to the molding of the organization image". CEO 1

"A positive CEO image may lead to stronger bottom-line for the organizations". CEO 2

"CEOs have to portray a positive image since they are the face that customers see when they buy the product". CEO 3

"The CEO may be responsible for the creation of a brand pill which cultivate loyalty in customers despite stiff competition". CEO 4

"The role of the CEO is as much as the role of any employee in that organization, in fact, the ordinary employee has a bigger role to play in organization image building since he is mostly the one who deals directly with customer and suppliers". CEO 5

"The CEO may be in a position to negotiate with the regulators such as the tax authorities and licensing authorities hence reducing the exposure of failure to comply with regulation". CEO 6

"A CEO is definitely responsible for the organization image". CEO 7

"A CEO actions contribute to the sustainability of the organization through the establishment of effective systems and process". CEO 8

An interview question was posed to the CEO in order to elicit comments on their perceptions of what the role of PR activities and strategies were in the organization. In particular, the question attempted to find out if CEOs perceived PR to be for communication, reputation building or for molding behaviors.

In general, the main benefit of public relations was perceived to be developing the position of the organization to its publics and at the same time positioning themselves through various public relations activities. And it was agreed by all that good public relations needed to be both proactive and reactive, that is creating a favorable environment with all the stake holders and having the ability to respond to crises and bad news.

It was noticed that the focus of public relations varies from organization to organization – small-sized organizations use the public relations department as a means of creating awareness and getting attention from its audiences. On the other hand, bigger companies always want to protect their valuable asset that is a positive corporate image amongst its publics. On the proactive side, public relations was seen to deliver benefits in terms of upholding, strengthening and looking out for risks to reputations so that people understand the company's position and professionalism which is what Van Riel specifies when he classifies 'assertive impression as a proactive strategy aimed at creating a good image in the specific target group (1985).

Public relations activities were mainly seen in terms of media relations and communication and its major benefits in influencing the reputation of the organization. Much of its role is seen to be managing the expectations of the company in ensuring that those audiences know and understand the goals of the organizations so that they support the organization in the achievements of these goals. In one instance, CEO number 1 indicated that he perceives PR to be "*Mostly communication because it is what we use to communicate to the general public about our intended expansion plans, our intentions to better their lives and our intentions to be sustainable*". In another instance, CEO number 2, opined that he perceives PR as *"communication since that is how we make the community aware of our brands"*. In still another instance, CEO number 3 indicates that he perceives PR as *"Communication as PR is important in marketing our products".* The underlying implication from the last two responses indicate that some CEOs still don't see the distinction between the marketing function and the public relations function in an organization.

There were responses that indicated that CEOs perceived PR to be for reputation building. The specific responses included;

"PR is an important tool for reputation building as we use to craft the organization image". CEO 4

"PR is both an important reputation builder as well as an effective communication tool for organizations that are forward looking". CEO 5

"PR is all encompassing as it ensures that the communication and reputational needs of an organization are met". CEO 8g

Internally, some CEOs recognized that public relations made a contribution to organization strategy. This came mostly through its role as the communications officer for the companies, ensuring that the decision makers are aware of the views of all the stakeholders thus enabling better decision making.   Secondly, public relations practitioners also influence strategy in maintaining key relationship between the all the stakeholders and the organization hence providing a 'corporate conscience'.   Moreover, Messinger et al. (1962) shows why communication practitioners should be able to implement the corporate strategy by helping to communicate the organization's strategic intention to both internal and external stakeholders which may help avoid misunderstandings (Messinger et al. 1962).

They all perceived the role of the PR department to be critical to the organization all always especially in hostile environments. 'Public relations is', according to another CEO about no surprises. The real benefit is about being to see around corners and anticipate what is vital to the organization'.   Some of the CEOs interviewed said that a good PR practitioner should be able to understand perspectives, and the needs of the publics with whom the company has important relations and provide an objective view on the perceptions that are likely to be created by decisions, actions and messages.

  This further expounds that impression management is the goal-directed attempt to influence other's perceptions about a person, a group or an organization regarding an object or person and at the same time providing self-assessed beneficial information in social interactions (Goffman 1959, & Schlenker, 1980).   Some of the CEOs stated the PR is 'very critical in any organization' and the practice can be valued when public relations advice is offered to decision-making at the highest level within the organization.

