

**UNIVERSITY–COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS FOR PROMOTING
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN
HIGHER EDUCATION**

INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

Series Editor: Patrick Blessinger

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INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND
LEARNING VOLUME 23

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EDUCATION**

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<https://www.hetl.org/>



United Kingdom – North America – Japan
India – Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2020

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-83909-439-2 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-83909-438-5 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-83909-440-8 (Epub)

ISSN: 2055-3641 (Series)



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Environmental
standard
ISO 14001:2004.

Certificate Number 1985
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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 is 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 is 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 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, as well as 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.

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PART I

PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON UNIVERSITY–COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Enakshi Sengupta, Patrick Blessinger and
Craig Mahoney

ABSTRACT

In a highly globalized, interconnected and interdependent world, universities can no longer survive in isolation. The educational, research and social actions have an impact on the community where the university works as a change agent to promote society's fundamental values of democratic participation and social justice. Sustainability education and awareness about social responsibility (SR) are becoming crucial mainly for students, so that they are aware of concepts such as economic prosperity, resource equity, energy sustainability and environmental health concerns (Sengupta, Blessinger, & Yamin, 2019). The SR of a university is to strengthen its ties with the community through promotion of active citizenship, volunteerism and developing a sense of civic and ethical responsibility among students and staff. Universities can have a great influence on achieving social and economic progress of a country as well as protecting the environment and addressing complex issues that plague society. The role of universities is not only restricted to exchange of knowledge but

University-Community Partnerships for Promoting Social Responsibility in Higher Education
Innovations in Higher Education Teaching and Learning, Volume 23, 3–14

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ISSN: 2055-3641/doi:[10.1108/S2055-364120200000023001](https://doi.org/10.1108/S2055-364120200000023001)

also in playing a leading role as an active member of society. Universities have come out of their isolation to accommodate and be a part of social change by actively engaging in community life and not being confined to only classroom and laboratory activities (Sengupta et al., 2019). This book provides empirical evidence on how universities have considered SRs as their prime focus and have engaged with civil society to enhance their values. Case studies from Indonesia to the United Kingdom enrich the book through their experience, interventions and narrations, which can be replicated in other parts of the world to create a better society and a more sustainable planet.

Keywords: University; partnership; community; social responsibility; engagements; intervention; implementation; civil responsibility; social justice; democratization; value; sustainable planet

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are assuming a profound role in today's society to act as catalysts for social change with the potential to address and mitigate a variety of social problems. Community–university engagement has gained prominent ground toward creating a two-way discourse that engages the community and the students to produce socially relevant contemporary knowledge based on active participation from both and bringing a solution to the table to make the world a better place to live. The subject of community and university partnership is all encompassing and involves the participation of all active stakeholders including the staff and the faculty members. This two-way process provides beneficial experiential learning platform for the students and creates a socially responsible research platform for the faculty. Community also stands as winner by gaining the opportunity to be a part of a sustainable livelihood and enjoy empowerment and relief from poverty, unemployment and other social issues. The indirect stakeholders like government and other civil society organizations benefit by their active participation to address social problems and create positive and mutually beneficial relations with the university.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) promoted by the United Nations came into effect in 2015 and provided a common ground and a framework that were adopted by 193 countries with 169 targets to be achieved, which were divided among 17 goals (EUA, 2016). Universities are now engaged in providing sustainable development through the goals specified in 2015. Universities are involved in cutting-edge research, high-quality education and ground-breaking innovations (Goals 4 and 9). Many universities have integrated these SDGs, which are now an important part of civil society (Goal 16), and they are excellent promoters of global and local partnerships (Goal 17). Through their contributions to these four goals, universities facilitate the achievement of all the other goals specified in the SDGs (EUA, 2016).

Along with universities, the role of civil society remains unparalleled in ushering in societal changes. Civil society is now beyond its traditional definition of a third sector and is considered a vibrant and active member of society acting as

facilitators, conveners and innovators who, along with the student community, is taking firm and bold steps toward inculcating social responsibility (SR) and sustainability in every individual, mainly the younger generation. The International Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association is one such organization that supports the SDG initiative and encourages heads of nonprofit colleges and universities, associations and institutes to sign the Declaration on University Global Engagement and to adopt the SDGs as a global policy framework for organizing their global engagement activities to address complex global challenges.

