



# Responsible Management Education in Africa

## Survey of African Business Schools

Donald Gibson

AABS Conference 15 April 2011

# Purpose of Survey

- Gauge the knowledge and uptake of the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) in African business schools.
- Develop an overview of the ethics and sustainability activities in African business schools.
- Investigate whether there is support for more formal interaction on the PRME.

- Online questionnaire was structured according to the PRME principles
- Distributed to AABS, SABSA, SADCNET databases as well as registered participants at AABS Conference.
- 48 individual responses
- 31 business schools / universities from across Africa (9 different countries)

# Spread of responses



# PRME Signatories

- According to PRME website, the African signatories include:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Country</b>
AABS	African
Chartered Institute of Commerce of Nigeria	Nigeria
Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria	South Africa
Graduate School of Business , University of Cape Town	South Africa
Multitech (Makerere) Business School	Uganda
Rhodes Investec Business School	South Africa
School of Business, American University in Cairo	Egypt
School of Finance and Banking	Rwanda
University of Lagos	Nigeria
University of Stellenbosch Business School	South Africa

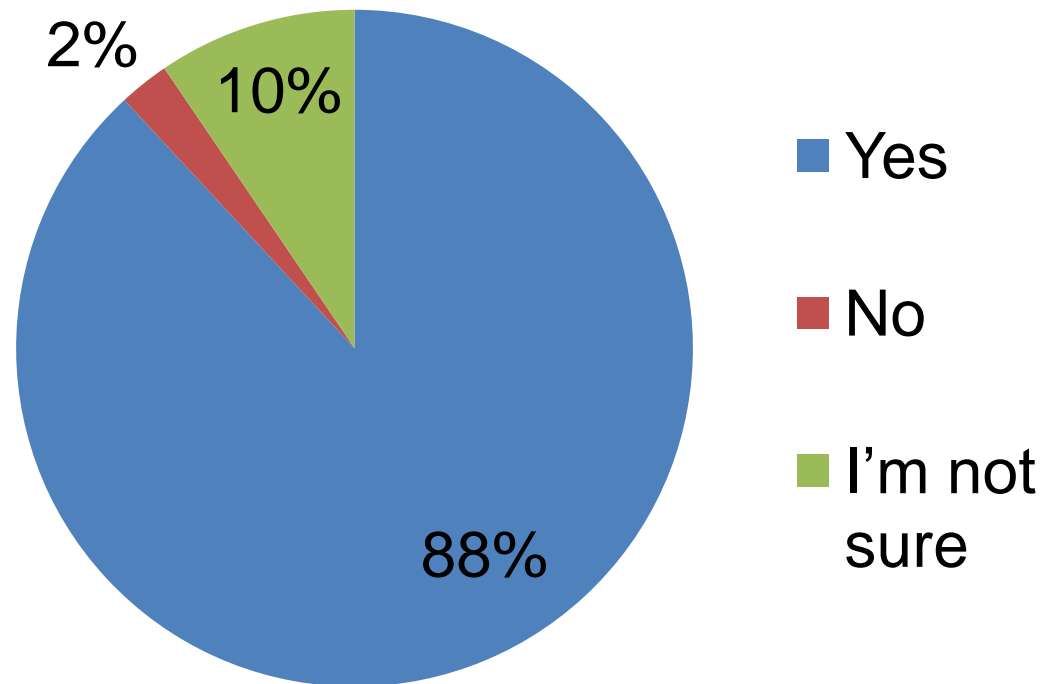
# Why did your organisation sign the PRME?

<b>Reason</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
We identify with the values	82
We are already incorporating the principles into our curriculum	45
Provides a new approach to education to meet the needs of business	36
Our students wanted us to	0
Peer pressure – our competitors signed up	0
I don't know why	0
Other (Please elaborate)	Competitive advantage

# If you haven't signed the PRME, why not & do you plan to?

<b>Response options</b>	<b># responses</b>
We plan to sign it	11
We do not plan to sign it	4
I don't know if we plan to sign it	4
We don't know what it is	7
We don't identify with the values of the PRME	0
The PRME is just another charter to sign up to	0
The PRME has no real value for our organisation	0
Other (open response):	2 - School has not discussed the issue; We would like to know more

Are the values of global social & environmental responsibility appropriate to African business schools?

