

INCLUSION OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AS A MODULE IN UNIVERSITY SYLLABI: A STUDY OF CONTENTS, PEDAGOGIES AND ACADEMIA-INDUSTRY INITIATIVES IN NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

The paper performs a probe into the coverage of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a module in university syllabi in Nepal by exploring the existing CSR contents and pedagogy in the business school curricula as well as academia-industry linkages to promote CSR education in the country. Since the issue of CSR and business ethics has the direct bearing on business and management domain, the paper has explored the syllabi of business schools. The study— based on a descriptive approach—sought to draw out a perspective on the content and pedagogy of the BE and CSR module in Nepali varsities. Encompassing the existing Nepali universities and/or the business schools under their fold, the study discovered that Tribhuvan University, the only central and national university of Nepal, has offered more BE and CSR contents either as a separate, independent module or as an integral part of other related subjects in a larger number of bachelors and masters programmes. Yet, there is a need to specify and ameliorate pedagogical arrangements in most of the universities in Nepal. Since BE and CSR are relatively young modules, the findings should prove instrumental for Nepali universities to formulation of curricular plans and strategies vis-à-vis foreign business schools in the days to come.

Keywords: Business ethics, corporate social responsibility, curricula, syllabi

INTRODUCTION:

In the emerging business practices, managers are increasingly using corporate social responsibility (CSR) as an essential component of their strategic management. They have to examine the practical approaches successful companies are using to integrate CSR strategies with the long-term needs of the business and evolve their strategies as business needs change. Only then will it be possible to realise what Harvard Business School envisions in its curriculum to achieve 'Strategies to Create Business and Social Value' through CSR.

Business ethics, CSR and sustainability have arguably become more important to both the corporate business world and business schools in recent years (Segon & Booth, 2009). For making business practices socially responsible and ethical, it is imperative to include corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a module in the syllabi of business schools, so that the business graduates who are aware of and skilful in responsible and ethical business practices can be produced to fill up the potential management positions that can transform the business into a sustainable one. It is logical that academic programmes of the business schools address the topics of BE, CSR and sustainability in a clear and strategic fashion (Ibid).

Hence, the paper primarily aimed at exploring the status of business ethics (BE) and CSR education in university syllabi in Nepal. Since the issue of BE and CSR has the direct bearing on business and management domain, the paper has explored the syllabi of management and business schools. More specifically put, the objectives sought:

1. To explore the BE-CSR contents, pedagogical arrangements and course modules of different academic programmes at business schools in Nepal;
2. To inquire into the key academia-industry initiatives taken up at national level towards the promotion of CSR education in Nepal; and
3. To identify the key problems facing the BE-CSR teaching-learning process at business schools in Nepal

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The literature concerning the study issue has been presented in three sections: Background Literature, the Nepalese Context and Study Environment Context.

The power of the state has shrivelled noticeably due to the increasing waves of globalisation and other externalities in the economies across the world. It has given rise to corporate capitalism where real power rests not with the government but with corporate enterprises; more particularly, multi-national and transnational companies (Manandhar, 2015; Sthapit, 2015b). With the unprecedented surge of corporate capitalism that rules the roost of economic affairs in the national and global economies, there is also an alarming risk that both the actions and inactions of the business firms could cripple and undermine their social goals and responsibilities.

Lockerheed's \$ 22 million bribery case (1976), Union Carbide's gas leakage disaster in Bhopal, India (1984), Enron scam in USA (2001), Siemen's slush fund case (2006), Rana Plaza collapse in Savar, Bangladesh (2013 April 24) have left indelible marks of social irresponsibility and excesses by corporate entities.

The Shell Oil Company, for example, experienced protests and lost revenues due to opposition of its oil-drilling activities in Nigeria, which was viewed as harmful to community interests and excessive pollutants. In India, Wal-Mart experienced loss of sales and massive protests because there were concerns that the firm's market entry would hurt small retailers in this populous country. Thus, the firms' failure to adopt CSR behaviours can have adverse, even disastrous, consequences (Sthapit, 2015a).