We live in an age of contradiction. On one hand we have prosperity and on the other extreme poverty, we are in a paradoxical world of both plenty and scarcity. The rapid growth of urbanization and the race toward modernization continue to deplete us of our natural resources. Time has come to judge our own responsibility and resort to introspection of our own actions and their social relevance and impact. Along with business conglomerates, the role of universities in this process cannot be overlooked. The role of institutions of higher education (IHEs) is crucial in addressing various social concerns as well as the national development. Academics have termed this as the “social responsibility of universities,” and it is in this capacity that the universities have the potential to erase the discrepancies and inequalities prevalent in our societies. Recently published GUNi Report has clearly argued:

Social responsibility emerges as the need to reconsider the social relevance of universities in light of the encounter of the local with the global, regarding priorities, demands, impacts and knowledge needs in the context of globalization. (Grau et al., 2017, p. 41)

The concept of SR is not a novel one; it is an integral part of any academic debate and used often in the context of sustainability and globalization (Vasilescu, Barna, Epure, & Baicu, 2010). A widely used definition of SR is from the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and states the following:

Corporate social responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to 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. (CSR: Meeting Changing Expectations, 1999)

The basic demand of SR lies in the fact that all stakeholders, be it business corporations or educational institutions, should function in a responsible manner with complete responsibility and commitment. Corporatization of universities and its effort toward profit maximization has challenged its role solely as a knowledge creator. Universities are building capacities toward fulfilling their SR and are now transforming the curriculum to address society’s socioeconomic need and encompassing introspection on the university’s internal processed environment (Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh, & Daraei, 2011).

LITERATURE REVIEW

University social responsibility (USR) involves a multidisciplinary integrated approach and encompasses many different areas such as active citizenship, civil

commitment, service to the community, community engagement (CE) and outreach programs, promoting economic development, encouraging students to think and act ethically to issues and motivating staff and faculty members to be actively involved in social well-being. Universities are expected to manage its social commitment along with expanding its knowledge base, indulging in research, developing human resource capacity among faculty and students in addition to educating the nation (Shawyun, 2011; Vasilescu et al., 2010). Resier (2008) defines the USR as a policy of the university containing in itself ethical qualities that affect the performance of the university–community relationship (students, faculty and administrative employees) and involve responsible management of the educational, cognitive, labor and environmental impacts, which is collectively produced by the university, in an interactive dialogue with society to encourage a sustainable human development. According to Mendez (2012), USR is an approach that encompasses science, technology and research in which contributions to the economically disadvantaged are given adequate value and attention.

The growing importance of this university–community alliance has also led to a strong emphasis on measuring the outcome and output of these activities. The benefits can be measured by repeated stakeholder engagement and by measuring the worth of any such activities in bringing about a general welfare of the masses. These impact measurement initiatives provide justification in using the resources of the university and its proximity toward achieving the outlined goals (Onyx, 2008). Universities are viewing CE as a part of their strategic plan, although not much literature is available to substantiate the claim (Hart, Northmore, & Gerhardt, 2009). Universities are attempting to define the concept of university–community partnership and are including the process and plans in their websites, detailing the approach route that they are taking toward implementing this concept (Tremblay, 2017). There is no doubt that all academics have agreed in unison that USR is as important as teaching the students in a university. The challenges lie in the fact that the vagueness and ambiguity still rule the concept with no proper measuring tool or evaluation criteria. There is a lack of standardized instrument that can measure the success of the partnership (Rowe & Frewer, 2000). There has been a growing tendency toward demanding accountability that has led to academics trying to construct benchmarks and performance indicators, which can account for the socioeconomic and cultural contribution at local and regional levels (Hart, 2010). Work needs to be done in the field of evaluating the process by which HEIs establish community partnerships and what approach route will be adopted by them to sustain the process (Kezar, 2005).

An important component of the university's research agenda is their activity centered around the community. Universities can tailor their research mission to produce quality research that can benefit both public and the students who are involved with their faculty members in conducting such research (Turk-Bicakci & Brint, 2005). USR provides a unique platform to develop sustainability of science and research. As an important stakeholder, government must encourage such partnership and help supplement university's efforts through funding, policies

and creating opportunities for training students in technology and science to meet the needs of the marketplace and industry (Leitão & Silva, 2007).

