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Published

2013

Journal Title

Journal of Business Ethics Education

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# The Complexity of Teaching an Emerging Paradigm: Understanding the University Educator's View of CSR

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**Abstract.** This paper sought to understand the current teaching approaches and course offerings of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) within the context of management education in Australian and British university business offerings. Identified in this qualitative research are the complexities and challenges of teaching CSR, its current relevance within management programs and how, by improved teaching and integration, CSR would increase its relevance to the field of management. In specific terms, whilst there are challenges, there are indications of growth in CSR courses within management programs. There appears little difference between CSR offered as a stand alone course or embedded into other courses. Given the findings, CSR is positioned as a holistic entity with a combination of offerings preferable. Finally, the inclusion of research activities that create connection between organisations, educators, students and the courses in business schools was identified, with research informing practice and in return practice informing teaching.

**Keywords:** CSR, teaching, course development, knowledge, pedagogy, lexical analysis.

## 1. Introduction

There is a “sacred duty” and responsibility bestowed upon teachers, and their institutions to provide the “best possible learning experience” (McKenna & Biloslavo 2011, p. 705). Substantial disasters relating to a lack of corporate social responsibility (CSR) mark history. In recent times, corporate examples include Bhopal, Exxon Valdez (Hartel & Pearman 2010), BP’s Horizon oil spill (Hoffman & Jennings, 2011) and the global financial crisis (Baden 2013a). These frequently occurring large-scale incidents illustrate the substantial impact of putting financial interests above the concerns of society and the environment. In response to this position business schools can be seen as a proactive frontline by “making a difference” through CSR education, or the opposite as a substantial part of the problem through a myopic corporate management position (Baden & Parkes 2013, Ghoshal 2005, Moon & Orlitzky 2011). This myopia is linked to the idea that growth at all costs is good business rather than a longer and more sustainable view that includes other stakeholder factors as well as the necessity to produce a

reasonable financial return (Giacalone & Promislo 2013, Giacalone & Thompson 2006).

In order to investigate the teaching of CSR within Australian and British university business schools, the Australian and New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) and the British Academy of Management (BAM) were selected as the frame of this research. The reasons for selecting these two organisations were as follows: both organisations have as part of their chart the advancement and improvement of management education, research and see themselves as leading organisations in this area. These organisations have subgroups that represent academics involved in CSR teaching and research. There is also a special interest group (SIG) within BAM committed to this area and ANZAM has a well-supported CSR stream in their national conference. BAM was founded in 1986 and ANZAM in 1987, making them similar in maturity and both could provide email access to all relevant members. These members do not represent all those involved in the CSR field. Through their membership however, the organisations' participants form a defined and significant group of engaged academics in the field of CSR, thus a relevant starting point for this investigation rather than an endpoint.

Relative to the traditional areas of economics and accounting, CSR is a new and developing area of higher education. By gaining insight into the current approaches used in delivering CSR, this understanding can be used to suggest methods to move CSR education and practice forward in a positive way. Through an online qualitative survey, investigating CSR from the business educator's perspective targeted the following research questions:

1. How do those involved in the development of CSR, as a field of study within university qualifications, perceive the uptake of CSR?
2. How effectively do higher education institutions teach CSR?
3. Is teaching CSR a new management paradigm or a new fad?

In addition to being a member of ANZAM or BAM, voluntary participation was sought from business school academics involved in the development and delivery of CSR courses (a single unit offering) and programs (a cluster of units based on CSR). To "make a difference" in business and society, it is argued that the awareness and adoption of CSR needs to be treated as a holistic approach. Support for such an approach is provided by findings presented in terms of learning theories, effectiveness and embedding of CSR into business school curricula.

## **2. Business Case for CSR Education**

Despite battling the perception that CSR is a business oxymoron (Claydon 2011), there are rising levels of understanding that have facilitated the rapid development of this topical subject (Blowfield & Murray 2008). A challenging aspect that has added to the CSR debate is defining CSR and the many synonyms (i.e. sustainability, social responsibility, corporate citizenship, corporate financial performance). Conveying CSR as a term is a considerable field of research in its own right (Baden & Harwood 2012, Carroll & Shabana 2010, Dahlsrud 2008) yet not within the scope of this paper. To simplify the communication of the many terms used in business faculties, CSR is assumed for this study and defined in broad terms as the business actions that advance social and environmental good beyond the immediate interests of the organisation, its shareholders and what is required by the law (Doh & Tashman 2012, McWilliams & Siegel 2001).

