

**LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES  
FOR PROMOTING SOCIAL  
RESPONSIBILITY IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION**

# INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

Series Editor: Patrick Blessinger

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# **SERIES EDITORS' INTRODUCTION**

## **INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The purpose of this series is to publish current research and scholarship on innovative teaching and learning practices in higher education. The series is developed around the premise that teaching and learning are more effective when instructors and students are actively and meaningfully engaged in the teaching–learning process.

The main objectives of this series are to:

- (1) present how innovative teaching and learning practices are being used in higher education institutions around the world across a wide variety of disciplines and countries;
- (2) present the latest models, theories, concepts, paradigms, and frameworks that educators should consider when adopting, implementing, assessing, and evaluating innovative teaching and learning practices; and
- (3) consider the implications of theory and practice on policy, strategy, and leadership.

This series will appeal to anyone in higher education who is involved in the teaching and learning process from any discipline, institutional type, or nationality. The volumes in this series will focus on a variety of authentic case studies and other empirical research that illustrates how educators from around the world are using innovative approaches to create more effective and meaningful learning environments.

Innovation teaching and learning are any approach, strategy, method, practice, or means that has been shown to improve, enhance, or transform the teaching–learning environment. Innovation involves doing things differently or in a novel way in order to improve outcomes. In short, innovation is a positive change. With respect to teaching and learning, innovation is the implementation of new or improved educational practices that result in improved educational and learning outcomes. This innovation can be any positive change related to teaching, curriculum, assessment, technology, or other tools, programs, policies, or processes that lead to improved educational and learning outcomes. Innovation can occur in institutional development, program development, professional development, or learning development.

The volumes in this series will not only highlight the benefits and theoretical frameworks of such innovations through authentic case studies and other empirical research but also look at the challenges and contexts associated with implementing and assessing innovative teaching and learning practices. The volumes

represent all disciplines from a wide range of national, cultural, and organizational contexts. The volumes in this series will explore a wide variety of teaching and learning topics such as active learning, integrative learning, transformative learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, meaningful learning, blended learning, creative learning, experiential learning, lifelong and lifewide learning, global learning, learning assessment and analytics, student research, faculty and student learning communities, and other topics.

This series brings together distinguished scholars and educational practitioners from around the world to disseminate the latest knowledge on innovative teaching and learning scholarship and practices. The authors offer a range of disciplinary perspectives from different cultural contexts. This series provides a unique and valuable resource for instructors, administrators, and anyone interested in improving and transforming teaching and learning.

Patrick Blessinger  
*Founder, Executive Director, and Chief Research Scientist,  
International HETL Association*

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# PART I

## ROLE OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Enakshi Sengupta, Patrick Blessinger and  
Craig Mahoney

### ABSTRACT

*Nations today are faced with unprecedented challenges due to rapid globalization and global climate change. Universities no longer operate in isolation but are now a part of society where they are expected to be socially responsible citizens. Universities need to have effective strategies in order to be effective in a highly competitive higher education (HE) landscape. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a preferred strategy that can help achieve a good reputation and competitive advantage for the institutions of HE. Such institutions imparting HE are engaging in debates and quality research work to gauge the need of the current generation with a vision to meet the needs of the future generation (Sengupta, Blessinger, & Yamin, 2020). This book contains chapters that review scientific literature with an aim to find out the theoretical underpinnings explored in the case studies and interventions practiced by universities across the globe. This book provides evidence for CSR and the role of civil societies in creating an organizational culture that promotes social competence and human relations. This collective knowledge will help facilitate continuous improvement in higher education institutions with external impact and internal capacity building and a focus toward performance and management.*

**Keywords:** Corporate social responsibility; higher educational institutions; universities; social ethics; value orientations; management; impact measurement; case studies; future generation; climate change; globalization

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) dates back to 1953 with the publication of Bowen's "Social Responsibility of Businessmen." The term was further refined in 1984 when Peter Drucker spoke about turning social problems into economic opportunities. World started viewing the concept of CSR in a different light and not a charitable giving or wasteful expenditure. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development defines CSR as:

the continuous commitment by the business organization to behave ethically and contribute to the economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large.

European Union describes CSR as:

the concept that an enterprise is accountable for its impact on all relevant stakeholders. It is the continuing commitment by business to behave fairly and responsibly, and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the work force and their families as well as of the local community and society at large.

European Commission (EC, 2006) emphasis that CSR practices "can play a key role in contributing to sustainable development while enhancing Europe's innovative potential and competitiveness" (p. 24).

CSR has been further defined as "corporate citizenship, sustainable business, environmental responsibility, the triple bottom line; social and environmental accountability; business ethics and corporate accountability" (Moon, Slager, Brunn, Hardi, & Knudsen, 2012, p. 2). It is argued and agreed by educationists that there exists an urgent need to educate students and enable them to understand sustainability matters so that while growing up they assume the role of pro-sustainability citizens, caring for their planet and surrounding with a futuristic view toward conserving and preserving the planet for future generations (Sengupta, Blessinger, & Yamin, 2020). CSR is the crucial bridge that gaps the inequalities found in our society and universities, NGO's civic bodies and government plays a vital role in being a part of this bridge. These bodies have the capacity to frame a comprehensive set of policies and practices that can be integrated into curriculum or running of businesses and impact decision making in an organization. Civil societies have joined hands with institutions of higher education (HE) to remediate social problems and create an ethical relationship in society with a focus toward transparency and accountability.

