

# CHAPTER 9

## CSR AND EDUCATION: THE GHANAIAN AND AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

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### INTRODUCTION

Issues concerning society are everybody's business. Therefore, individuals, larger or smaller groups, formal or informal entities, public or private firms, governmental or non-governmental organisations who are key stakeholders of society must always aspire to champion societal concerns. Society's welfare should be everybody's business. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) in a broad sense can be viewed as the relationship of organisations with society as a whole, and the need for organisations to align their values with societal expectations (Atuguba & Dowuona-Hammond, 2006). In reality, it is a set of standards by which organisations can impact their environment with the potential of creating sustainable development (Helg, 2007). It is critical that society educates everyone to be responsible. From all societal actors, universities are the ones educating the future elites of a country. What they teach and do not teach may make or break a nation's future and well-being. As noted by Dashwood and Puplambu (2010), there is a greater need for crafting a sustainable, strategic and mutually beneficial

set of responsible actions in embracing the right approaches to CSR. According to them, such actions should emanate from a genuine recognition of, and attention to, economic, traditional, historical, as well as business arguments from the perspectives of the stakeholders and interest groups.

Amaeshi, Adi, Ogbechie, and Amao (2006) contend that CSR is a localised and socially embedded concept and therefore the prevailing ideas, perceptions, issues addressed and modes of practicing CSR are reflections of organisations' responses to their socio-economic environment. There is evidence to suggest that CSR issues differ in nature from one location to the other and across industries. Hence, the perfect implementation of CSR in Ghana and Africa as a whole can be enhanced when academia in partnership with industry initiate, design and teach programmes that are relevant to the needs of industry and are a perfect fit with the African culture.

The conceptual basis of this chapter, therefore, rests on the preposition that higher institutions of learning in Ghana and Africa need to adopt sustainable strategies of embedding CSR into their curricula. The chapter also urges Business and Economic schools to seek out a proactive approach to teaching CSR, as a means through which students can become competitive actors on the social development market and be persons able to offer the result-driven partnerships that businesses are looking for.

In light of the above, business schools in Africa should try to push towards the movement of integrating CSR into core business education that is educating responsible managers with a broad range of stewardship skills in addition to high-level technical competencies, not for the sake of integration but for the sake of meeting the expectations of a dynamic and modern business environment (CSR Magazine, 2005).

When CSR is studied as a course, it explores the challenges and opportunities of current CSR models as well as the next generation of issues that business practitioners will face. New frameworks and concepts will help organisations in society to focus and integrate social responsibility in order to position firms for higher levels of success. It will also provide the practical knowledge and insight needed to improve decision-making, leverage partnership, manage risk and measure performance.

In Africa, CSR seems to be driven by factors that differ from those of Western Europe and hence could be grossly misunderstood. The difference in CSR between countries in Africa and those in the West can be examined by looking at the various drivers for or causes of CSR in developing countries, like those in Africa. Although these drivers are not all unique to developing countries, together they build a distinctive picture of how CSR is conceived, incentivised and practised (Dartey-Baah & Amposah-Tawiah,

2011). The evolution of CSR and the emphasis on sustainability in business enterprises have elevated the desperate need to move from doing business for the sake of profit margins alone to social impact which in turn affects the profit bottom line.

Universities and training institutions need to take the lead in transforming society and take on the difficult role of beginning such changes. This will make them responsible, visible and involved actors within their respective communities. Teaching CSR is one way of tackling the proposed changes in Business and Economics education. CSR has emerged as a promising concept for business engagement in society to address major societal challenges that governments and non-profit sectors have failed to successfully address. This paper is therefore guided by the following objectives:

1. To find ways of generating industries' interest in collaborating with academia to research into ways of improving CSR strategies in Ghana and Africa.
2. To research and better understand how CSR can be embedded in the curriculum of business schools in Ghana.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

The methodology of the study focused on gathering information about opinions of stakeholders concerned with CSR education in Ghana. The population comprises faculty, students and views of respondents in industry. The research sought to seek their opinions on how CSR as discipline could be incorporated into academic curriculum. Purposive sampling method was used to select respondents.

In this regard, selected students were asked to express the thoughts on CSR education under a focus group discussion. This approach was chosen to allow respondents especially students to individually express their views regarding CSR education.

### *Research Design*

Qualitative research approach was used to obtain views from respondents. In-depth and open-ended questions were used. Questions were structured with students contributing their views through focus group discussion. In all

85 business students in their 3rd and 4th year were involved in the focus group discussion with the average of 8 in a group. All the participants had CSR as a core taught subject. For easy analysis, participants were numbered 1–8 and the groups numbered A–H and these codes were used for identifying and matching responses with specific participants. The discussions were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. The data collected was analysed using qualitative analytical methods including interpreting responses, drawing inferences and literally reproducing responses word for word.

In addition to the focus group discussions, eight faculty staff were also interviewed on the subject. A number of business executives were also asked to express their opinions on CSR education in Ghana and Africa and what they thought should constitute the course content of such an education.

Besides, websites of most business schools and universities of English-speaking African countries were also visited. The programmes offered and course outlines, where available, were examined to obtain information on the level of CSR education in these universities. English-speaking African countries were used because the authors cannot translate non-English texts should they include universities from non-English-speaking countries.

#### *Limitation of Approach and Design*

Obtaining detailed opinion on CSR issues was difficult due to lack of clear-cut understanding of CSR issues from respondents. Most respondents did not seem to have an idea of how CSR issues could be added to CSR curricular. Again, stakeholders of CSR like students, faculty and practitioners could not meet on a common platform to discuss CSR-related issue of interest. Nevertheless, the authors believe they have managed to capture through their research, representative reflection of the various stakeholder perspectives relevant to CSR education in Ghana.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

It is universally recognised that CSR has become an indispensable tool in the growth and profitability of businesses throughout the world. Accordingly, corporate managers now have the difficult task of balancing business priorities. With the use of CSR activities in the creation of successful businesses, CSR has become a blistering subject of the western management community after several decades of arguments (Chen & Wang, 2011).

The ultimate goal of being socially responsible is to increase the welfare of humanity; CSR can be defined as corporations assuming rights and obligations in developing values including that of protection, sustainability, acting responsibly and economically with respect to the environment (Gil Estallo, Giner de la Fuente, & Griful-Miquela, 2007). There is no single, universally accepted definition of CSR. According to the definition in the 'Green Paper: Promoting a European framework for Corporate Social Responsibility' of the European commission, CSR is described as a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis. The International Standards Organization (ISO), while considering organisations in general, defines social responsibility as 'a balanced approach for organizations to address economic, social and environmental issues in a way that aims to benefit people, communities and society'.

Different mechanisms of promoting the development of CSR are possible in Ghana and Africa as a whole. Such mechanisms range from teaching CSR in the tertiary institutions as a course on its own and voluntary codes of conduct to international regulations. [The World Business Council for Sustainable Development \(2007\)](#) also defines CSR as the continuing commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce, their families and the local community, and the society at large. [Diversity Australia \(2007a\)](#) suggests that CSR strategies include community projects, employee volunteering, strategic giving, matched giving, community-based partnerships and corporate foundation giving.