The significance of CSR has continued to grow as business becomes more complex and challenging (Moon & Orlitzky 2011). Challenges of measuring the value and benefits of CSR are noted by the Aspen Institute's suspension of the "Beyond Grey Pinstripes" Report, due to the difficulties of assessing the net benefit of CSR courses (Korn 2013). Counteracting this challenge, the 2010 UN Global Compact-Accenture Report found 93% of CEOs from 766 global corporations recognised sustainability as vital to their future success. In addition, full integration of sustainability was acknowledged by 96% of CEOs (Accenture 2010). Business students who are conversant in positively managing CSR with integrity are essential (Hanlon & Frost 2013) and supported by the growing awareness of CSR. The business case for CSR education is further evidenced by the United Nation's Decade of Education (2005-2014) along with significant numbers of highly ranked universities signing up to the "Principles for Responsible Management Education" (PRME) (PRME 2013, Setó-Pamies, Domingo-Vernis, & Rabassa-Figueras 2011).

## **3. Embedding CSR Knowledge**

Ghoshal (2005) emphasised the argument that business schools should reflect on the unprincipled and immoral theories taught and the need to take responsibility for redirecting future education and mitigating corporate disasters (Hanlon & Frost 2013, Wankel 2010). Teaching business students is explained as the desire "to use business to enhance the well-being of all stakeholders, repair damage done to the economy, society, and the environment, and leave the world better than they found it" (Giacalone & Calvano 2013, p. 377). Embedding CSR knowledge is contended to fulfill the vision of longterm benefits for business and society (Stewart & Gapp, in press). Current and future managers need CSR skills

and knowledge to view alternatives in doing business differently and “making a difference”.

Business and society have identified CSR actions and behaviours as principles of good practice; therefore, the burden is on higher education to provide students with core competencies of sustainable management skills (McKenna & Biloslavo 2011). In the area of CSR, educators have struggled to incorporate meaningful learning experiences. Hanlon and Frost (2013) identified the issues with students’ awareness of human rights and corruption as key areas of concern. Giacalone and Thompson (2006) considered the problem with the underlying economic worldview of management. Doh and Tashman (2012) highlighted the disparity in terminology that revealed both a lack of uptake and focus when taking a helicopter view of how business schools and their faculty approach CSR. Although educators have strived to apply current understandings of CSR, best practices have not emerged (Doh & Tashman 2012).

The lack of uptake was also revealed by Fernández and Sanjuán (2010) at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in their study of Spanish higher education institutions. When Baden (2013b) looked at students who justified unethical behaviour, she found the benefits of positive role models to be an effective mode of teaching CSR. Cahn and Glass (2011) established that their business and society students who studied news events had higher moral reasoning versus the same students who utilised lower moral reasoning in the context of applied dilemmas as evidenced by self-serving judgments. The issue of uptake, inconsistent terminology, and ineffective teaching practices indicate that business schools and their educators have been challenged to shift CSR into the mainstream business curriculum.

Supported by the premise that teaching institutions are the foundations of practice, a study of the Financial Times Top 50 Global Business School programs disclosed that most academic streams covered CSR at some level (Christensen, Peirce, Hartman, Hoffman, & Carrier 2007). Other studies on CSR business education (D. Christensen, Barnes, & Rees 2007, Fernández & Sanjuán 2010, Matten & Moon 2004) showed support by practitioners and industry for CSR to be mainstreamed into curriculums; in spite of this, low levels of scholarship have been evidenced. Starkey, Hatchuel, and Tempest (2004) maintained that business schools have played a key role in new ideas and ideals, yet in the management profession business school values are questioned, specifically as the promoters of salary and career enhancement. Until the advent of CSR courses, philosophical and ethical foundations were rarely included in business degrees.

Thoughts have been positioned on the positives and negatives of stand alone courses versus embedded or a combination of both. Benn and Kramar (2011) advocated the stand alone courses with lifelong learning for students. Other authors have suggested that stand alone CSR courses are futile when confronted by the profit maxims of many business degrees (Giacalone & Thompson 2006, Waddock 2007). When offered as an optional course, there is also the risk of only interesting students who already have an alliance with CSR principles (Baden

2013a). In this instance, attracting the students who would benefit the most from learning about CSR is improbable. Another set of issues has been evidenced with the embedding of CSR into overall business courses. This is underlined by the educators' questionable expertise and proficiencies in CSR along with their motivation or lack of it and their confidence in teaching CSR relative to their primary subject (Cant & Kulik 2009, Dean & Beggs 2006).

The latter option, where integrated stand alone and embedded courses are adopted is preferred and argued as the most effective and practical way to "make a difference" (Christensen *et al.* 2007, Waddock, Rasche, Werhane, & Unruh 2010) with calls for a holistic approach (Benn 2012, Giacalone & Calvano 2013, PRME 2013). It has also been advocated for CSR to be included in business curriculums through practical learning and development of the student's experience, insight and intuition, as well as applied skills (McKenna & Biloslavo 2011). CSR in higher education needs to go beyond just speaking the language of sustainability (Simmons, Shafer, & Snell 2009) and move to embedding CSR through pedagogical engagement and consideration of moral duties, justice, virtues and consequences.