In keeping with the phenomena of globalization and privatization of education institutions and the ever-growing competition in HE industry, it is becoming imperative for higher education institutions (HEIs) to adapt a corporate approach in the

changing face of the industry (Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Gumpert, 2000; Weymans, 2010). Institutions are resorting to various strategies that are geared toward discovering the importance of corporate image, corporate identity, corporate reputation, and use of CSR as a reputation and an advantage building strategy (Atakan & Eker, 2007; Melewar & Akel, 2005; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Stensaker, 2007). Working with civil societies and use of CSR toward building competitive advantage is a direction chosen by the leaders of the institutions. These strategies are helping the university to move beyond their classroom and establish relationship with active members of society to help their students understand and appreciate the current problems and work on a collaborative effort to create a solution for such issues.

Educational institutions are charged with legitimate duties of educating the masses, advancing knowledge through research and contribute to economic development in a sustainable manner (Sengupta et al., 2020). Leaders in educational institutions have shown a commitment to CSR through “actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law” (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001, in Strand, 2011). Leadership in educational institutions is considered to be crucial for CSR as they are actively involved in securing the commitment of management and develops a system of incentives to reward staff and faculty members who develop and push for the adoption of sustainability practices at all levels (Székely & Knirsch, 2005). A conscious effort is needed on the part of the active individual that is both a good leader and a good manager to transform the institution into a sustainable and socially responsible body who is both accountable to its stakeholders and helps inculcate it in the running of the institution (Székely & Knirsch, 2005).

A university's decision to engage in CSR comes from its leader and is viewed as a strategic choice. While talking about the involvement of leaders in CSR academics have stated that “decisions regarding CSR activities are made by managers and stem from their mental models regarding their sense of who they are in the world” (Basu & Palazzo, 2008, p. 124) and from “their own perceptions of what they think is important or their own moral values” (Waldman, 2008, p. 118), while it holds true for businesses the same is applicable in an institution of HE. Leaders can give directional guidance and motivate the entire institution toward creating a conducive atmosphere and help create “a proactive strategy in shaping the perspectives of future leaders through sustainability related management education, research, management, and training programmes” (Lee et al., 2013, p. 4).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The controversy that surrounds HE is its role in economic prosperity of a nation and to what extent should it function as an ancillary unit in creating economic capital. The property that is zealously guarded by every university is its intellectual capital. Academics have argued in the past that the role of a university should be restricted to creation of intellectual capital. However, the intellectual capital is a source of economic prosperity of a nation. It is the source of research and development and growth and progress of manpower. CSR is noted as an

approach that can help in creating a higher academic quality of life. The leaders along with their team of faculty, staff, and student should help accelerate the integration of civil society and CSR in the curriculum of students with an academic goal toward creating a solution to all those which are considered as social evil.

In recent years academic institutions have shifted their focus of working from a self-contained viewpoint to one that is collaborative in nature. Institutions of HE have realized that it can no longer thrive in an environment that enjoys predictable funding and student enrollment without having much of a competitive edge between institutions (Dill, 2003; Gioia & Thomas, 1996). Globalization and internationalization of HE have put institutions into an ambiguous arena that looks more like a consumer goods marketplace (Gioia & Thomas, 1996). There is a severe struggle to attract high quality students and academic staff not only within national borders but also in an international level (Melewar & Akel, 2005). This strategic change has led institutions to adopt a business-like approach to compete and survive in this industry (Gioia & Thomas, 1996). Universities have no alternative but to reform themselves and customize their approach toward education to new economic realities (Weymans, 2010).

Managing an institution of HE and making it financially sustainable is a large task that not only faces a global competitive environment but also faces financial realities that are looming large along with the pressure to alternative sources of resource commitment (Gumpert, 2000). A traditional business talks about customers and implementing CSR in the company to garner market share and win favorable customer feedback and brand loyalty is considered to be a good strategy. However, treating students as customers is still not looked upon as a favorable approach to market an institution of HE.

Therefore, this uphill task can only be completed if educational institutions start changing their traditional mode of management and ushers in a multifaceted approach with help from civil society and government. Academics are not allowed to have an ivory tower approach any longer. The problem lies in the core where till date academia enjoys being self-contained, governing itself and focusing on knowledge activities that functions in isolation determined largely by themselves. This approach may have been suitable in the past century (Weymans, 2010). In the current global market environment, the social pressures on businesses have increased and stakeholders are demanding a commitment toward well-being of all, and concern for the CSR is not manifested only by academics but by the public and the shareholders as well (Popa, 2010).