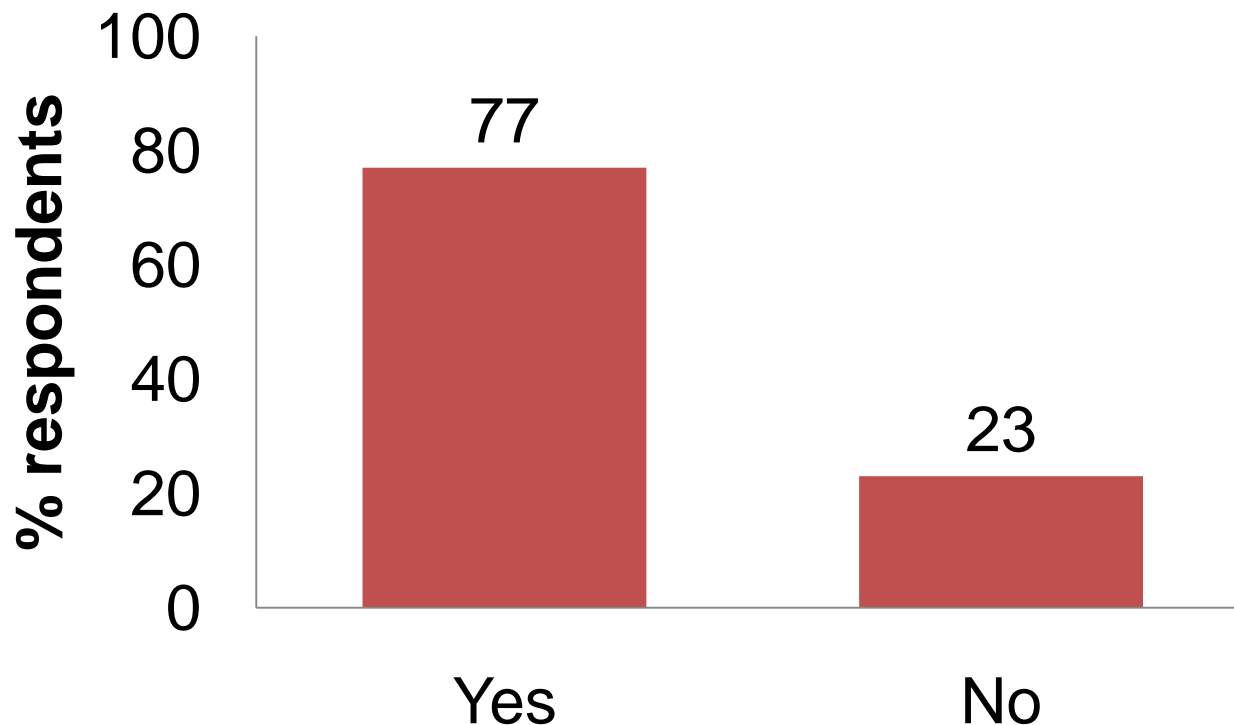


## **PRME Principle:**

“We understand that our own organizational practices should serve as an example of the values and attitudes we convey to our students.”