#### **4. Applied Learning of CSR**

Going beyond the espoused "lip service of social responsibility" (Norman & MacDonald 2004, p. 243) is argued to be a business schools' responsibility (AACSB 2004). Developing foundational CSR skills at the higher educational level is said to provide the practicalities in tackling complex and challenging issues of sustainability (Moon & Orlitzky 2011). A participatory and practical approach is necessary to be fully engaged in learning (Argyris 1977, Nielsen 2009). From this argument, Argyris' (1997) practical and interactional approach of double-loop learning is presented to decrease defensive routines that individuals and organisations often display when their status quo is being challenged. Re-defining and re-evaluating frames of reference indicate a paradigm shift or gamma change, described as a radical alteration in how one views reality or their interpretation of reality (Kuhn 1970, Porras & Silvers 1991). Alpha (perceived improvement) and beta (modification in standards) change results in single-loop learning with the actions understood as consequences. Gamma A (core values changed) and Gamma B (reinstatement of the new concept) replace one paradigm with another to bare new actions, behaviours and understanding that reframe and change governing variables (Porras & Silvers 1991). Gamma change is directly related to Argyris' (1997, 1983) double-loop learning (Porras & Silvers 1991, Porras & Singh 1986). Moving from Gamma A to Gamma B is generalised by a conscious shift in paradigms through adaptation, adoption and embedding of new constructs (Argyris 1983, Porras & Silvers 1991) and developed from reflection, critique and questioning. As a result, more

effective performance is evidenced in double-loop learning in contrast to single-loop learning when self-defeating acts are displayed (Argyris 1977, Stewart & Gapp, in press). From a pedagogical perspective, the positive shift to gamma level through double-loop learning creates deep re-conceptualisation and new frames of reference.

Although studies discussed earlier report various levels of participation, CSR or similar courses are not always offered either as stand alone or embedded into core subjects, so the opportunity to deplete corporate disasters through business graduates remains unchecked. The advantages of combining stand alone courses in conjunction with embedding CSR into mainstream business subjects has potential, yet this is also challenging with the urgent need to address the slow uptake of CSR. This reinforces the need for commitment and the argument to create a more sustainable future (Porter & Kramer 2011). As evidenced with the corporate examples, the current teaching models have not gone far enough in creating the necessary transformation to CSR business practices. Business students who have a continuing allegiance to CSR, underpinned by the philosophies of double-loop pedagogy gained in higher education, are advocated to connect the demands of industry with key capabilities in CSR approaches. By exploring the insights and knowledge of academics at the forefront of management education, this study identified the progress of CSR courses within universities and explored student engagement in CSR practices from the educators' perspective.

## **5. Data Collection**

As specified in the introduction, the research was located in Australia and Britain with the specific intent to understand the development of CSR courses as part of management programs in business schools. Given this focus, this initial study was narrowed to ANZAM and BAM as these organisations position themselves as overarching bodies responsible for the development of management education and research. It is for this reason that other forums with a specific focus on CSR were not used in this study. LimeSurvey, an online survey tool supported by the relevant research organisation, was used to reach participants via electronic links emailed to relevant parties in both ANZAM and BAM. The use of this approach and LimeSurvey provided inbuilt security and protocols, including ethical clearance, data storage and the advantage of internal technical support. This was of relevance due to the quantity of recipients, and their anonymity in terms of institutional location while gaining optimal transparency of responses and providing privacy of the institutions membership database. The survey consisted of 12 open-ended questions:

1. In the areas that you teach what focus do you adopt in relation to CSR?
2. What is your perception of how students respond to CSR as a management approach?
3. Do you have any interesting ways of making CSR relevant to students?
4. Where do you see the future of CSR as a management method?
5. Where do you see the future of CSR as a course for students?
6. What is your institution's attitude toward CSR?
7. What is your department's attitude toward CSR?
8. What is your personal philosophy of CSR?
9. How does the instruction of CSR in the degree taught, create relevance in the market place?
10. In your opinion, how do the students rate the importance of CSR to their future careers?
11. By teaching CSR does this reflect in actions that create social and environmental good?
12. Does CSR education develop a level of inclusion or socially responsible behaviours?

After the elimination of partial responses, 52 responses from voluntary participants were gained from the qualitative survey. Responses were then uploaded from LimeSurvey and converted into MS word documents in preparation for analysis that was manually investigated with the aid of the computer-based software, Leximancer. The initial requirement for the establishment of trustworthiness was to read the responses and to establish that there was sufficient discussion within the responses to provide insights and understanding. To this end, respondents offered detailed and complex answers from a paragraph to a series of paragraphs (ranging from one to three paragraphs). The extent of information when the responses were combined provided a rich story for each of the questions asked.