CSR is also about the purpose of companies; what companies individually and collectively contribute to life in a community, a country and even life on earth. CSR is closely associated with the idea of 'sustainability'. It is about the interdependence between a company and its economic, social and ecological environment. It is about how that interdependency can be managed for the better performance of a company and society as a whole. The concept of CSR is now widely recognised as a way of doing business. It is integral to all mainstream business decision-making. Those companies which have adopted CSR principles and practices no longer regard them as an optional bolt-on but have built them into all aspects of the business. Leading CSR professionals in companies no longer 'do CSR' for the company but, working with everyone from the Main Board downwards, act as advisors on how CSR principles can be applied at every stage of the business and help to monitor the company's CSR performance.

Matten and Moon (2004) also identified that the term corporate social responsibility is interpreted in a number of ways; in fact, they proposed that CSR is used synonymously with terms such as Business Ethics, Corporate Citizenship, Sustainability, Corporate Environmental Management, Business and Society, Business and Globalisation, Stakeholder Management and Governance. CSR is one of the important principles on which modern business is built.

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development in its publication 'Making Good Business Sense' by Lord Holme and Richard Watts used the following definition. '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'. The same report gave some evidence of the different perceptions of what this should mean from a number of different societies across the world. Traditionally in the United States, CSR has been defined much more in terms of a philanthropic model. Companies make profits, unhindered except by fulfilling their duty to pay taxes. Then they donate a certain share of the profits to charitable causes. It is seen as tainting the act for the company to receive any benefit from the giving.

The definition of CSR used by Business for Social Responsibility is: 'Operating a business in a manner that meets or exceeds the ethical, legal, commercial and public expectations that society has of business'. On the other hand, the European Commission hedges its bets with two definitions wrapped into one: 'A concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment. A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interactions with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis'. Both of these definitions broadly focus on the impact of how one manages the core businesses of a firm.

Some go further than others in prescribing how far companies go beyond managing their own impact into the terrain of acting specifically outside of that focus to make a contribution to the achievement of broader societal goals. It is a key difference, when many business leaders feel that their companies are ill-equipped to pursue broader societal goals, and activists argue that companies have no democratic legitimacy to take such roles. That particular debate will continue. The practice of CSR is much debated and criticised. Proponents argue that there is a strong business case for CSR, in that corporations benefit in multiple ways by operating with a perspective broader and longer than their own immediate, short-term profits.

Critics, however, argue that CSR distracts from the fundamental economic role of businesses; others believe it is nothing more than superficial window-dressing; yet others argue that it is an attempt to pre-empt the role of governments as a watchdog over powerful multinational corporations. CSR has been redefined throughout the years. However, it essentially is titled to aid to an organisation's mission as well as a guide to what the company stands for and will uphold to its consumers and other stakeholders.

### *Origin of CSR*

CSR has been around for over 50 years now. Rather more pertinently, CSR has been there ever since commerce began (Asongu, 2007). While some authors do believe that CSR is a relatively new concept, CSR is perhaps as old as business itself and in some societies one cannot do without being socially responsible (Clement-Jones, 2005). Though traditions of corporate philanthropy date back to the Victorian Era where Quaker companies like Cadbury's, Rowntrees and Hershey's always worked towards improving their employees' standard of living along with developing the communities they lived. It is seen that CSR was carried out in a paternalistic form where it was initiated by the owners of the firms, while if we see today CSR is practised by corporations that are owned by the shareholders and run by employed managers. The term 'CSR' came into common use in the early 1970s, after many multinational corporations were formed, although it was seldom abbreviated. The term stakeholder, meaning those on whom an organisation's activities have an impact, was used to describe corporate owners beyond shareholders as a result of an influential book by R. Edward Freeman, *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, in 1984. Proponents argue that corporations make more long-term profits by operating with a perspective, while critics argue that CSR distracts from the economic role of businesses. Others argue that CSR is merely window-dressing, or an attempt to pre-empt the role of governments as a watchdog over powerful multinational corporations. CSR is titled to aid an organisation's mission as well as a guide to what the company stands for and will uphold to its consumers. Development business ethics is one of the forms of applied ethics that examines ethical principles and moral or ethical problems that can arise in a business environment. Though CSR is not a new phenomenon, it has been under much retrospection over the last decade. Much has been talked about and written about CSR.

### *Importance of CSR*

There has been extensive research on CSR and all aspects and roles from which the organisations could benefit. Many great scholars and researchers have quoted CSR to be one of the firm's strategies to derive benefit from its customers, ultimately resulting into the gains or profits for the companies. In the opinion of [Porter and Kramer \(2002\)](#), CSR and related philanthropy are a major source of deriving competitive advantage from the consumers and finally help the firm's bottom line. Most of the researchers have felt that this link could be helpful for the companies to make a positive impact on the customers, employees and suppliers to a certain extent. As per the study conducted by [Greening and Turban \(2000\)](#), CSR could also help the companies to attract better and high-quality talent as their future employees.

According to [Peter Navarro \(1998\)](#), businesses indulge into CSR as a part of their brand building exercise to increase its visibility in the eyes of the investors and other stakeholders, to appeal to a wider set of customers, to spread good will of their brand name in the market, etc. As the times have changed where all the stakeholders demand a greater amount of transparency and visibility in the system, most of the corporate have started becoming open about the CSR activities that they indulge in and advertise them too. This has helped the firms in gaining public attention and subsequently gains. The firm is undoubtedly benefited in one way or the other; however, this is not the focus and the main reason why they should indulge in CSR. Firms should have strong faith in the act of doing well, not just for themselves and their immediate intermediaries but all the stakeholders of the firm. Evaluators should also consider the good that these firms are doing towards society and not just focus on the profits incurred by the firms.

Over the years all the organisations have realised the necessity of CSR being an integral part of their corporate philosophy. Many studies have supported and emphasised the role of CSR benefiting the company though its focus may just be to help the society at large. The benefits of CSR include an enhanced brand, increased positive associations from consumers and employee loyalty ([Diversity Australia, 2007b](#)). Main reasons for implementing CSR are good reputation of a company and its products, increased motivation and productivity of workers and understanding the society in which the company operates as well as contributions to sustainable development among others.



## THE NATURE OF CSR IN AFRICA

According to Visser (2007), CSR can be understood to represent the formal and informal ways in which business makes a contribution to improving the governance, and social, ethical, labour and environmental conditions of the developing countries in which they operate, while remaining sensitive to prevailing religious, historical and cultural contexts. In Visser's study of CSR in African countries, the author noted the following characteristics:

- 'CSR tends to be less formalised or institutionalised in terms of the CSR benchmarks commonly used in developing countries, that is CSR rarely has codes, standards, management systems and reports.
- Where formal CSR is practised, this is usually by large, high profile national and multinational companies, especially those with recognised international brands or those aspiring to global status.
- Formal CSR codes, standards and guidelines that are most applicable to developing countries tend to be issue specific.
- In developing countries, CSR is most commonly associated with philanthropy or charity, that is through corporate social investment in education, health, sports, development, the environment and other community services.
- Making an economic contribution is often seen as the most important and effective way for business to make a social impact.
- Business often finds itself engaged in the provision of social services that would be seen as government's responsibility in developed countries, for example investment in infrastructure, schools, hospitals and housing.
- The issues being prioritised under the CSR banner in Africa are different from most developed countries. For example, tackling HIV/AIDS, improving working conditions, provision of basic services, supply chain integrity and poverty alleviation.
- Schmidheiny (2006) noted that social issues are generally given more political, economic and media emphasis in developing countries than environmental, ethical or stakeholder issues.
- The spirit and practice of CSR is often strongly resonant with traditional communitarian values and religious concepts in developing countries, for example African humanism (Ubuntu) in South Africa' (cited in Dartey-Baah & Amposah-Tawiah, 2011, pp. 129–130).