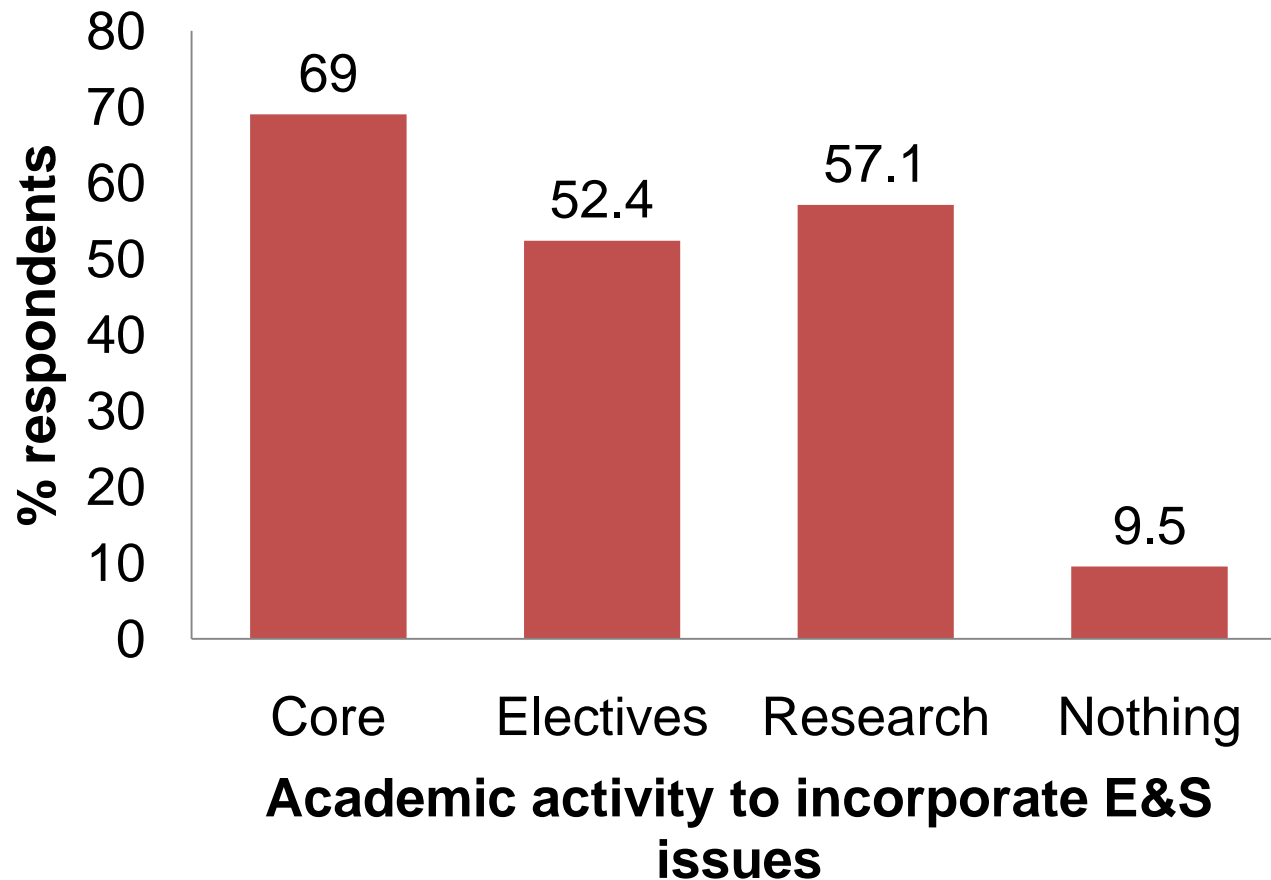
# Vision & Mission Statement

Does your business school's mission and vision include a commitment to social and environmental responsibility?



# Principles 2 & 4: Academics, curricula & research activities

What academic activities are you involved in to address responsible management education?



## **Which degrees/diplomas/certificates incorporate social and environmental responsibility?**

- DBA
- MBA / Executive MBA
- Post Graduate Diploma in Management
- Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration
- Bachelor of Accountancy
- Bachelor of Economics and Finance
- Bachelor of Business Administration
- Bachelor of Commerce
- Bachelor of Management in Leadership
- Certificates courses