## **6. Data Analysis**

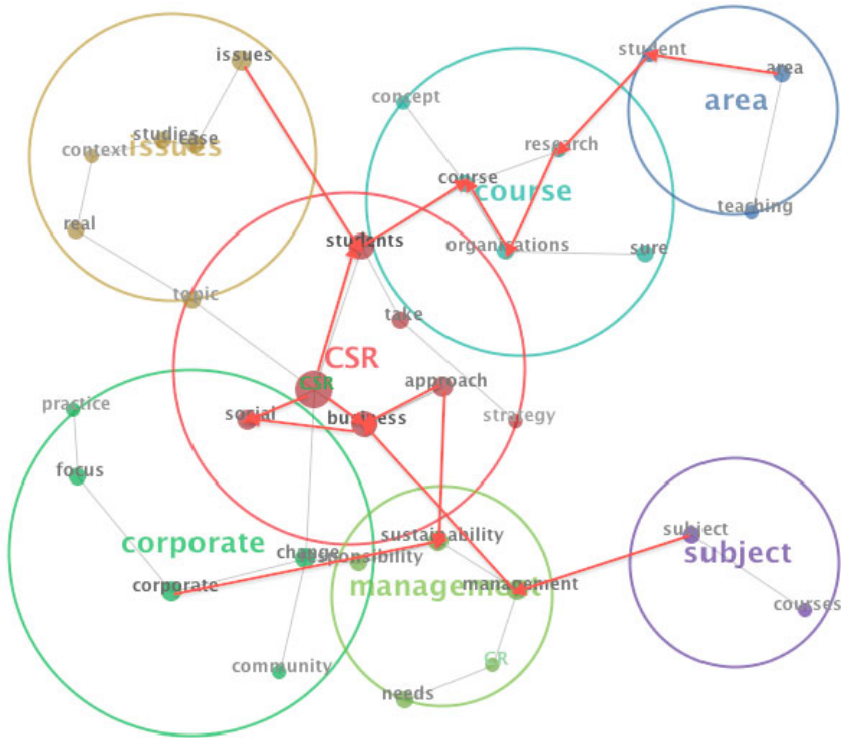
### **6.1. The Leximancer Approach**

In the first instance, Leximancer identifies relationships within the text to generate concepts and themes from the uploaded documents (Cretchley, Gallois, Chenery, & Smith 2010). This has the added benefit of themes being recognised that may have been overlooked if coded manually (Crofts & Bisman 2010). As an investigative tool, Leximancer used the uploaded data to create a thesaurus and locate synonyms by identifying patterns of language that were then reduced back to categories. This was achieved through 1000 iterations in the first instance. During this stage, the program was looking for significance rather than frequency, and it was these findings that created the original output. This output consisted of a thematic map and associated concepts that were colour coded with colour associated through strength of connectivity. However, this map was not accepted at face value, as it required human investigation in order to improve the trustworthiness of the themes and concepts presented.

Leximancer provided an effective platform for the human investigation into the initial findings. In addition to the map, this software produced a log of all themes and associated concepts. The log showed every location for each concept and theme in the text allowing the researchers to gain insight into the logic and associated meaning developed by the software. Through this log, the analysis was improved by the work of the researchers with the removal, combining and renaming of the concepts. In this case, after a week of manual interpretation of the original analysis, themes and concepts were clarified and reduced. The analysis was then rerun again with the outcome accepted as being a realistic interpretation of the material provided.

Once the analysis was accepted and the associated map produced themes were identified (Figure 1) with “bubbles” denoted by colour, with the primary theme recognised by a red bubble and a large red dot also known as the “hotspot” as represented by the theme of CSR. Other bubbles were graded by the cooling of the colour scheme and then highlighted by the respective colours, which are detailed in the following material. Concepts that contribute to these themes were depicted in grey font with a coloured “dot” matching their related theme. Leximancer also provided a function that linked themes and concepts through an assessment of the connectivity and then produced a descriptive path. As with the map, these paths were investigated by the researchers who assessed their relevance and trustworthiness. The outcome of this effort identified six relevant paths that presented additional insights gathered from the participants and improved the understanding. These paths were shown in Figure 1. and are subsequently presented in Table 1 with a discussion following the details of the mapped themes.

Figure 1: Leximancer concept map generated from LimeSurvey survey results. Colours of the bubbles: CSR (red), issues (orange), corporate (green), course (blue), area (dark blue), management (bright green) and subject (purple).