Dartey-Baah and Amposah-Tawiah (2011) proposed that the difference in CSR between countries in Africa and those in the west can be analysed

within the context of seven key drivers of CSR in Africa, namely cultural tradition, political reforms, socio-economic priorities, governance gaps, market access, international standards and stakeholder activism. The authors argue that western theories are limited in their understanding of the relevance and practice of CSR in Africa. Hence, the specific cultural, socio-economic, and other contexts of African countries and the needs of their respective communities must be taken into account when formulating and implementing CSR programmes.

Klins, Van Niekerk, and Smit (2010) also observe that Africa's cultural context influences attitudes towards CSR. The very communal culture is manifested in the following African indigenous concepts like 'Harambee', 'Tsekada', 'Ubuntu', 'Zekat' and 'Nnoboa', etc.

- *Harambee* embodies and reflects the strong ancient value of mutual assistance, joint effort, social responsibility and community self-reliance. It is guided by the principle of collective good rather than individual gain (Winston & Ryan, 2008).
- *Tsekada* is about behaving as a "righteous person", fulfilling obligations to society (Ararat, 2008).
- *Ubuntu* in Southern Africa reflects an interdependent, communal, harmonious, relationship-aware and respectful community culture – meaning each person can only be fully functioning through other people (Nussbaum, 2003).
- *Zekat* (or *Zakat*) can be translated as charity or alms to the poor' (Klin et al., 2010, p. 3).

In Ghana, similar cultural values that express mutual assistance and a sense of community include the concept of 'Nnoboa', a practice whereby members of a community especially farmers join forces to help each other in solving each others' problems in return for similar favours in time of need.

Klin et al. (2010) pointed out that CSR in Africa is most often associated with medium to large companies, and particularly with multinationals or large foreign investors. Given the relative wealth of these companies in comparison to the poverty of the countries and societies in which they are operating, CSR can be a way to counteract negative perceptions of business, as well as a way to make a genuine difference to social and environmental challenges. Thus, CSR activities in Africa aspire to resolve challenges faced by communities, which governments cannot fully address.

By contrast, the environment, workplace issues, product quality and health and safety, which form the focus of CSR in western countries, get

much lower priority in Africa. As a result, CSR is seldom related to the companies' core business, but rather tends to be 'positive payback' philanthropy, with public relations benefits. Consequently, CSR activities and projects in Africa are mainly focused on creating a positive corporate image, as well as addressing weak public sector service delivery in the areas of healthcare (particularly HIV/AIDS), education or labour skills development and the prevention of child labour. This supports *Ofori's (2007)* assertion that managers and executives in Ghana and Africa engage in CSR activities primarily to enhance their corporate image among customers and also for the well-being of the society.

In oil-producing and mining countries of Africa, for example South Africa, Nigeria and now Ghana, CSR is a particularly prominent theme among mining, oil and gas companies due to their significant social and environmental impacts (*Hamann & Kapelus, 2004*). However, due to increasing competition and the need to find new ways of attracting and retaining customers, telecommunications companies have also joined the CSR bandwagon in various African countries including Ghana. Nonetheless, no comprehensive policy framework to set the parameters of CSR activities in Ghana exists. Furthermore, there is no institutional body regulating corporate activities on CSR and as such reporting on CSR is not consistently done among corporate bodies (*Ofori, 2007*).

Nevertheless, CSR in Ghana is taking a new dimension with the First Ever CSR Foundation Conference held in Ghana on 30 November 2011 and the subsequent launching of the new Ghana CSR Diary & Awards. Endorsed by the Association of Ghana Industries and the Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ghana CSR Diary & Awards is a combination of a special CSR Magazine and a non-competitive CSR award ceremony that celebrates and awards organisations engaged in CSR activities aimed at providing essential assistance to communities in a variety of developmental areas, for example education, health, infrastructure. The magazine also aims at exposing irresponsible and unethical business activities of organisations found culpable, helping to educate the general public on CSR matters as well as 'recognise and motivate institutions that are executing socially impacting activities and reward them accordingly' (<http://ghanacsrdiary.com>).

Clearly, there is now much awareness of the important role the CSR activities can play as the government pursues its development agenda and organisations also strive to be associated with worthwhile contribution that they make to society (*Dartey-Baah & Amposah Tawiah, 2011*).

## THE PILLARS AND PRINCIPLES OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

According to [Karima, Oshima, and Yamamoto \(2006\)](#), the main pillars of CSR are thought to be based on three key factors referred to as the 'Triple Bottom Lines of CSR', namely economy, society and environment. Without going into the debate about the definition and contents of the triple bottom lines, the authors state that the guidelines contained in a 2001 'Green Paper' presented by the European Commission 'has been accepted as the authorized guideline of what companies should do to meet their social responsibility' (p. 328). The requirements outlined in the Green Paper are listed in Table 1.

According to [Crowther and Aras \(2010\)](#) there are three main principles of CSR, namely *Sustainability, Accounting and Transparency*. As the word suggests, sustainability is all about the decisions taken at present in a company and its impact on the future. Sustainable development is both possible and desirable by most companies. So, firms should make a conscious effort to invest in technology and in development towards the society.

There is a great emphasis on the ethical aspects of the company and this in turn demands the company to be accountable to its internal customers, that is employees, its external customers and the stakeholders. Businesses attempt to maximise profits as their first and foremost goal; however, nowadays companies cannot just stop at that. They have to focus on the ethical and the social factors also equally and ensure that they maintain transparency in their accounting systems and the policies that they follow in the companies. Companies need to follow business ethics and need to maintain a certain standard, as the companies who don't follow ethics and don't maintain honesty would be far away from achieving their goal and keeping their stakeholders satisfied. According to [Carroll \(1999\)](#), there are four main imperatives that the companies need to pursue while practicing the CSR, namely maintaining the legal, economic, ethical and philanthropic aspects that are expected by the customers and stakeholders.

Organisations have developed a variety of strategies for dealing with this intersection of social needs, the natural environment and corresponding business imperatives. Organisations can also be considered on a developmental continuum with respect to how deeply and how well they are integrating social responsibility approaches into both strategy and daily operations worldwide. At one end of the continuum are organisations that

**Table 1.** Requirements for CSR Proposed in Green Paper.

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*Economy*

1. Close cooperation with stakeholders
2. Compliance with national and international legislations
3. Providing superior products and services
4. Promoting entrepreneurial initiatives

*Society*

1. Human resource management
  - Better information throughout the company and profit-sharing and share ownership schemes
  - Lifelong learning and empowerment of employees
  - Better balance between work, family and leisure
  - Equal pay and career prospects for women
  - Consideration of employability and job security
  - Reducing unemployment, raising employment rate and fighting against social exclusion
2. Health and safety at work
3. Concerns with local communities
  - Providing jobs, wages and benefits, and tax revenues
  - Provision of additional vocational training places
  - Donations to charitable activities
  - Partnerships with communities, sponsoring of local sports and cultural events
4. Concerns with human rights
  - Extermination of child, forced and prison labours in international operations and global chain suppliers
  - Consideration of wages, working hours and other social conditions

*Environment*

1. Internal management of environmental impacts and national resources
    - Reducing the consumption of resources
    - Reducing polluting emissions and waste
    - Consideration of products' impacts throughout their life cycle
  2. Concerns of local communities
    - Concerns for local physical environment
    - Environmental education for community
    - Assisting environmental charities
  3. Global environmental concerns
    - Protecting natural resource base of economic development
    - Poverty eradication
    - Financial and technical assistance for sustainable development
    - Support for NGO's advocacy role for sustainable development
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*Source:* Requirements for CSR proposed in the report 'Ten Years after Rio: Preparing for the World Summit on Sustainable Development' (cited in Karima et al., 2006).

do not acknowledge any responsibility to the society and the environment. And on the other end of the continuum are those organisations that view their operations as having a significant impact as well as reliance on society at the economic, social and ecological levels, thus resulting in a sense of responsibility beyond the traditional boundaries of the organisation.

