Editorial: Organisational character: issues, imperatives and practices

R.P. Banerjee and Bengt Gustavsson

How does a corporation create its identity? Quality and structures of governance, accepted products, services and brands and on top of everything the overall perception of people at large and consumers in particular make a kind of identity for the organisation. In their pursuit of excellence, corporations throughout the globe might adopt a business process that would create a particular identity for a moment and would shift to another at the next. The process might continue, depending on the requirements of the markets in general and consumers in particular. In the process, many times, a dilemma arises between the concern for the short term as against the long term.

A short-term approach to doing business might help gain the desired or coveted result but might go against the norms of the sustainable business paradigm. The recent fiasco on Wall Street reveals the lack of a trustworthy identity of enterprises throughout the corporate world. Behavioural solutions of human problems and the dynamics of the collective in an enterprise might, to a certain extent, go to making the organisation trustworthy in the short term. Behavioural implications, because of their intrinsic shortcoming, have failed to offer a trustworthy identity for the organisation. Sustainable enterprising requires of the organisation a certain set of attributes merging into a particular type of character.

Organisational character emerges out of the cluster of organisational attributes revealed through its business process. Once the process of characterisation is on there could be various approaches to the same. Need for the identification of its character now and the desired state of character would be felt by organisations once they put in serious thought about its long-term sustainability, on the one hand, and creating a trustworthy identity through having the right character type. Character type could be inherited from the past profile of the organisation or could be enforced in the business process through a means of consensus based on the mission and vision of the corporation.

An obvious question would be the risk to corporate credibility in the short-term for its initiative to create a characteristic identity in the long term. The amount of risk involved in the process has to have a bearing on the worth of corporate activities and might put pressure on its values.

This special issue of *IJHRDM* has spelt out the concept in empirical terms and has dwelt on the issues, imperatives and practices in the corporate world. Papers published here will obviously generate a series of discussions from various aspects of the subject.