There were seven major themes identified in the analysis. In order of importance or strength these are *CSR* (red), *issues* (orange), *corporate* (green), *course* (blue), *area* (dark blue), *management* (bright green) and *subject* (purple). At the macro level this offered insights into the participants' views of teaching CSR at the higher education level. The primary theme of CSR is associated to the concepts of *students*, *take*, *approach*, *topic*, *social*, *business* and *strategy*. These concepts underlie the stories of the combined approaches needed to teach the social and business aspects of CSR and what the students take from this topic and the strategies used to teach it. Evidence of this was included in the written responses:

**Participant 24:** A bimodal approach is normally acknowledged. Those that are certain of the criticality of CSR, as instrumental to corporate sustainability and then those who only perceive CSR as a “business case”.

The relationship of business and society was highlighted as being one approach to CSR whereas strategic approaches to teaching CSR were acknowledged not only in the bimodal approach but also from CSR stand alone courses through related topics:

**Participant 14:** Underlying issue is the business society relationship and that CSR is one approach - i.e. critical inquiry rather than breathless enthusiasm.

**Participant 42:** The other subject organisational change and development focuses on sustainability and therefore addresses CSR as a broader component of inclusion of social impact and responsibility.

The *issues* of CSR are highlighted in the next theme with the concepts of *topic, real, context* and *studies*. In this context, issues of ethics, stakeholder views and environmental citizenship were significant as they linked to the student's studies of CSR. Connecting the study of CSR to the real world was the aim of CSR educators as participant 43 stated:

**Participant 43:** This also better prepares students for work in organisations where they will increasingly need to address issues of stakeholders, social and environmental impact.

Aiming to produce students who can make an impact on future generations (Giacalone & Calvano 2013) appeared to be an implicit motivator in participants, however the educator and the attributes of the course attempted to address the students' worldview. Within the *course* theme, *organisations, sure, research* and *concept* emerged. These concepts associated aspects of how the CSR course was taught in the participants' respective business school. When teaching the conceptual frameworks, building in research on organisations is essential to bring the interrelatedness of CSR and business whilst ensuring the content remains relevant to the students:

**Participant 15:** Many students bring their own world view to the course (either strongly + or -) I teach and tend to view CSR through that lens (even if they don't recognise that themselves).

**Participant 25:** I make sure that students understand exactly what CSR is and then take it from there, show/discuss/point out, its relevance/advantages etc., use my own research and publications on CSR. Basically, in the course I teach, it is more about how large organisations deal with their staff which often isn't all that great.

Teaching CSR in a meaningful and relevant way is aimed at increasing the impact of students as they graduate and start their careers in business. The following theme of *management* holds the concepts of *sustainability, responsibility, CR* (corporate responsibility) and *needs* that hold direct

relationships to the CSR term and the complexities of definitions (Baden & Harwood 2012, Dahlsrud 2008). This does not dilute the passion and enthusiasm for the environmental and social issues of CSR that were portrayed in the participants responses related to the management theme:

**Participant 14:** Primarily a social focus, as I feel that environmental issues are a necessary component of saving the human race and so are part of the whole solution - but it's a social problem.

**Participant 19:** Personally, I believe that CSR is currently where environmental issues were in the early 1970s - hopefully sooner rather than later, CSR initiatives will be embedded/operationalised within all management activities.

**Participant 21:** That more regulation is needed and a change in societal expectations. This is an integral component of sustainable management that Australian organisations will need to get a handle on.

The final theme of *subject* brings back in the issue of CSR *courses* and whether they are taught in the suggested bimodal approach or the alternatives of stand alone or integrated courses. Although the importance of teaching CSR is evident, all business schools do not adopt the subject. This situation has caused frustration for those who value CSR principles, as the desired impact has not been established. Despite this, the hope that CSR courses will become a mainstream component of business schools was demonstrated:

**Participant 26:** I believe it will become increasingly important in practice and this will flow on to the curriculum content in time. CSR is a critical issue for management /business schools.

**Participant 2:** Yes of course it is VIP for business schools and given the changing nature of the world.

After a detailed investigation of the themes and associated concepts, the researchers developed the following paths. Six paths were identified that provided insight into the teaching of CSR within management programs. The paths are initially summarised in Table 1 and then discussed in detail below. All paths developed had a common starting point in the major theme of *CSR* and then investigated through how the concepts linked across the other present themes (*corporate, issues, course, area, management and subject*).