## CSR AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

A report from the [EC forum on CSR \(2004\)](#) refers to the important role of universities in building the necessary capacity for the relevant CSR strategies, resulting in graduates as future managers and employees who have sufficient cognition of a good attitude and improved capacities to coherently approach CSR (cited in [Karima et al., 2006](#)). The report, in addition, requires universities to play a role in the improvement of information on CSR for consumers, employees and other stakeholders. There is therefore a requirement for universities to contribute to the promotion of CSR resulting in graduates who have sufficient cognition of and a good attitude towards CSR. Studying the CSR education at the University of Tokyo, the authors argue that universities that support and promote the ideals of CSR and score high in their compliance with such ideals are more likely to include CSR programmes in their curriculum and proposed the future establishment of university-wide education programmes based on the concept of CSR and the value of sustainability at all universities.

Karima et al. noted that according to Triple Bottom Line, the economy can be classified into education and research, because the principal function of universities can be found in academic activity, while that of companies can be found in business or economic activity. Thus the Triple Bottom Lines of university CSR are defined as (1) Research and education, (2) Society and (3) Environment. Hence, in addition to instruction of the concept and significance of CSR, issues associated with social ethics and morality of education and research, compliance towards associated laws, human resource management, human rights, safety and health and various concerns regarding environmental safety and preservation must be covered by special educational programmes at universities.

[Reinhard, Osburg, and Townsend \(2010\)](#) proposed a model of inclusion of CSR into the academic curriculum of cooperative education. The model focused on the teaching and most importantly students' research of CSR-related topics and their operation in specific business organisations. Their

study shows that the student groups working on the research projects significantly raised their interest and knowledge CSR and were able to come up with scientifically defensible results. There is now even more impetus than before to expand the current research focus on the dynamics of how CSR operates in the marketplace.

The ethical and moral concerns in educational research at universities are at present important and profound issues. In 2004, UNESCO's European Centre for Higher Education held the International Conference on Ethical and Moral Dimensions for Higher Education and Science, which adopted the Bucharest Declaration. This declaration provides the framework for problems associated with the ethical and moral dimensions at universities including the following:

1. Universities cannot be regarded simply as 'factories' producing scientific and technological experts within a global knowledge economy. Universities must have key intellectual and cultural responsibilities in a knowledge-based society.
2. The values and ethical standards that universities espouse will not only have a crucial influence over the academic, cultural and political development of their academics, students and staff, but also help shape the moral contours of society at large, promoting the highest possible ethical standards.
3. High ethical standards should be respected and put into effect not only at a rhetorical level, but also in every aspect of the work of institutions including their internal governance and management, engagement with external stakeholders as well as their teaching and research programmes (cited in [Karima et al., 2006](#)).

Thus, the major points of the Bucharest Declaration support the promotion of CSR education and research in all universities.

[Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh, and Daraei \(2011\)](#) observe that universities, as the centres of knowledge generation and sharing, play a very important role in solving world's problems by ensuring a sustainable tomorrow. However, it is questionable whether universities are concerned about the teaching and learning of CSR in their institutions. Their study shows that all the top 10 leading universities of the world studied are, in some way or another, engaged in social responsibility and sustainability issues and announce it in their website content. However, many studies reveal that the integration of CSR education into the academic curriculum that promotes the teaching and learning of CSR in most universities is severely limited.

Academia has an important contribution to make in examining the complexities of corporate citizenship in Africa, in highlighting the meta-narratives and ideological tensions that underscore much of the debate, and in critically evaluating the progress by companies in their pursuit of social, economic, environmental and ethical goals. There is a clear support for the inclusion of CSR as part of the curricula within both academic and business circles.

## FINDINGS

Survey of universities' websites of four African countries, namely Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya, revealed that universities in South Africa top the list with CSR-related degrees and courses. This notwithstanding, it is only the University of Cape Town (UCT) that offers a comprehensive core module on corporate citizenship. Other universities provide either core modules on business ethics or on business in society or on HIV/AIDS policy and strategy (Visser & Tolhurst, 2010). It is also worth noting that CSR-related short courses are offered in some selected schools. For example, UNISA Centre for Corporate Citizenship offers two six-month courses in corporate citizenship and corporate governance. Again, Corporate Citizenship is offered by the Sustainability Institute at the University of Stellenbosch and the Leadership Centre, University of KwaZulu-Natal while Corporate Governance is being offered by the Institute of Directors. In addition, the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business offers courses in CSR, business ethics and black economic empowerment.

In Ghana, the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS) offers CSR as a core module for all undergraduate business students. CSR has also been integrated into some courses like Business Policy and Strategic Management. The UGBS has recently established the Centre for Corporate Responsibility – a CSR Centre of Excellence to develop courses/modules for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Courses and training materials emanating from the centre are intended to enhance private and public stakeholder proactive engagement in CSR. In addition, the Central Business School (CBS) being the largest business school in Ghana in terms of student population offers CSR as a core course for its business students pursuing degrees in Marketing, Human Resource Management and Management Studies. The students pursuing Management Studies programme also take a course in social responsibility and professional ethics in their final year. Also, the Institute of Professional Studies (IPS) recently



introduced CSR as a core course for its undergraduate students, while the undergraduate students of Methodist University College start a course in CSR beginning 2012–2013 academic year.

Although, most of the universities in Nigeria do not offer a comprehensive module on CSR, they integrate CSR into some courses such as business ethics and health, safety, and environmental management. For example, Lagos Business School, Redeemers University, Adamawa State University and Ambrose Alli University offer courses on business ethics and health, safety and environment management. This strengthens the position of [Nejati et al. \(2011\)](#) that environmental responsibility is a requirement for the survival and prosperity of human beings which is an important aspect of social responsibility. This is because environmental issues are closely linked to human rights, community involvement and development, and other social responsibility core subjects.

Similarly, there is no comprehensive CSR module offered by Kenyan Business Schools. However, CSR is integrated into some courses. For example Kimathi University College of Technology offer courses on Development Studies and Ethics, Business Policy and Strategic Management. Besides, University of Nairobi also offer a course in Strategic Management for students pursuing degrees in Business Administration.

For the focus group discussions, the following questions were used as a guide to elicit students' opinion and views about CSR teaching and learning at the Central Business School of the Central University College in Ghana.

1. What do think of CSR as it is being taught now at Central University College?
2. Do you think CSR should have a department of its own?
3. Do you think students should have the option of specialising in CSR as they do for Banking and Finance, Accounting, Marketing and Human Resource Management?
4. How can CSR be embedded into the university curriculum?
5. Give your thoughts on CSR and education in Ghana.

