

### **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**

As early as 1935, Barnard analysis of business from a multi-dimensional perspective: *economic, legal, social and physical environment* was a precursor of CSR. (T. Hudtohan, 2009). In 1960s, CSR has been introduced by organizations into their practice and involves civil society organizations, corporations and states all over the world. However, by the late 1990s, CSR became almost universally sanctioned and promoted by all constituents in society from governments and corporations to non-governmental organizations and individual consumers. (E. Garriga, 2010). Most of the major international organizations such as the United Nations, World Bank, Organization of Economic Cooperation, and International Labor Organization not only endorse CSR, but have also established guidelines and permanently staffed divisions to research and promote CSR.

A review of selected literature on CSR from 1938-2007 (Alastre, 2008; Cheng, 2007; Macasaet, 2008) shows a wide range of corporate initiatives involving internal and external responsibilities. In that 70-year period, CSR drove corporations to move business from a 'purely profit' orientation to a business with a triple bottom-line perspective which include responsibility for people, for society and for the environment. (Smith, 2007)

CSR is now a well-known expression for a collection of different and yet related terms as: business ethics, corporate citizenship, corporate responsibility, socially responsible investment, sustainability, corporate social performance, triple-bottom line, corporate philanthropy and corporate accountability (Silberhorn & Warren, 2007). The number of organizations reporting their financial, social and environmental achievements is increasing as members of the public demand companies to disclose how they conduct businesses in socially and environmentally responsible ways (Perrini, 2005).

According to a recent survey conducted by The Conference Board, nearly 90% of corporate managers report that their companies take CSR as a part of core business principles, and 70% report that their companies have a corporate foundation that advances social causes (Muirhead et al. 2012).

### ***Corporate Social Responsibilities in Vietnam***

Vietnam, officially the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, is bordered by China to the North, by South China Sea to the East and South, by Cambodia and Laos to the West. Its area is 331,690 sq km. The country includes 64 provinces, 538 Districts, 9,038 Communes, 1,210 wards. With an estimated 91.5 million inhabitants as of 2012, it is the world's 13th-most-populous country, and the eighth-most-populous Asian country (Hoa Vo. 2012).

In 1986, a socialist economic policy gave way to a policy of greater economic openness (“Doi Moi - evolution”) aimed at transforming Vietnam from a planned economy to a “socialist market economy.” State-owned companies have been privatized, and in theory the state has withdrawn from certain areas, although it continues to try to control some aspects of private industry. The party and government agencies want to maintain a socialist orientation, e.g. promoting the interests of disadvantaged groups (ethnic minorities, the disabled, residents of underdeveloped areas, etc.), redistributing wealth, and providing support for rural areas.

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility was first introduced widely in Vietnam in 1990s through various activities of international NGOs and multinational companies (Pham Vu Thuy Chi, 2012). From 2005, Vietnam has had CSR Awards, which was organized by Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), Ministry of Labor-invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), in order to honor enterprises in CSR implementation in the context of global integration. According to Vice-Director of VCCI “CSR has become necessary requirement for each company, if the company does not embrace CSR, they cannot approach the global market” (Saga Vietnam, 2008).

CSR is now one of the hottest topics in business, especially following a few environmental damages caused by factories in 2010. As the public shows increasing interest in CSR and also reacts strongly against those that fail to do so. Therefore, both companies and organizations start paying more attention to CSR.

Nevertheless, CSR is still a new concept and pioneers in Vietnam are facing numerous challenges in executing CSR programs in Vietnam. (Mai Vu, 2011).

### ***Corporate Social Responsibilities of Universities***

Higher education institutions in general and universities in particular, have undergone in-depth transformations in the last decades, affecting and being affected by socio-demographical, political and economic phenomena. As higher education has become a highly competitive “mature industry” and a diversified sector, it was necessary for universities to reinvent themselves in response to new challenges and opportunities.

In essence, corporations are both economic organizations and social institutions. Therefore, universities have social responsibilities (SR) as corporations have. A corporate social orientation requires ethical and social commitments, connections with stakeholders and consistency of behavior on a long term (Meehan, Meehan and Richards, 2006). For example, if a university decides to be more responsible and connected with the society, it must be prepared to create, develop and implement a successful social responsibility strategy.