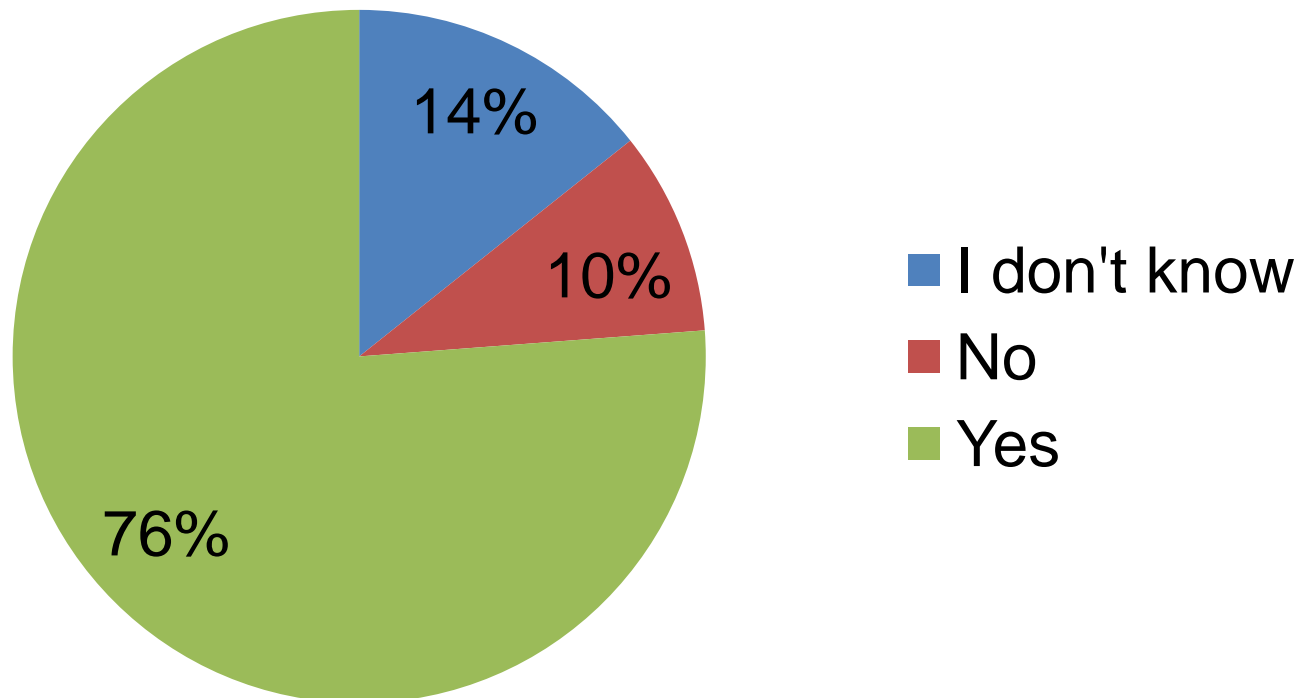
# Principle 3: Key methods being used



- Workshops / thought leaders seminars / practitioners forums / public lectures / Hosting guest speakers from leading companies
- Visits to companies with strong social and environmental stewardship credentials
- Curriculum development with experts in field and academics/ study materials for courses / case studies / study guides
- Student based academic clubs, e.g. The Corporate Governance Club and Entrepreneurs' Society

# Principle 5: Partnership with business

Do you interact with businesses to understand their challenges in meeting environmental and social responsibilities?



# Principle 5: Partnerships with business through



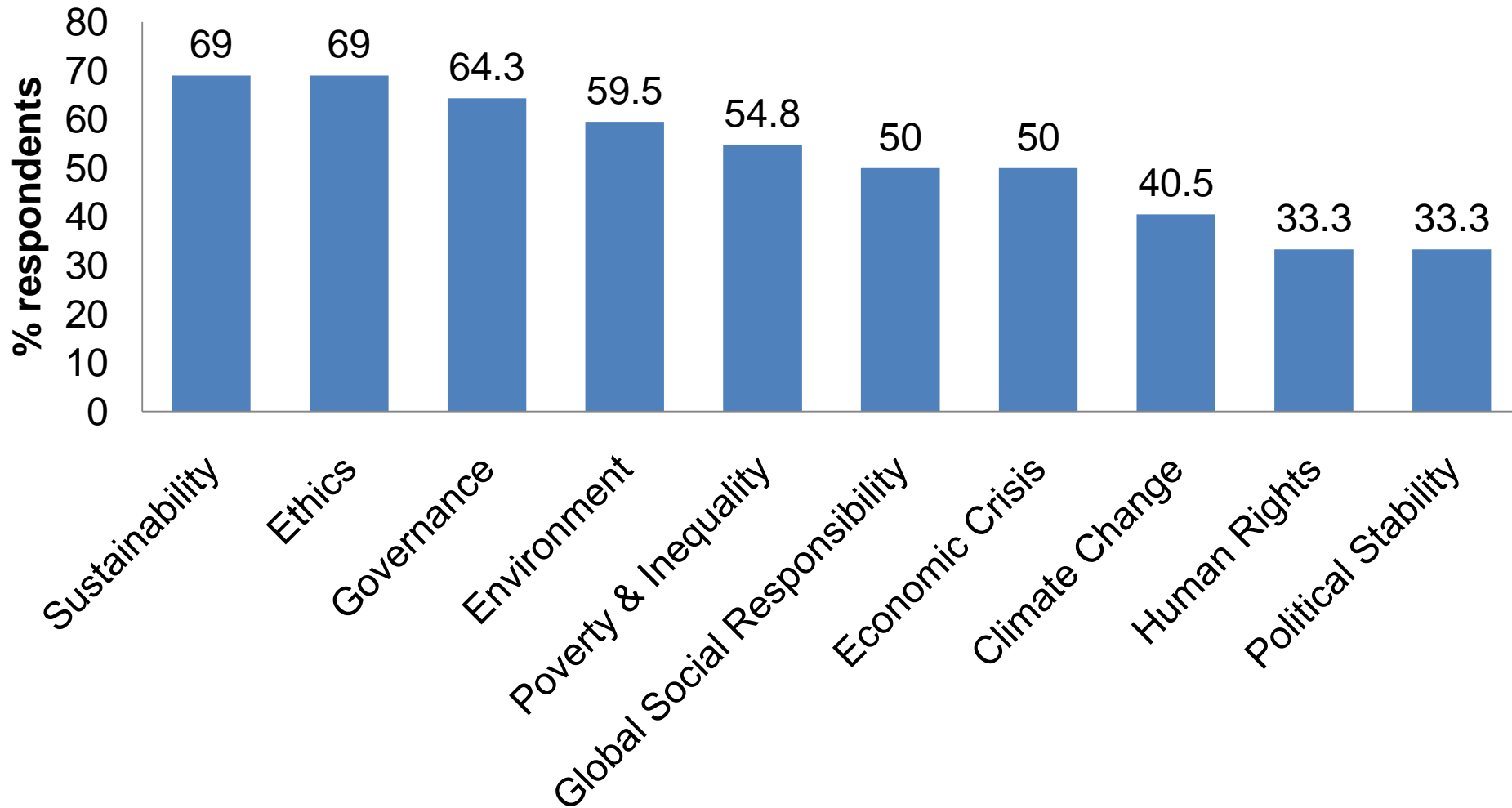
- Seminars / workshops / conferences with industry
- Research surveys and student research on issues drawn from industry
- Writing business cases
- Guest speakers and part time lecturers drawn from business
- Consulting work with corporates
- Site visits as part of academic programmes
- Funding from and partnerships with industry
- Memberships of professional industry bodies