Activities that facilitate university–community partnership has a wider impact on four kinds of audiences (Ferman & Hill, 2004); they are the educational institution that is actively involved in strategizing such a partnership, faculty members, students and the community in which they are located. Students are made more aware of the problems in the community; they are connected to the practical aspect of life and are actively involved in seeking solutions and negotiating with current problems, which makes them a better candidate as a future leader. These activities have direct impact on the student’s academic achievement as they prepare them for academic learning and critical thinking. Faculty finds a way to connect classroom to the practical world outside and reaps the benefit by producing quality research journals on the work done in the field. The institutional leaders take the opportunity to improve their relationship with the nearby community and bridge the gap between community well-being and the ivory tower syndrome. Community is benefited through the programs that are being implemented by the institutions aimed at general well-being of the people at large (Erickson, 2010).

CHAPTER OVERVIEWS

Extending the Welcome: The Role of University–Community Partnerships in Supporting Refugees in England, by Agata A. Lambrechts, is about issues around refugee rights that have come to public attention following the surge in asylum application in Europe in 2015; several responses have been developed by universities in England to extend the welcome to refugees in both local communities and on their campuses. While some institutions act on their own, others have created social relationships and collaborations with local and national third-sector organizations, on which they can rely for their experience of working with and access to refugees and other forced migrants, in return offering their expertise and resources. The purpose of this chapter is to describe one such collaboration setup to support refugees residing in the City of York, in the North of England, UK. While not perfect, the York University–community partnership for refugees is a successful one, delivering tangible benefits for all the interested parties – most importantly, for the forced migrants themselves. Within this chapter, the partnership’s origins, its evolving aims and objectives, and the current outcomes of the collaboration are discussed. The chapter concludes by offering perspectives on the reasons why the partnership became successful, as well as acknowledging its challenges and limitations, drawing valuable lessons for both HEIs and community organizations in other parts of the world.

A Problem, a Plan, and South African Youth: Actively Involving the Youth in Tackling Social Issues, written by Ashiya Abdool Satar, provides a theoretical and empirical examination of young people’s role in identifying and solving problems in their communities from a social justice perspective. The complex political processes in South Africa stymie a top-down approach for advancing social justice.

Therefore, this study focuses on a bottom-up stance to nurture social justice efforts by concentrating on the role of the youth, younger than 18 years, in initiating change in their communities. Such engagement aligns with the principles outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted in 1989 that aims to enrich both the individual and the community (Dirsuweit & Mohamed, 2016; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 1989). The University of South Africa (Unisa) is involved in a community outreach program of this nature, commissioned by Empowervate Trust, a South African nonprofit organization that manages the Youth Citizen's Action Campaign (Y-CAP), which equips learners with the skills to solve societal issues in their respective communities. This chapter thus attempts to clarify what active citizenship means to the youth by focusing on the findings from focus-group interviews with South African learners who are involved with community development projects that advance social justice initiatives in their communities through the Y-CAP endeavor.

Addressing Avoidable Inequalities: The Role of One University in Place-based Transformational Change, written by Claire Taylor, Nina Ruddle, Ken Perry and Clare Budden, explores one UK university's influence and involvement as a key partner within the 2025 Movement, a movement for change with a collective vision to tackle avoidable health and housing inequalities by 2025 in North Wales, UK. The approach to building 2025 is founded in systems leadership and social movements resulting in transformational change in the way we work, think and deliver across a region as a collective. The innovative role of the university as a key partner has shifted the perceptions of the university in the region and its capacity to act as an instrument of Government, contributing to the political imperative to support communities as part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The chapter outlines the principles behind 2025 and the university's role to date, as illustrated through three case studies: Learning and Leadership; Social Prescribing; and Healthy Homes—Healthy People. The chapter reflects upon the challenges faced and how they have been overcome. Finally, enablers for successful collective working are identified, which have resulted in the university being able to utilize its expertise, energy and education to work in partnership in order to tackle some of the most complex issues facing our communities.

Internationalizing Institutional Accountability for Engaging with Communities: The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, by Mathew Johnson, John Saltmarsh, Georgina Manok and Gene Corbin, explores reciprocal partnerships between IHEs and communities, which provide opportunities for IHEs to fulfill their core mission while at the same time benefiting communities. One model of institutional accountability for this type of partnership is the Elective Carnegie Community Engagement Classification. As a process is underway to internationalize the US-based classification, this chapter engages with a central guiding question: How can we best adapt the CE classification's institutionalizing framework for CE – designed in the context of the United States – in a way that upholds the integrity of engagement practices, adheres to effective strategies for organizational change, and is sensitive to national, cultural, economic, political,