The focus group discussions reveal that most of the participants agree that CSR education is important and that universities should endeavour to incorporate CSR into the educational curriculum either as a core course or a minor subject to be studied under various core courses. As one participant pointed out, teaching CSR is 'a good foundation for students as it is preparing us for the corporate world. It will help students know their duties and responsibilities to the society' (Participant no. 2 from Focus Group F). Yet, some argue that although teaching CSR is important in universities, the

current mode of delivery, that is classroom lecture method is not very effective in that it does not teach students how to help their communities and society in a more practical way. As such, 'CSR should be taught but in a more practical sense in the form of attachments, community services among others' (Participant no. 7 from Focus Group D).

Opinion was divided on the issue of establishing a whole department of CSR and offering CSR as a major comparable to other majors like Marketing, Finance, HRM, etc. While some participants thought that CSR should be treated as a full discipline and a separate department created for it, others believe CSR should rather be incorporated into the general curriculum of all courses. A participant from group A sums up opinion of the group saying: 'We do not think it is really necessary treating CSR as a main course on CUC campus [Rather] it should be incorporated in all departments so all students will have basic ideas about it' (Participant no. 4 from Focus Group A).

Yet the consensus in group C was that: 'Creating a department for CSR in CUC will be a perfect idea, since every responsible company has a department for CSR dealing with how to take responsibility of its society' (Participant no. 3 from Focus Group C). The idea here is that creating a department for CSR and allowing students to specialise in CSR will give students the opportunity to develop expertise in the field and be easily absorbed by the increasing number of organisations focusing on CSR. As one participant from group G stated: 'Students specialising in CSR is a good idea, since some companies have department for CSR, it will be an opportunity for those specializing in it to get a job' (Participant no. 1 from Group G).

Relating to the issue of how CSR can be integrated into the university curriculum, participants expressed varied and diverse opinion ranging from CSR being part of the foundation course for all first-year university students, a core subject for all courses, a minor subject for all students, and an elective to CSR being a major specialism for students who wish to major in field. As one participant observed, 'CSR being taught as a course is a nice idea and if it is taught and done well will help raise the image and reputation of the school' (Participant no. 8 from Focus Group H).

On students' general opinion of CSR education in Ghana, most of the participants agree that CSR education is woefully inadequate and must be 'improved', 'intensified' and 'introduced into the Ghana Education Curriculum'.

The above findings clearly support the assertion of Visser and Christiaan (2005) that academic institutions and researchers focusing specifically on

corporate citizenship in Africa remain few and under-developed. Karima et al. (2006) also note that although education is one of the fundamental and essential missions of universities, it is 'unclear how to establish programs for education on social responsibilities' (2006, p. 3).

The present study therefore proposes a model of CSR education that emphasises a holistic approach to CSR instruction at universities; an approach that embeds and integrates CSR education into the entire university curriculum.

## **THE CSR EDUCATION PARADIGM**

The CSR education paradigm presented below proposes that for graduates to acquire the knowledge and understanding of CSR and be able to apply them effectively when they become employees and managers in various organisations, they ought to be exposed to CSR concepts and applications at three separate but continuous stages of their university education. Instruction in CSR at university should begin with Foundation courses through to theoretical application and to practical application in the form of internship and attachments. The model postulates that CSR education should not simply be a onetime affair where CSR is treated as a minor footnote, a single topic taught in a 2 to 3-hour lecture within a major course. Rather, it should be well integrated into the entire curriculum of business education from the first year through to the final year culminating in internships where students gain knowledge of the practical application of CSR in the workplace (Fig. 1).

### *Foundation Courses in CSR*

The foundation courses in CSR should afford students the opportunity to learn the three main core subjects underlying liberal education: Ethics, Philosophy and Theology. Ethics provides the basis of CSR and then students are exposed to two other subjects that unite ethical concepts with their personal beliefs of their humanity through Theology and Philosophy studies. Ethics concerns values of humanity, philosophy deals with the nature of humanity, and theology concerns studying the foundations of one's faith.

Powers and Vogel (1980) argue that teaching business ethics is not solely about helping managers to resolve a specific moral dilemma, but also to

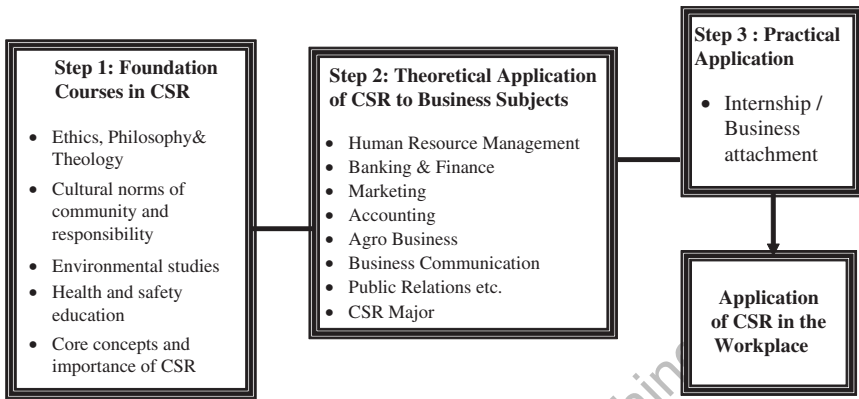


Fig. 1. The CSR Education Paradigm.

develop competencies or capacities for, moral judgement in business contexts, the ability to integrate broader social issues with the managerial role and to implement this concern in a holistic fashion. According to Gardiner and Lacy (2005) interest in areas such as Social and Environmental responsibility, and by default business ethics, has been triggered by successive corporate scandals combined with external pressure from NGOs, policy-makers, consumers and the media. However, whilst the business world considers the benefits of CSR and business ethics specialist versus mainstream generalists, there is a parallel and increasing need for business schools to address the issue as part of the curriculum. With the internationalisation of business, there is an ever-increasing need for a greater and shared understanding of ethical principles and their application.

Culture is the set of values, beliefs, behaviours, customs and attitudes that helps the members of a community to understand what it stands for, how to behave, and what is considered acceptable and important. According to Hofstede (1997) culture is the collective programming of mind that distinguishes the members of one community from the other. Culture should therefore be promoted to ensure people's motivation towards achieving the common good. Klins et al. (2010) observe that Africa's cultural context is an important factor in defining CSR on the continent. The very communal culture manifested in African indigenous concepts like 'Harambee', 'Tsekada', 'Ubuntu', 'Zekat' and 'Nnoboa' should be taught and explained to business students to act as the basis for contextualising CSR. Seeing CSR as part of the traditional culture will motivate graduates

to promote the initiation and implementation of community-related CSR activities that meet real needs of the communities served by the organisations they work for.

Environmental studies provide the foundation of CSR in the understanding of how to manage physical resources of the organisation and the community it resides in 'so that they are conserved for the future' (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011), as well as prevent harmful consequences for relevant stakeholders. With respect to CSR education associated with environmental concerns, Karima et al. (2006) argue that the main goal of environmental education is to change behaviour through increasing environmental knowledge and the number of positive effects. In the last three decades, throughout the world, extensive and well-considered measures have been taken to develop high-integrity environmental education programmes. Despite this, the results of several studies, especially those conducted on developing countries, show that these environmental education programmes have not necessarily been successful. Because environmental education will be an important dimension of social responsibility education, the authors postulate that efforts should be made to develop superior educational programmes to deal with environmental concerns at universities. Karima et al. observe that while attention is paid to the role of environmental education in elementary and secondary school curriculum, few studies have focused on the role of universities as a means of increasing people's environmental knowledge.