Table 1: A brief description of the paths from the key them CSR to other identified themes

<i>Path from CSR to other themes</i>	<i>The concepts that link themes</i>
1. CSR to CORPORATE	CSR => Business => Approach => Sustainability => CORPORATE
2. CSR to ISSUES	CSR => Students => ISSUES
3. CSR to COURSE	CSR => Students => COURSE
4. CSR to AREA	CSR => Students => Organisations => Research => Student => AREA
5. CSR to MANAGEMENT	CSR => Business => MANAGEMENT
6. CSR to SUBJECT	CSR => Social => Business => Management => SUBJECT

The path from *CSR* to *corporate* involves the concepts: *business*, *approach*, and *sustainability*. This pathway is similar to existing research that emphasises the differences between the business case perspectives of CSR versus the instrumental view where the only value of CSR is to maximise profits (Friedman 1970). The respondent discussion around the path included the following statements, which was typical of the feedback in general:

**Participant 27:** CSR is important not only to the health of the corporation but also to contributing to the long term health and sustainability of the planet. If corporations can demonstrate leadership in this area, and with genuine practical outcomes (not just those reported to make them look good in annual reports and other publicity statements) then everyone can gain from their business success rather than just a few.

**Participant 24:** CSR is critical for corporate sustainability. I current teach an entrepreneurship unit that focused on sustainability and CSR issues.

**Participant 37:** CSR is a very limited approach to measure and hold corporations accountable. The huge variety of voluntary mechanisms and methods of corp reporting leave this area wide open to abuse.

This path highlighted the need to build CSR into the everyday thinking through a holistic attitude of what is good for business and to include approaches that lead to sustainability of society, environment and profit as others have reasoned (Giacalone & Calvano 2013, McKenna & Biloslavo 2011). This showed a two-way relationship of the path: one was the building of understanding of good business practice around CSR through education; and the second was the reverse, with good corporate examples of CSR flowing back into the learning process.

The next path to CSR was *issues* that passed through the concept *student*. The need to engage a student was best demonstrated in the following quote that provided a global insight into the role that relevant issues play in maintaining engagement within the classroom.

**Participant 42:** I am seeing an increasing number of students interested in this issue, in terms of those wanting to focus on an aspect of it for their dissertation, but for the rest of the class I sometimes feel they “switch off” and are less interested in this issue than the more “glamorous” aspects of marketing such as branding and marketing communications. Therefore it is useful to have best practice examples from leading global companies to show students that **CSR** is not an optional add-on but integral to the management of the company.

Or as included in the following statement:

**Participant 11:** Without awareness of the issues, how could we expect students to undertake initiatives that create social and environmental good? It is through gaining knowledge on **CSR** that students become aware of ways in which they can engage in business and also create social and environmental good.

Therefore the role of **CSR** became real when an impact was presented and this impact was in the form of an issue, which related back to them in a personal fashion rather than an arms distance case study. This leads directly to the third path from **CSR** to *course*, which both reinforced and expanded the comments in path two but provided further associated discussion and information.

Only one concept *students*, a rather logical linkage, mediated the third path from **CSR** to *course*. As indicated the theme *course* is the delivery of material in a coherent order to students, and the feedback from participants suggested the increased relevance of such courses within management programs as seen in the following quotes:

**Participant 40:** Each module is encouraged to embed **CSR** element.

**Participant 51:** Our recent review of the **Management** and **Marketing** program in ... recommends a dedicated course to cover **CSR**.

**Participant 28:** 10% of my course in leadership is devoted to **CSR**.

**Participant 39:** As stated before the **Department** recommend a dedicated course covering **CSR**.

Where **CSR** does not already exist as a course there is strong support for the development and inclusion of **CSR** courses which management students should be required to undertake in their studies as seen in the following two responses:

**Participant 42:** **Students** will become more aware of **CSR** as an integral part of doing business.

**Participant 8:** **CSR** should be an integral part of business degrees.

The path is understandably connected to path 4 where CSR linkage to the theme *area* is investigated. Here in *area* there is a focus on teaching and the connection is best described in the following quote:

**Participant 32:** How I approach teaching this area is strongly focused on how students learn with emphasis on developing student capabilities. Issue of CSR and sustainability increase student interest and engagement and improve their capacity to engage in such areas in organisations.

Research is seen as a way of adding to this understanding in the teaching process in the *area*:

**Participant 18:** After research clarifies the cost-benefit case for CSR, the discussion will become easier.

**Participant 33:** Significant in-depth research on CSR including looking at motivations for CSR activities and subsequent disclosure of said motivations.

In summary, this path indicated that *research* is used so there is the establishment of a set of capabilities within the *students* undertaking of CSR, thereby producing managers with a set of CSR abilities in their professional toolkit, as seen below:

**Participant 32:** How I approach teaching this area is strongly focused on how students learn with emphasis on developing student capabilities. Issue of CSR and sustainability increase student interest and engagement and improve their capacity to engage in such areas in organisations.

Pathway 5 connected CSR to the *management* theme through the concept of *business*. This exemplified the importance of “pragmatic” teaching of CSR in management programs so students were able to understand the impact of *business* practices. Participants also framed where they see CSR within this management/business context:

**Participant 19:** Personally, I believe that CSR is currently where environmental issues were in the early 1970s - hopefully sooner rather than later, CSR initiatives will be embedded/operationalized within all management activities.