## **Principle 6 – Dialogue**

We will facilitate and support dialogue and debate among educators, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

# Principle 6: Facilitating dialogue

Which of the following issues does your organisation facilitate and support dialogue with stakeholders on?



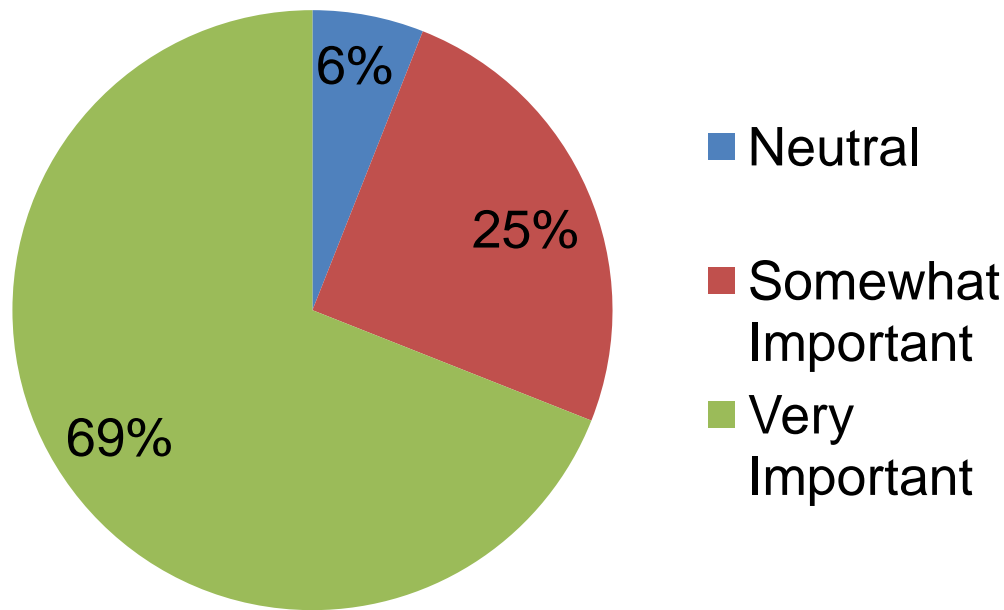
# Complimentary research



- Georgetown MBA group.
- MBA Global Experience:  
Johannesburg March 25, 2011
- Researchers: Charlotte Fausett  
Coor, Preethi Harbuck, Jee Sun  
Lee, Adrienne Weil
  