Nejati et al. (2011) stated that environmental responsibility is a precondition for the survival and prosperity of human beings. It is therefore an important aspect of social responsibility. Environmental issues are closely linked to human rights, community involvement and development, and other social responsibility core subjects (ISO/DIS 26000, 2009). Consequently, CSR education should necessarily incorporate elements of environmental education.

Following from environmental education in CSR is health and safety education. Health and safety programmes are concerned with protecting employees and other people affected by an organisation's activities, products and services against hazards. Given the potential health hazards emanating from activities of most organisations, including water, air and land pollution, toxic emissions, and potential accidents at the work place with their accompanying health implications for employees, communities and other stakeholders, it is imperative that business students are educated on the health and safety issues regarding organisational life. Such an education will equip graduates with sufficient and adequate knowledge on

how to initiate and/or implement relevant policies and programmes to ensure the full protection of the health and safety of employees and their local communities.

The core of CSR education at the foundation stage should therefore centre on the concepts, theories, principles and importance of CSR. The requirements proposed in the [EC Green Paper \(2001\)](#) could form the basic tenets around which core CSR curriculum could be developed.

### *Theoretical Studies*

In theoretical application, students undertake subjects or units pertaining to their major area of study, for example Marketing, Human Resource Management, Accounting and Public Relations, and apply CSR concepts to that area of study. It is regrettable that in most African universities and business schools CSR instruction is relegated to optional ethics classes, and volunteer and philanthropic extracurricular activities or electives that are not linked to core business strategy. There is a clear message that CSR is a tangential issue in postgraduate curricula at best. That is, business leaders are good people, but they have been educated to think of the economic well-being of their companies as being at odds with, or irrelevant to, the environmental and social health of the planet. Business schools encourage their students to comply with environmental, labour and human rights regulations but seldom suggest that there are significant benefits to be gained from going further. Their maxim is that 'the business of business is business' – governments or philanthropic organisations should worry about ecological and social issues. They see CSR and profits in terms of 'either/or' instead of 'both/and'.

However, given the current global stature of CSR and the increasing customer and community awareness of the ethical obligations of businesses, it is imperative that business students are well versed in the nature, principles, theories and models of CSR so that they are capable of making decisions based on CSR tenets, and effectively implementing them to ensure the sustainability of the business, society and the environment. As part of their studies, students should be encouraged to research CSR-related topics in their respective discipline and their operation in specific business organisations. Lecturers can also use actual cases of organisations' ethical conduct as case studies and simulations to enable students apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, analyse real problems as well as develop the skills of logical thinking and judgement. By so doing, university

graduates will be able to use persuasive arguments to influence employers, employees and shareholders to initiate and implement effective CSR programmes that meet the needs of all stakeholders.

Besides, studying chosen majors and exploring CSR's application in these disciplines will equip business students with the analytical and conceptual tools necessary for developing models and strategies for tackling the economic, social, ethical and environmental obligations of firms. Apart from the traditional business courses, students desiring to specialise in CSR should have the opportunity to study CSR as their major.

### *Practical Application*

In practical application, students apply their CSR values and theoretical understandings in a real-life context. It is proposed in this chapter that business internships are an ideal mode through which CSR concepts can be studied and analysed in real life. This practical application step gives students an opportunity to see CSR concepts in action and to test the challenge of implementing CSR concepts in an organisational context.

Internship helps students to combine academic study with on-the-job experience. Armed with theoretical understanding of the principles and importance of CSR, students can assess the ethical stance on specific organisations as well as acquire specific skills that are needed to pursue their professional goals and aspirations. Internship students with CSR education can also point out ethical lapses in their organisations and suggest ways of rectifying them.

Some interns also find permanent, paid employment with the companies in which they interned, giving the new employees the opportunity to affect and influence fellow employees in their convictions about businesses' responsibility towards the sustainability of the communities they operate in, their employees, other stakeholders and of course the business itself. It is expected that graduates with CSR education will be in a better position to support, promote, initiate and implement viable CSR programmes in their work environments as well as influence both their superiors and subordinates to promote ethical and responsible business values.

In this paradigm, it is argued that for university education to make effective contribution to graduates' awareness of CSR and commitment to promoting and supporting the implementation of such initiatives in their respective organisations once they have obtained employment, the university curriculum should focus on the broad learning outcomes and

be used as guidelines to develop learning programmes for CSR that are focused on sustainability of business, social and physical environment. The development and teaching of CSR should therefore be specified in all stages of the university curriculum from the first year to the final year culminating in internship that combines theoretical knowledge with practical application.

## **SUMMARY OF CSR APPLICATION TO CORE BUSINESS MODULES**

Integrating CSR instruction into the core business modules offered in universities will require an understanding of CSR application to various business subjects. The following areas of application are worthy of note.

### *Strategic Management*

It implicitly covers most CSR issues. In particular, it should include the increasing need for companies to analyse the evolving social and ecological environment of their operations and to build into their strategic thinking their involvement in national and international public policy issues concerning the environment and human rights. Companies increasingly find themselves in de facto governance positions over such issues, and how they respond and/or actively engage is a key strategic decision.

### *Marketing*

Marketing courses tend to focus almost exclusively on customers. What risks does a company face if its marketers ignore the social impact of global brands, advertising and potentially creating unsustainable demand? How might a company's environmental and social impact affect customer perceptions?

### *Human Resource Management*

HRM is all about people. Companies are run by people. People have consciences, self-esteem, peer groups, family and friendship pressures. Company leadership needs to understand and work with these trends to



attract and retain the best talent. Here, the welfare of employees, fair wages, equality of treatment, health and safety issues, good working conditions and flexible work schedules that afford employees a good work–life balance are key issues to be covered. Managers need to develop methodical decision-making processes when facing ethical dilemmas, so that they can justify their decisions to everyone concerned, including to themselves, as opposed to making quick judgements and justifying them afterwards.

#### *Accounting and Financial Management*

Students need to understand the relationship between financial and non-financial management issues. A key issue is how to balance traditional approaches to return on capital employed and discounted cash flow with the increasing need to take account of unpaid for and unmeasured social and environmental capital and value flows and long-term sustainability. Companies need to be accountable to all their stakeholders, and accounting courses need to cover ways in which this might be managed and how companies might be persuaded to do it better.

#### *Economics*

Courses on economics touch on every aspect of the purpose and contribution of business. Economics is the study of how scarce resources can be used most efficiently to provide for our needs and wants. As more and more of the world's resources, including water and the air we breathe, become scarce and basic needs are not adequately provided for, the environmental and social aspects of economic decision-making will affect firms increasingly. Issues of sustainability and globalisation are central to economics and CSR.

#### *Operations Management*

This is often very technical and short-term focussed, but it is the essence of a company's delivery of value. Core to the CSR thinking is how to make the vision of a sustainable future sufficiently tangible to ensure the involvement of those who have the technical expertise to make it happen. This includes important environment, health and well-being issues.

### *Project Management*

This should include stakeholder analysis and engagement, environmental and social pre-investment and ongoing risk analysis and management techniques. These are increasingly important in project management, especially in areas of weak governance.

### *Supply Chain Management*

It provides the core context for examining a company's degree of influence over its whole value chain and its legal and moral complicity in the environmental and social issues arising at any point in the chain, for example sustainable development and child labour.