These positions need to be reinforced with the culture of language and CSR inclusion within existing management concepts:

**Participant 36:** CSR needs to be refined further. Corporate responsibility needs to be framed in management language which emphasizes immediacy of board concerns.

Here there is also a warning of the need to build this integration and relevance within management education:

**Participant 4:** To be honest, I think it could end up being a management “fad” if we’re not careful. I think more could be done on linking CSR to alternative business models.

The last pathway between CSR and *subject* included the concepts of *social, business* and *management*. While the term *subject* is similar to *course*, this line of discussion was different to the previous one on *course* as the focus here was on embedding CSR into existing *courses* versus CSR as a stand alone offering:

**Participant 28:** As part of the subject of “strategy” within a business school’s curriculum, and as an equal part of a module on business ethics at both undergraduate and professional postgraduate courses.

**Participant 43:** CSR is growing in importance in the business school with the strong chance that a separate subject group being developed in next 2-3 years.

**Participant 2:** Not as a course/subject in its own right, but embedded in all aspects of professional training.

The value of this is seen in the social and environmental outcomes as summarised in the statement below:

**Participant 36:** Theoretically speaking, the introduction of CSR to students should ideally lead to social and environmental good.

The themes in the map (Figure 1) and the six paths (Table 1) developed from this position strongly supported the inclusion of CSR in management education and suggested that this is a new and growing area, whether as a stand alone course or embedded into existing subjects. There is some concern that without engaging CSR into existing management language as demonstrated through effective research, the value of CSR to the business/corporate world could become a fad. The importance of these concerns did not diminish but reinforced the overall significance of having CSR actively included in management education and research. When it came to the teaching of CSR, responses indicated that there was substantial material available in the form of examples or teaching aides (videos, news casts, YouTube, TedX, case studies). In regard to the immediacy of action, the passion and frustration of the respondents was noted. Yet considering the participant pool was targeted for their teaching of CSR related courses, it is consistent that this is an area of partiality due to the respondents’ links and knowledge of the field. The inclusion of research activities that create a dual connection with business and corporations was seen as very important, with research informing practice and in return practice informing teaching.



## **7. Discussion and Implications**

Going beyond what is socially and legally acceptable by instilling CSR practices and values in business students is the redirection needed to alleviate the myopic financial focus of traditional business disciplines (Doh & Tashman 2012, McWilliams & Siegel 2001). As seen by the significance of the UN Global Compact-Accenture Report, the World Business Council for Sustainability and other indicators including the Global Reporting Initiative, the corporate world is recognising the importance of CSR (Accenture 2010, Benn 2012). Financial and legal obligations are the fundamental components that businesses need to have in place; otherwise their demise is inevitable. Yet Hanlon and Frost (2013) point out that current graduates lack the ability to understand the impacts and consequences of their decision-making. In business courses, the financial achievement and stockholder dominance has traditionally been valued over the stakeholder view. CSR courses challenge this premise and encourage the managers of the future to think beyond the sole financial measure of success. Operating differently to the traditional financial focus and taking the contemporary approach of CSR management meets the needs of the future. It is reassuring to note that survey participants articulated this connection and the importance of creating mutual benefits for business and society, by enlightening business students of the possibilities that CSR offers.

Difficulties in quantifying the value of CSR education and the benefits to business students are issues that have already challenged the Aspen Institute's "Beyond Grey Pinstripes" Report (Korn 2013). Teaching of CSR at the higher education level is generally provided by an individual course or embedded into management courses, yet a combination of both is rare. University business curriculums that do not include any form of CSR ignore the evolution and opportunities of CSR to imply that CSR is not valued. Participants recognised CSR as a significant part of teaching within a business school curriculum, yet currently the necessary impact required to "make a difference" and to create opportunities is lacking. The way CSR is taught is an issue as evidenced in this research. Embedding CSR into all departments (i.e. accounting, human resources, marketing and management) of a business school is one option. Many business schools provide stand alone courses, often with a focus on CSR or business ethics yet if offered as an elective then there is the danger of "preaching to the converted" as the students attracted to this course would likely be those already aligned with CSR principles (Baden 2013a, p. 80). Several surveyed participants supported having a combination of embedded and stand alone courses. Logically this would help the impact and immediacy issues in the hope of improving short-term effects, yet the challenges of uptake and relevancy would not be remedied.