- 176 Student Respondents
- 68% from GIBS, 19% from Lagos

# African MBA Students

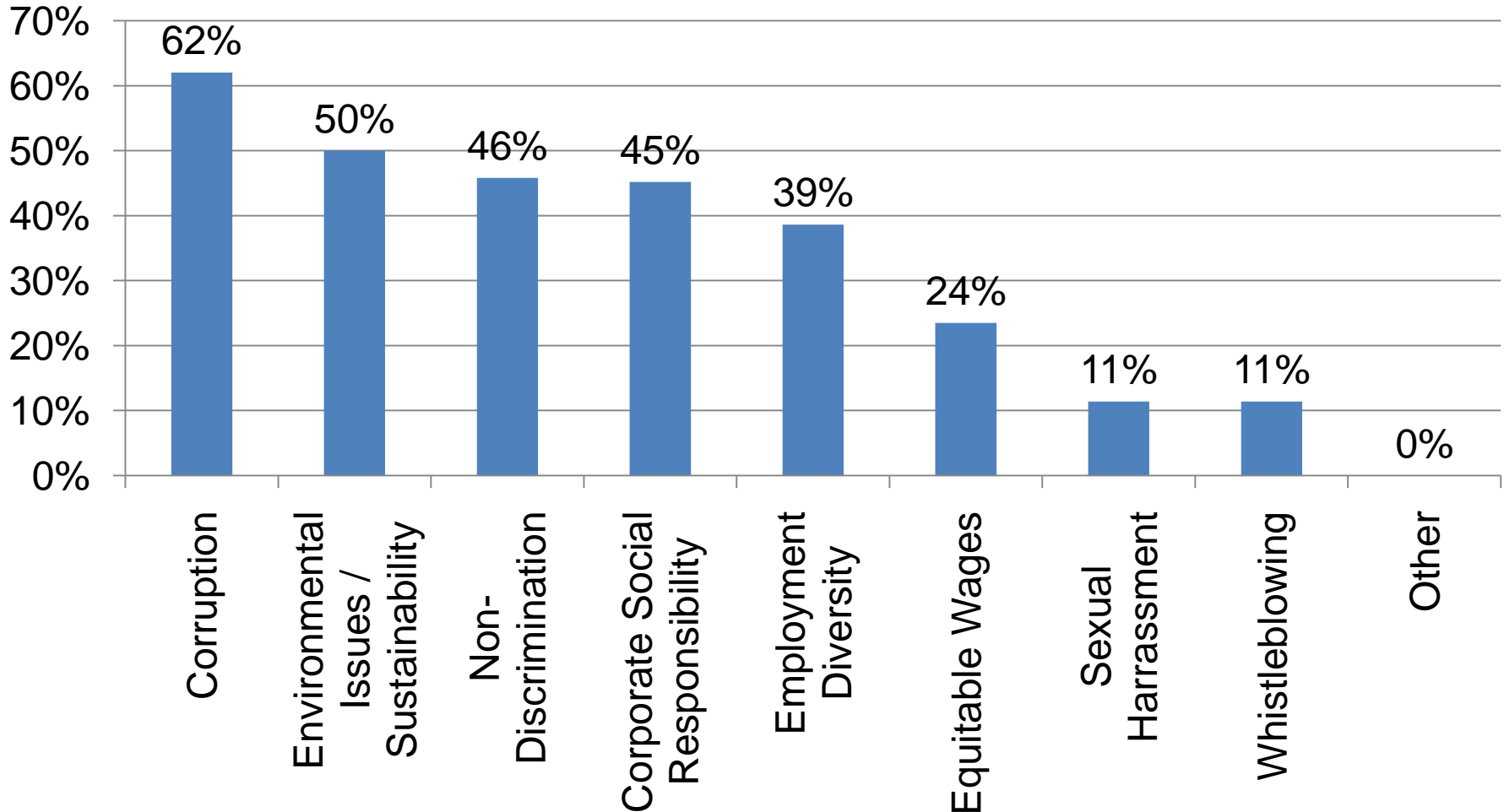
## Importance of Business Ethics



•94% of students agreed that ethics is important to them

# African MBA Students

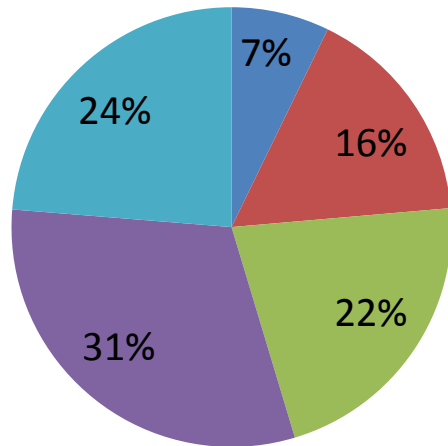
## Most Important Business Ethics Issues



Source: Georgetown University MBA Research (2011)