### *Organisational Behaviour*

This provides an ideal opportunity to relate student's personal values to the purpose of their work/life, the organisations they will lead and manage in the future and the extent to which they will embrace CSR business strategies.

### *Business Law*

While hard law may restrict companies' legal responsibilities primarily to serving shareholder interests, students should also be aware of evolving soft law relating to the interests of other stakeholders and public expectations arising from it. Students need to explore the issues of complicity, sphere of influence and the precautionary principle.

## **THE CSR CURRICULUM**

There is no widely recognised CSR curriculum but the following comprise the main themes that most would probably agree should be included:

- *Mission, values, reputation, brand image*

What is the purpose of a company? Why it needs to be more than just maximisation of medium-term shareholder value. What are the issues of

motivation. What does a company stand for? The business and moral value of a good reputation.

- *Ethical/responsible decision-making*

An ethical approach to doing business – doing the right thing. Ethical reasoning principles, for example rights theory, cultural relativism, gender and other forms of discrimination, etc.

- *Value chain, legal and moral complicity, sphere of influence*

What is the extent of a company's responsibility? What is its effective sphere of influence? What is its responsibility over both sourcing issues and product use and misuse?

- *Stakeholder management (value added and reduced)*

Companies both create and destroy value. Some of the value created and much of the value destroyed is often external to the company and not part of traditional accounting processes.

- *Environment, health and well-being*

Environment is now the dominant sustainability issue. What does corporate environmentalism mean in practice? There are well-established business principles and practices for health and safety but they are often neglected.

- *Social impact, labour issues, human rights*

Labour issues have long been part of management education but they are increasingly seen in the wider context of human rights and the impact companies have on local communities and society in general. What is a company's impact on and responsibility for poverty alleviation, non-discrimination, freedom from slavery, torture, etc.?

- *National and international public policy engagement*

This is the ultimate stage of CSR engagement by a company. A company's approach to CSR tends to start with philanthropy, and then defensive reputation protection, followed by a more offensive approach aimed at greater public recognition. Increasingly, large companies are thrust into a fourth stage of acting as a development agent, ameliorating government failure. This has led some leading companies to recognise their role in, and seek to manage more proactively, their engagement with public policy issues.

### *Partnering with Stakeholders*

CSR is strictly embedded with a multitude of business actors. With the call for sustainability and the new role of business in society (Blowfield & Googins, 2006), and with increased expectations and new rules and tactics (Burke, 2005), leadership is bound to come into contact – and conflict – with key stakeholders in the arena of responsible business, global versus regional and local needs, and different national cultures. Corporations need to engage with stakeholders to develop valuable CSR-related actions. Stakeholders that face challenges and threats are more likely to succeed when a long-term vision is embraced.

### *Organisational Challenges and Limitations*

Companies face challenges and limitations as they implement CSR. These usually relate either to political issues or to organisational-level concerns and are often embedded in culture. In the new age of CSR, the needs of the stakeholders, consumers, employees, national as well as international regulators, watchdogs, NGOs and activist groups have to be satisfied (Hatcher, 2002).

McGraw (2005) considers the biggest challenge in the field of CSR implementation to be the development of leaders for a sustainable global society. According to this author, the challenge will be to develop leaders for a sustainable global society by encouraging imagination and the accomplishment of a positive change.

## **CSR EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR BUSINESS SCHOOLS**

The idea of integrating the CSR case in the core business school curriculum is key and important. First, a compelling and credible business case for CSR has been the ‘Holy Grail’ of consultants, business schools and corporations for years. The use of a CSR case simulator would be a first for whichever business school that seizes the opportunity. The second reason why this approach is a breakthrough is that it quantifies three human resource benefits: the ability to attract, retain and increase the productivity of top talent in the sustainability business case.

Integration of CSR across the curriculum helps future leaders integrate sustainability into their thinking process. This applies to people with particular dedication to CSR as well as those whose main interest lies in areas such as finance, strategy and marketing. Businesses are looking for answers and tools relating to the 'how to' of sustainability, and business students should be the ones testing, exploring and creating these new ways of thinking.

Any teaching programme of contemporary business know-how needs to be infused with CSR thinking. The only practical way to do this in the short term may be to provide an elective module with a few special CSR events for the whole student cohort to get them thinking about the main issues.

## **WAYS BY WHICH BUSINESS SCHOOLS IN GHANA AND AFRICA CAN INCORPORATE CSR EDUCATION INTO THE CURRICULUM**

A number of options are available for business schools in Ghana and Africa to initiate CSR education. The following are worth consideration:

### *1. Build relationships and develop partnerships with the corporate sector*

Business schools in Africa need to build research partnerships with the corporate world with a long-term focus. These partnerships are critical to keeping up with emerging business practices and to feed 'real-life' examples into the classroom either via case studies, guest lecturers or mentoring. These activities should be done in the context of African culture and based on specific needs of each African community.

### *2. Better understand business needs for sustainability education*

Business schools should conduct research to better understand the business needs for sustainability education in Africa. They can do this by undertaking extensive needs-analysis research and by engaging in productive partnerships with the corporate sector.

### *3. Understand students' needs and raise demand for sustainability courses*

A needs-analysis research should be conducted. This will provide a better understanding of students' interest in sustainability issues and will teach them approaches that will effectively generate and maintain their interest over time.

#### 4. *Build internal support for sustainability courses*

This will enhance effective ongoing relationships with key internal stakeholders.

#### 5. *Provide support for faculty staff to develop their knowledge and skills in sustainability*

It will enhance the capacity of the participants to incorporate education about and for sustainability into the schools programmes. The relationship built with staff members will enhance the learning culture within the business schools and will lead to greater incorporation of sustainability into the core and elective courses and increased support for organisational change within the business schools.

#### 6. *Revise core courses and develop new optional courses to address education for sustainability*

This will ensure that students are engaged in sustainability issues at various stages during their studies. Course revision should, however, provide students with the tools to explore the challenges of sustainability in a new way. This will equip them with more systematic and critical thinking skills to use back in their organisations.

#### 7. *Develop new resources (especially case studies) to support integration of education for sustainability*

Case studies and teaching materials should be developed based on the awareness of the needs of students, staff and the corporate sector. This will lead to a greater incorporation of relevant sustainability materials across core and elective courses which will build the skills of the graduates.

## POSSIBLE TEACHING TOOLS

Some CSR teaching tools that can be used include

- business speakers,
- CSR case studies,
- NGO speakers,
- CSR professional speakers,
- internships,
- communications/media speakers,

- CSR journals and
- other associated CSR initiatives.

Since there is limited student development opportunities outside classes being offered by the higher education system, little or no practical skills and abilities are acquired during formal education. The main problem foreseen is the focus of Ghanaian and most African universities on lectures rather than on practical assignments or applied teaching, along with old curricula encompassing little or no modern concepts on societal trends such as CSR. The results are dissatisfied students, low levels of employment and the social alienation of young people because they are not being trained as responsible individuals and responsible future leaders. Teaching CSR will provide opportunities for practical skills development, exposing students not only to the concept of social responsibility, applicable at both individual and corporate levels, but also to the latest debates on the role of the business sector in society.

## **ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF INCULCATING CSR INTO THE CURRICULUM**

1. Embedding CSR as a theme for existing courses
2. Introducing the CSR course into curricula (core and/or elective)
3. Offering within the university a combination of extracurricular CSR-focused activities (seminars, lectures, study visits, projects, practical activities, etc.)