Both the participants and the literature (Benn 2012, PRME 2013, Waddock *et al.* 2010) support the combinations of embedded and stand alone courses, although this is not yet the norm but the exception in business schools. Possibly

the impact issue lies more in the pedagogy of CSR principles. Taking a transformative approach and learning through on going questioning, feedback and collaboration leads to double-loop learning and gamma change to support long-term transformation (Argyris 2006, Porras & Silvers 1991). The world rapidly moves towards depletion in resources and subsequent financial stressors that weigh heavily on both business and society. Positioning double-loop learning pedagogy to create a gamma change approach provides a practical development through the incorporation of skills, knowledge and a deeper understanding needed to create CSR strategies (McKenna & Biloslavo 2011, Stewart & Gapp, in press). This argument emphasises the need to educate the next generation of business students in CSR and posits the potential to look beyond profits as a sole indication of success and embody the ethical (social and environmental) as well as philanthropic aspects

It is not an educator's position to tell students how to behave or make decisions; nevertheless it is their job to challenge perspectives and highlight potential consequences for business students to "leave the world better than they found it" (Giacalone & Calvano 2013, p. 377). Double-loop learning provides such a framework by going beyond rote learning and teaching CSR as an imperative for students' pedagogical engagement in "making a difference". The cyclical framework allows an iterative approach to look for alternatives whilst taking into account the context and resources. In the CSR management educative process it has been suggested that case studies (Cahn & Glass 2011), team teaching (Brinkmann, Sims, & Nelson 2011), and positive role models (Baden 2013b) contribute to the integration of CSR courses.

No two businesses are alike, so it is essential to understand multiple and diverse perspectives, consequences and outcomes. It was reassuring to understand that the participants in this study had significant tools available in the way of video, YouTube, case studies and reports to support and assist in creating a realistic learning environment. Utilising these tools helps to create a teaching environment where students are able to participate in discussions, provide feedback and relate to real life scenarios where they can apply double-loop learning, leading to a deeper understanding and gamma change (Argyris 2006; Porras & Singh, 1986). Business students who have developed CSR skills will be positioned to look at alternatives, question situations and seek solutions that have philosophical and ethical foundations. Foundations of CSR as a reality in the higher educational system offer students the aptitude and ability to consider options in tackling complex and challenging issues (Moon & Orlitzky 2011).

## **8. Conclusion and Future Research**

In this study, there are inherent limitations. Firstly, it can be speculated that the responses were predominantly a Westernised perspective as the participants came

from membership databases sourced through a UK and Australian management institution. Secondly, responses themselves were another aspect as they were in written prose that precludes observations of the setting. Lastly, there is a limitation of sole views of academic teachers. These limitations provide research pathways from the teacher, student and practitioner viewpoints so as to understand and develop CSR in terms of higher education institutions. Specifically, in taking this research into the future we propose a narrow focus. Conscious application of double loop learning to a CSR course at either the under or postgraduate level through an action research approach is being considered. This would give potential to explore from a perspective that provides richness, reflection and the ability to build on best practice.

A clearer and more coherent understanding of the “sacred duty” imparted upon educators has been developed from a CSR teacher’s perspective and highlighted challenges of engagement, measurement and the need for a sense of urgency. CSR courses are necessary; particularly with business students to ensure they have philosophical foundations, awareness of CSR and to continue the progress of spreading the knowledge of CSR. As a result of this study, further research is highlighted to explore how CSR courses at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels can be developed to increase the connection of the student transitioning into the practical aspects of CSR. Specifically from the local institutional perspective, the students and educators can provide further qualitative understanding as to how the uptake can be increased. This in conjunction with industry insights pertaining to value adding of business students’ skills and knowledge would be beneficial in the promotion and development of CSR in business education.

The increasing challenge of leaving the world in a better condition than it was found makes educating business students in CSR a growing and topical concern. Studying CSR education from an instructor’s perspective holds practical and relevant implications in creating new ways to do business and be competitive. Although the participants noted the various tools available, if these are not used proficiently or with an appropriate student cohort then CSR education will not be effective. In saying this, it was evident that the business school approach needs to hold relevancy for teachers, students and potential employers. This relevance includes understanding key problems of reduced uptake associated with current modes, the increasing urgency to embed CSR into business curriculums and the frustrations of educators associated with these challenges.

To overcome these issues, teaching CSR in higher education should be embraced through a holistic approach including embedded and stand alone courses. This approach challenges the parochial financial focus of business courses culminating in the enhancement of students’ capabilities and long-term benefits for business and society. This study highlighted how educators perceived CSR courses as a mainstay of business degrees, along with insights as to how CSR courses are taught. The participants’ passion for CSR was evident and harnessing

this enthusiasm maybe a way forward for the implementation of CSR courses and their integration across business school curriculums. As well as creating a constructive change to business and society, higher education institutions have the responsibility to teach business students CSR. Provisioning managers of the future with the motivation, aptitude and skills to practice CSR is anticipated to “make a difference” by advancing social and environmental good beyond the immediate interests of the organisation and its shareholders.

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