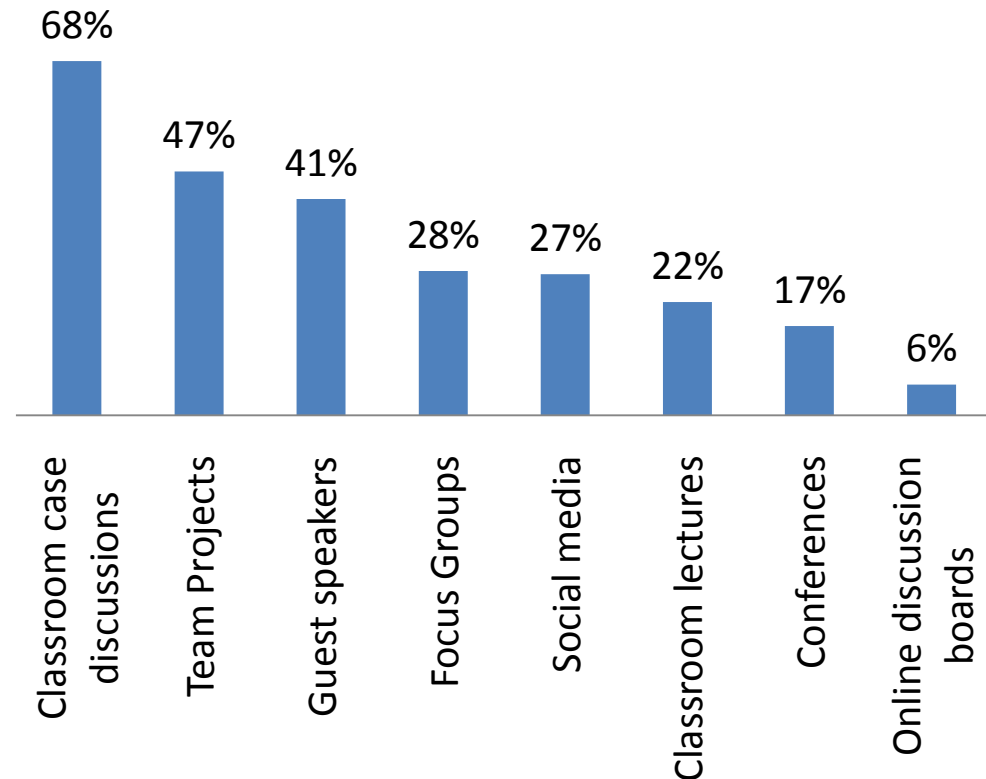
# African MBA Students

## Willingness to Take an Elective Course about Business Ethics



- Not Likely at All
- Not Very Likely
- Neutral
- Somewhat Likely
- Very Likely

## The Best Way to Discuss Ethics



# African MBA Students



Most students prefer to learn about business ethics in the classroom with real-life examples, case discussions, and only a minor focus on theoretical principles.

## Teach Best Practices

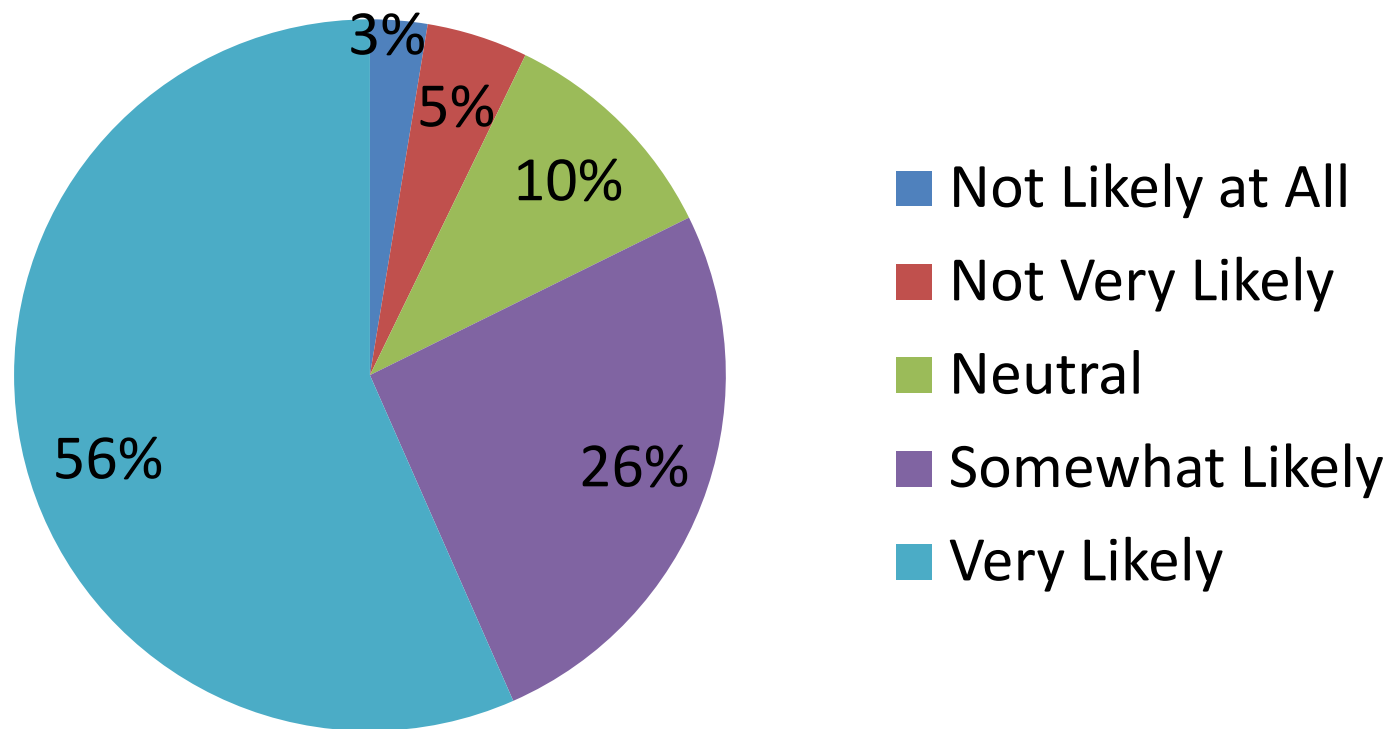
- Spotlight companies/leaders who have behaved ethically
- Account for any insurmountable hurdles (e.g., rampant corruption)