### *1. Embedding CSR as a theme in the existing courses*

The first approach to CSR in the curricula of business schools in Ghana and Africa is embedding CSR in existing courses. This solution would assume that every course identified as a potential one for CSR education would include topics teaching knowledge of the concept and the practices of CSR. Connections should be made between CSR and the main topic of the course. Also, CSR should be integrated at a reasonable proportion into practical and/or written students' assignments. Putting CSR knowledge within existing courses would ensure a very high number of students being exposed to CSR education as part of their formal courses already being taught, some of which can be expected to be compulsory. This approach would also allow for the integration of CSR knowledge with other core concepts for business and economics.

### *2. Introducing CSR as full courses into the curricula*

The second solution is creating special courses with a CSR topic; these being either core or elective. Teaching a special course with focus on CSR allows an in-depth exposure to the concept and practice of CSR, ensuring unity for the concept. CSR could also be a topic for practical assignments and, given available time, other stakeholders regarding CSR development might become involved in the teaching process.

### *3. Extracurricular CSR teaching activities*

This option offers universities the opportunity to use a combination of extracurricular activities like seminars, lectures, study visits, projects, practical activities, etc. to educate students on the importance of CSR, corporate citizenship and related concepts. This option consists of providing a combination of other CSR teaching activities under a university umbrella though outside the formal curricula. This will allow for the greatest degree of diversity of approaches to CSR and for a variety of teaching methods, along with a high number of opportunities for practical skills gaining and topic knowledge; it would additionally lead to the engagement of a large number of CSR stakeholders (non-profits, businesses, media, industry, etc.) who could put themselves forward to counterbalance the lack of trained academic staff teaching CSR. For example, Central University College in Ghana has a yearly community outreach programme that gives students the opportunity to volunteer to help deprived communities. Students help as nursing assistants in community hospitals and teach in less privileged schools. Students who were interviewed on this research suggested that this programme should be made compulsory for all business students and also that it should be graded as a CSR practical core model in the business school.

The three alternatives provided above should not be viewed as mutually exclusive but could be combined in various forms to enrich students' learning of the subject. In particular, extracurricular CSR teaching activities should form part of the core activity of those offering full courses in CSR. However, the actual form that CSR education should take would depend upon the individual educational institution, their priorities and motivation.

## **ALIGNING CSR WITH BUSINESS STRATEGY**

In finding new ways to address the social, economic and environmental effects of doing business while balancing conflicting demands on their



attention, time and resources, it has become important to emphasise the alignment of CSR with business strategy. This programme helps one to define priorities, integrate social responsibility throughout the business and build social and business value. Also it will strengthen one's ability to define and implement powerful CSR strategies that provide the firm its reputation and its way of doing business for enduring success.

Adoption of CSR as strategic business concept will go a long way in reducing risks that may occur due to societal misunderstanding and confrontation. Every society that draws a lot of benefit from CSR activities will be a strong ally to corporate growth and development. A strong relationship or bond between society and companies will result in goodwill which will insulate or insure the company from various forms of societal unrest.

Finally, equipping business students with the knowledge, understanding and importance of CSR will inculcate in them the spirit of accountability knowing that society will hold them and their organisation accountable for actions that impact their lives. Accountability is one of the processes whereby a leader, company or organisation seeks to ensure integrity. In a global stakeholder society, accountability is among the key challenges of organisations. Responsible leaders are concerned with reconciling and aligning the demands, needs, interests and values of employees, customers, suppliers, communities, shareholders and society at large. A company's track record in terms of CSR accounting will be effective when appropriate CSR measures are included in its internal as well as its supply chain activities. CSR requires accountability by all leaders, individuals, organisations, stakeholders, customers and community members and yet accountability is complex.

## CONCLUSIONS

Social responsibility is the greatest challenge of this century, and societies need to be 'well trained' to be able to successfully face this challenge. A responsible and active citizenry is needed and a reliable and professional education system is the key. Looking at the place and role of universities in generating and sustaining this needed social change, CSR education emerges both as a need and as a tool through which to educate future business elites to be socially responsible, thus also ensuring socially responsible conduct through such formal curricula by individuals. Considering investment industry, it will be appropriate to engage people or graduates with CSR qualification to assist in implementing their CSR strategies effectively; therefore, business schools and institutions in Ghana and Africa for that

matter should develop their curriculum in line with industry requirements in order to make the CSR courses relevant to industry and society.

Using real case studies, Business schools can show how leading sustainable development companies are 'doing well while doing good'. Current and future business leaders can learn from these case studies, can consider how the rationale and methods used by those leading sustainable development companies might apply to them and can accelerate their CSR journeys. More importantly, they can use a sustainability business case simulator as a decision-making tool, tailored to their particular situation. The business case for sustainable development should be the cornerstone of an enlightened curriculum in business schools. The compelling business case shows how advancements in environmental and social performance also result in improvements in the bottom line, including competitive differentiation and gains in market advantage.

By integrating the business case into their core curriculum, business schools can help convince corporate leaders to want to capitalise on the sustainable development propositions. Thus they would be educating business leaders as if the bottom line and the world mattered. Corporations around the world are struggling with a new role, which is to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the next generation to meet their own needs. Organisations are being called upon to take responsibility for the ways their operations impact societies and the natural environment. They are also being asked to apply sustainability principles to the ways in which they conduct their business. Sustainability refers to organisational activities, typically considered voluntary, that demonstrate the inclusion of social and environmental concerns in business operations and interactions with stakeholders (van Marrewijk & Verre, 2003). Organisations that have seen the importance of CSR are getting on board graduates who have studied CSR in school.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of recommendations are made for universities, students, businesses and other stakeholders for the effective application of CSR to their activities.

- *Recommendations for universities in Ghana and Africa*

African universities should see themselves more as competitive actors on the education market, aiming to promote diverse and high-quality educational

offers to thereby attract good students. Teaching techniques, methods and tools should be adapted to current societal changes, and curricula should be adjusted continually to equip students with relevant theoretical and practical skills and knowledge. Integrating CSR into business and economics curricula will transform universities into triggers of social change, acting as engaged and socially responsible actors within the community. By teaching CSR, universities and specifically business and economics faculties will contribute to educating future, socially responsible business elites. More than 50% of students in the focus group said CSR should be taught as full model but that there is no need to form CSR departments in the business schools.

By putting CSR at the heart of their curriculum, business schools can play their part in ensuring that tomorrow's leaders and companies think and act responsibly, creating value for both shareholders and society at large (Craig Smith, Senior Fellow, Marketing and Management and Associate Dean, London Business School).

- *Recommendations for students*

Students should make every effort to take advantage of available opportunity to personally develop themselves, whether this takes place inside or outside the formal curricula; and they should act in a socially responsible manner both as individuals and also as members of their respective professional communities; and they should put pressures upon universities to provide high-quality educational services.

- *Recommendations for the business and non-profit sectors in Africa*

CSR is assuming very important dimension in Ghana and Africa and businesses and all organisations in Africa should take advantage of this new phenomenon to grow their organisations and also transform the African society.

Both business and non-profit organisations engaged in promoting and developing CSR should engage universities as partners in CSR-related projects, using activities such as student development opportunities and implementing them in collaboration with universities. Business and non-profit sectors might hold relevant resources that could be used for CSR teaching, for example stories that can become case studies or innovative partnerships tackling community problems that can point to the business value of CSR activities.

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