Today’s strong universities stand out by their ability to follow their vision and to preserve their identity even amid significant shifts on the global higher education market (e.g., the increased internationalization, the marketization and deregulation of universities). Moreover, the presence of many stakeholders and the application of theories and concepts that have been successful in the business world in an effort to gain a larger share of this market have clearly demonstrated that universities behave more and more as entrepreneurial universities in the current knowledge economy (Ramachandran, 2010; Petruzzellis and Romanazzi, 2010). The growing concern of nowadays universities to satisfy the needs of different stakeholders (e.g., students, parents, employees, public and private companies, society) and to deal with a profound ecological and social disruption has imposed them a greater social responsibility (Kunstler, 2006).

At the turn of the twenty-first century, universities cannot ignore governments and corporations (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004). Firstly, “the government induces universities to act according to the public interest” (Bok, 1982, pp. 47-48). Secondly, universities have a crucial role to play in optimizing the way society is managed, in attaining the objective of ensuring major improvements in people’s lives. On the other hand, universities have become increasingly active in identifying know how and its transfer towards individuals and corporations (Bok, 2003, p. VII).

Being in the service to great ideals and advocating civic engagement universities have to promote learning outcomes that go beyond discipline-specific knowledge and to produce good citizens who are trained for both competency and character (Wilhite and Silver, 2007). Universities are not only educational services providers, but also shapers of identity with major responsibilities to the nation and to the wider world (Sullivan, 2003). As universities are facing some of the challenges corporations face, they both struggle for funds, good employees, reputation etc. In order to respond better to societal demands universities can learn from the corporate experience. This is why “corporate models and managerialism are a part of emerging definitions of academic work” (Hammond and Churchman, 2008, p. 237).

The third millennium university has to be “a place where people are taught to engage as critical and conscientious citizens” (Hinchcliff, 2006, p. 83). In this respect “social responsibility is in ever greater demand, not only from large and multinational companies, but other organizations such as governmental agencies, universities and research centres ” (Canibano and Paloma Sanchez, 2009, p. 96).

### ***Higher Education and Universities in Vietnam***

Vietnamese greatly value education and consider higher education as the top priority strategy. Most of young people in Vietnam want to study in higher education to achieve a degree so it may lead them to have good job in the future. Number of students is growing every year. (Hoa Vo, 2011).

In November, 2011, the government approved a Human Resources Development Strategy, which set an objective of having 573 higher education institutions to rapidly increase the rate of trained human resources in the economy in various forms and at different levels from 40% in 2010 to 70% by 2020.

There are 204 universities in Vietnam (150 public and 54 non-public), with 59,672 teaching staffs. Of which, only 14% universities staffs have PHD degree (8,519 people), and 46% have Master degree (27,594 people). Total of university students of school year 2012 is 1,448,021. (Vietnam Education Index, 2012).

Vietnam Education Strategic Plan for 2010 – 2020 pointed out that Vietnam education has

gained important achievements but it is still facing weaknesses and shortage.

The effectiveness of educational activities is low. Literacy rate among young women is only 96%. The rate of graduates from universities in comparison with the initial enrolment is low. Students from mountainous, remote and isolated areas hardly graduate higher education. University graduates are usually confused when entering real life. There is a gap between university training program and employers' requirement. Therefore, a number of graduates cannot find jobs which are appropriate with their studying fields. The graduate's adaptability to labor market is poor. (Viet Nam Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2011)

A part of trained graduates is incapable, lacks of sense of honest spirits and responsibility for their students, does not respect the technical process, embezzles and wastes raw materials and lacks working cooperation and healthy competition spirits. According to a survey on graduate employment in 2009-2010 conducted by Center for Policy Studies and Analysis, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, among 3,000 respondents, 26.2% are still unemployed with the majority unable to find a job. Among those employed, 61% said they lacked sufficient working skill, 42% lacked experience and 32% cited insecure professional expertise. Therefore, only 52% of Vietnamese satisfied with the higher education quality.