To steer an educational institution in achieving its competitive edge and imbibe CSR not only in education but as an approach for management can only be done by an effective leader of the institution. Leaders are capable of promoting clear CSR goals and missions through a well-chalked-out strategic plan. Amagoh (2009) argues that it is only leaders that can be responsible for innovations, and he further views effective leadership as responders who can initiate change and are those individuals who will find ways to creatively address challenges while sustaining high performance of their institutions. Neera, Anjane, and Shoma (2010) state that the concept of leadership remains ambiguous due to the changing environment of our time but the leader is definitely those who thinks and



make decisions ahead of their time. Fairholm (1998) and Kanji (2008) discuss the significance of a leader who is capable of articulating the vision as a means of demonstrating support for the program being implemented.

In this case implementing CSR and tie-ups with civil society organization (CSO) to provide a meaningful and wholistic learning experience to students lies with the leaders. It is now nearly impossible to manage an educational institution in a traditional market-oriented manner. As Stensaker (2007) points out the challenges lie in managing an educational institution in keeping with the changing environment and its tasks and at the same time maintaining the organizational identities and inner characteristics which is the core of any institution of HE.

## CONCLUSION

This transition of an institutions from a traditional approach to that of a CSR-oriented modules and curriculum is imperative and cannot be avoided as there are increasing cases of global warming, deforestation, chemical warfare, uprooting of humans which have created a huge impact on our interconnected ecosystem, food chain, and the overall quality of life (Blessinger, Sengupta, & Makhanya, 2019). Students need to be aware of such issues and while studying in the institutions should be exposed to find solutions through their projects, research, and curriculum of study. The courses should be designed around concepts like CSR, ethics, human rights, and social values to promote equality, inclusiveness, and social justice among students and other members in the university. Vocational training, scientific research, publications, and workshops are to be encouraged, which will help further the CSR agenda of the institution. Integrating CSR with the help of institutional leaders and making them a part of their strategic plan is the need of the hour to which all institution must cater.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEWS

“Corporate Social Responsibility: Reflections on Universities in the United Arab Emirates,” written by Ahmed Ankit and Tharwat EL-Sakran, discusses about CSR as a concept which can be applicable in public service institutions, where responsibility means that the organization is capable of partaking and carving a solution toward urgent social needs. Universities are institutions in which social responsibility emerges not only because of their fundamental mission in the dissemination of knowledge, training, and creation but also because of the enormous challenges they face being a part of a greater society. A university is created to serve its society by graduating people who can contribute to its social and economic development. In recent years, there has been a rapid increase in the number of private universities in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The academic and professional programs offered by local universities have been developed to follow the revenue-generating practices that are widely used in other different regions of the world. The Country has also seen a growing interest in CSR. The chapter investigates the CSR-related evidence as envisaged in UAE and further emphasizes the four levels of responsibilities,

namely, academic responsibility, social responsibility, responsibility toward disadvantaged groups, and environmental responsibility, which are seen as essentials.

“Civil Society, Higher Education Institutions, and Corporate Social Responsibility in Zambia,” authored by Fred Moonga, speaks about the abundant scholarship on the role of CSOs in promoting community and social development in the low-income countries in general, and Zambia in particular. However, there is limited scholarship on the role of CSOs in HEIs, and vice versa, and how the two have become key partners in CSR. Historically, CSOs were preoccupied with community work partly because of their mandate to help vulnerable people access resources for meeting basic needs, and at times actual provision of these resources. Lately however, these organizations have taken keen interest in generating learning materials and assistance in designing curricula for some HEIs. This has been partly because of their practical experiences in policy and intervention implementation among other issues that position them well to inform curriculum development. HEIs too, have over time, changed their approach to pedagogical issues from perceiving themselves as the sole generators of knowledge to appreciating partnerships and reflecting on their relationship and contribution to society. The focus of this chapter is on analyzing the relationship between CSOs and HEIs and how these complement each other in CSR.

“Current Understandings of Global Competency in Shaping Globally Engaged Citizens,” by Jacquelyn Ann Williams and Christine Schiwietz, talks about colleges and universities playing a significant role in preparing students to navigate the many issues and challenges that characterize contemporary societies, challenges that are simultaneously local, national, and global in nature. This has led to increased calls within HE to re-envision educational practices to prioritize global competency. However, ambiguity persists regarding how faculty in transnational HE contexts, specifically international branch campuses, understand global competency and conceive of their role in shaping students’ sense of self, perspective-taking, and social responsibility systematically. Using a social constructivist lens, this chapter outlines initial case study research, informed by King and Baxter Magolda’s (2004) constructive-developmental model of intercultural maturity, Kegan’s (1994) scholarship on self-authorship, as well as Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning theory. This investigative research as cited in the chapter will be useful in terms of understanding how administrators and educators facilitate the environmental conditions and educational practices that lead to global competency and socially responsible global citizens. The broader implications of such study could potentially inform educational change policy and confirm the important role universities play in shaping and transforming societies.

“Teaching Sustainability Activism to Student Scientists: Peer Learning and Curricular Design,” authored by Jesse Priest, discusses a case study analysis of one undergraduate program that focuses on training science majors to perform sustainability outreach in their communities; this study offers pedagogical suggestions for how educators in universities might incorporate sustainability and activism into their curricular design. This chapter discusses the relationship between the hard-academic knowledge of the classroom and the outreach work done by the students by examining how curricular design and classroom activities lead to