4.2 Miscellaneous Interview for Public Image Consultants

A miscellaneous interview outside the scope of the outlined methodology was carried to provide corroborating evidence on the results obtained from main CEO interviews.In this regard, a few selected Public image consultants who were interviewed also cautioned organization against making use of the brand of the CEO all the time. Derek Bbanga (Public Image Consultant), proposed that before any organization makes the CEO famous, 'companies should make sure that the CEO understands the brand value of the organization and they should match those of his/her personal brand value. He also did emphasis that 'it much easier for founders of organization to make use of the brand personification since they share and understand the core brand value of that specific organization, the reason there are so many great and famous names that have been utilized as brand such as Nestle, Ford, Hewlett Packard amongst many others'.

He further cautioned the organization and its employment strategies, 'it is always easy to notice successful organization, since their brand value is always reflected to the personal brand of the CEO. Secondly, is that the corporate image of the organization is very vital to the overall success of the organization at the same time it's important to look out for charismatic leadership

traits among the potential CEO as the organization intends to hire'.   In a broader perspective, this remarks specifies Bass school of thought, he says that ' the study of leadership is important in understanding the organization performance and helping today's PR officer in developing strategies that are in line with the vision, values and mission of the organization which is very critical to its success (Bass, 1990).

Derek further emphasized that 'the CEO of any organization should be seen and heard as the face of the organization whether there is a crisis or not, at the same time, every CEO together with the help of the PR department should ask themselves what legacy do they want to leave behind, and thereby working together to change the perception, attitudes, beliefs and opinions of the CEO to the public, which is what Khan, adheres since his categorical when he affirms 'for the CEO to bear any influence to the public, they would have to use the help of the PR within the organization who is involved in the development of strategies and objectives that the ability to mould the image of the CEO to the public' (Khan, 2004, p. 45).

Derek, point out that 'it is easier to help women in top leadership position to personally brand themselves since they bring to core the value of emotional intelligence since they are able to visible articulate and use the skills they taught by their advisers' meaning that it's easier for the female gender to work closely with key advisor to select soft skills that help in evoking positive effects and a strong emotional brand with their followers (Prewitt, 1975).

His recommendation to corporate organizations in Kenya, is that PR practitioners should be fully involved in training and coaching their CEO's to develop leadership presentation skills as well as non-verbal skills including their efforts to frame, script, stage and deliver their message to the external public all the time as this helps in developing a charismatic corporate image the influences the overall organizational success and it put emphasis on what Frost and Cooke scholars have stated all along (Frost & Cooke, 1999).

5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary of the findings

A strong majority of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the CEO image after the awards impacts on the financial successes of the organization (85%), that the CEO image after the awards helps the organization to gain competitive advantage in today competitive markets (85%), that the CEO image after the awards affects the overall company reputation (89%) that the CEO image after the awards directly influences the stakeholders (85%). The findings imply that CEOs nomination and positive image positively contributes to the performance of an organization. This positive relationship may arise because the stakeholders (suppliers, customers, government and the general public) either become more trusting or are convinced of the going concern and sustainability of the firm. This way, the organization can attract capital at low costs, can target customers more easily and can negotiate with suppliers more easily. This further improves the top line and bottom line results.

5.2 Conclusions

Results led to the inference that CEOs nomination and positive image positively contributes to the performance of an organization. Specifically, the positive CEOs image may lead to financial successes of the organization, contribute to gaining competitive advantage in today competitive markets, affect the overall company reputation and directly influences the stakeholders.

5.3 Recommendations

The study recommends that since there seems to be appositive relationship between organization performance and the CEOs positive image, then PR departments and CEOs should seriously emphasize on the important role of PR department in shaping the CEOs image.

5.4 Suggested areas of further research

The current study recommends a regression analysis that may demonstrate the sensitivity of organization performance to CEO image. The study also recommends the adoption of the balance score card concept to organizational performance in a bid to test the relationship between CEOs image and organization performance. The current study should also be replicated across different sampling frames such as the firms listed on the Nairobi securities exchange and the Kenya association of manufacturers list.

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