## Teach that Ethical Behavior Creates Competitive Advantage

- Use Case Studies (e.g., JP MorganChase)
- Engage outside speaker testimonials

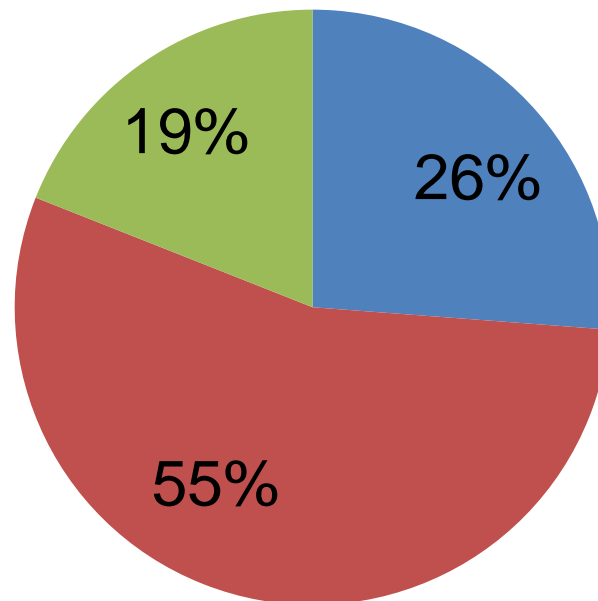
*Source: Georgetown University MBA Research (2011)*

## Willingness to Take an Ethical Oath



Have you received sufficient information about the UN Global Compact or PRME to inform your participation in PRME?

■ Yes ■ No ■ I'm not sure



# Participation in an African PRME network



Would you be interested in participating in an African network that advances PRME and shares knowledge?

- Yes 96%
- No 0%
- I don't know 4%

# Your suggestions on the network's role

- Collaborative and knowledge sharing forum
- Share best practice, experiences and international benchmarks
- Design learning materials and teaching strategies
- Link African business schools and with global academia
- Link to business
- Develop cross-border research and attract funding
- Create awareness and promote the PRME

- Compile a library of cases related to issues identified
- Showcase curricula
- Database of business leaders willing to present real-life ethical dilemmas
- MBA Oath or AABS-specific oath
- Explore possibility of AABS enforcement panel

# Conclusions

- Both business schools and their students show interest in RME
- Levels of RME activity vary substantially across the continent
- Awareness of the UN Global Compact and the PRME vary
- Further information dissemination is required to inform participation in PRME
- There is strong support for an African network

# Up for discussion...

- Creating a network for PRME in Africa
- AABS to spearhead the network

Thank you!

Donald Gibson

Director: Transnet Programme in Sustainable Development  
Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria  
[gibsond@gibs.co.za](mailto:gibsond@gibs.co.za)

Claire Thwaites

Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria  
[thwaitesc@gibs.co.za](mailto:thwaitesc@gibs.co.za)