Hung (Le Ngoc Hung, 2012) also pointed out that while Vietnam is still inadequate human resource in rural and remote areas, most of higher education graduates are from urban provinces and they are trying to look for good jobs at big cities. In another hand, educational data indicates that students from mountainous, remote and isolated areas enrolled into universities are very low, the dropout rate of rural students tends be higher than that of urban students. The students have hardly graduated degree on time as planned.

Inclusion, it is very necessary to have a scholarship program to support young people from rural areas particularly female students from low income households to access to and complete their higher education. It is students from rural areas who will come back to work in rural areas for poverty reduction and development. However, the lower-income students have some unmet financial need that also contributes to their need to work while study. The students have to make a series of choices about whether to go to college, how to fund college, and whether to work and how much to work. (Tina Tuttle, with Jeff McKinney & Melanie Rago, 2005). Study after studies show that working is a necessity for most students in higher education today, and this is unlikely to change in the future. The reality of working students is an opportunity for colleges to show their social responsibility, innovation and leadership. Helping inform students of the benefits of working and helping students meet their educational goals should be an

important objective of any university.

### ***The University of Labor and Social Affairs (ULSA)***

ULSA established in 1961 by the Ministry Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA). Located at 43 Tran Duy Hung Street, Cau Giay District, Ha Noi, with total of 800 staffs and 5,200 students, ULSA is well-known university in Vietnam.

As members of MOLISA, ULSA commits to promoting social and economic justice for poor and oppressed populations and enhancing the quality of life for all. It strives to maximize human welfare through: (1) providing high quality of Education of social workers who will challenge injustice and promote a more humane society, and whose actions will be guided by vision, compassion, knowledge and disciplined discovery, and deep respect for cultural diversity and human strengths. (2) Conducting research that engenders understanding of complex social problems, illuminates human capacities for problem-solving, and promotes effective and timely social intervention. (3) Contributing to public services that enhance the health, well-being, and empowerment of workers, disadvantaged communities and populations at local and national levels.

ULSA has four training levels: Associate Degree (Vietnamese: Cao Dang) is three year program; Bachelor Degree (Vietnamese: Cử nhân) is four years; in-service training and Master Degree is two year program. ULSA is planning for offering Doctor of Philosophy.

ULSA is now cooperating with Asian Institute of Management (AIM), Philippine Women's University (PWU), President University (Indonesia), Batangas State University, and Angeles University Foundation and other international institutes to offer various training courses for students.

Every year, 1,400 students graduated from ULSA and most of them can find job within 9 months after graduation. In 2012, ULSA receives 1,500 new students.

While several universities in Vietnam are announcing temporary closure of their faculties and

some are even trying to sell them to other institutions for lack of enrollment, number of students enrolled into the ULSA increased every year despite the cost of education in Hanoi is quite high. This demonstrated that education quality of ULSA is good and appropriate. (<http://vietnamnews.vn/social-issues>)

### ***Social Responsibility of ULSA***

ULSA becomes a famous and popular university and is ranked among the top graduate schools of social work in the nation because of its quality services and its social responsibilities.

The school has expanded student scholarships, added endowed professorships, and introduced award-winning partnerships with regional, national and international organizations. It's all part of a legacy of social innovation that has nurtured scholarship, shaped leadership, and educated successive generations to service and social justice.

Since 2007, applying the education credit policy of the government, the school provided credit for disadvantaged students to support for tuition fees, books, studying and research facilities, accommodation, traveling and other expenses necessary for students' study during the time at universities. Preferential lending rate is 0,5%/month. (Report on ULSA operation, 2011)

ULSA also provides a range of professional support services for students and help students from low income families to find jobs. ULSA is one of 55 universities located in the central of Hanoi and does not have enough hostel rooms for students. Therefore, most of the students have to rent rooms surround the school to stay. Renting a room near the school is expensive. To help its students to overcome the difficulties, ULSA has been working with house owners to find appropriate and accessible rooms for students, and helped them to find appropriate part-time jobs while studying to earn for living. Therefore, number of working students increased significantly. Working students are not only able to earn for living but also improve their self-confident and working experiences. (Nguyen Thanh Ha, 2010).

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