Things have changed considerably in recent times. There has been realisation among more business firms across the world to fulfil and promote corporate social responsibilities (CSR), since business activities and social issues are getting inextricably interrelated; and businesses are an integral part of the society and they can never disassociate themselves from social issues and concerns.

There are a number of voluntary codes of conduct that set standards for at least labour issues, environmental protection, and health and safety in firms, although no binding rules currently

exist to regulate companies at the international level (ActionAid Nepal, 2003), when comes to CSR and business ethics. Such voluntary codes include UN Global Compact, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), and OECD Guidelines (See Appendix 4).

In Nepali business sector, FNCCI Business Code of Conduct-2004 and NBI Business Code of Conduct-2013 were introduced to promote ethical, responsible business practices in the country. Myopia not only on part of the corporate sector but also on part of the business schools and their syllabus designers towards CSR is both detrimental and undesirable. Snoeyenbos (1992) and Sikula (1996) emphasised the importance of teaching business ethics to ensure a holistic approach to business education. Weakness on part of the universities to espouse the core values of ethical business and CSR in its syllabi stultifies their graduates' competencies. A Polish study can be cited as a good example: Tormo-Carbóa, Oltrab, Seguí-Masa, and Klimkiewicz (2016) investigated management students' awareness of business ethics from a sample of 307 undergraduate and postgraduate management students in Poland. Its results showed that having taken previous courses on business ethics and CSR does not play a relevant role in students' ethical awareness. Segon and Booth (2009) surveyed the students' demand for including BE/CSR in the MBA curricula of Australian universities and found that although three fourths (73.5%) of the students showed their attention and awareness, only 49.2% of them actually demanded inclusion of BE/CSR into their MBA curricula. These findings stimulate further questions and concerns as to whether business ethics/ CSR course design and methodology issues have been effective or not posing challenges for academicians and researchers as well as for business school leaders.

Further, Slavova and Bankova (2015) found that in Bulgarian universities (N=25), the standalone modules of Business Ethics and CSR accounted for 11.5 percent and 4.8 percent respectively of all subjects included in the sample, although CSR-related components are offered across different modules in 80 percent of universities. It made the researchers to attribute it to the fact that CSR was a relatively new concept and practice in Bulgaria starting only from 2001/02.

The Nepalese Context:

In Nepal, the business community first faced a severe exposure to ethical business and CSR issues when Germany's Panorama Channel reported on the use of child labour in carpet industries in 1994 causing a massive damage to Nepal's carpet exports to the EU nations (Manandhar, 2015; Sthapit, 2015b). It was followed by a series of gushing media revelations of corporate scandals involving mostly, bankers, business leaders and corporate honchos.

Ten years down the line, under the mounting pressure of customers, trade unions, NGOs and government regulations; Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) introduced an 18-point Business Code of Conduct in 2004 to promote ethical business practices among the private sector companies. FNCCI is the umbrella body of private sector firms in Nepal. But, its draft of business code just received lukewarm response. Almost after the decade, National Business Initiative (NBI) reviewed the business ethics and CSR practices in Nepal and announced the NBI Business Code of Conduct in 2013. NBI is apolitical, non-government organisation working for promoting responsible business and peace-building, among others, in the country with active private sector initiatives (NBI, 2017a). While FNCCI's document was driven by the code to abstain from negative behaviours, the NBI's code emphasised on positive behaviour (Manandhar, 2015) towards the social responsibility and ethics.

Carroll (1977; 1991; 1999) posited a four-domain pyramid of CSR comprising Legal, Ethical, Economic and Philanthropic social responsibilities that the businesses should discharge. But, the concept and practices of CSR in Nepal have not developed beyond some basic philanthropic or charity activities that too are performed at the times of disasters like earthquakes and floods (Sthapit, 2016). Many firms have made CSR a matter of creating media hype and glamour, while some other FMCG companies unscrupulously resort to cheating poor Nepali buyers with a bait of inflated lottery prizes that would never be delivered to the customers (Sthapit, 2014; Manandhar, 2015).

Therefore, the performance of Nepali business firms in the sector of BE and CSR practices has so far been mixed. Now with the increased realisation of promoting ethical business and CSR practices in Nepali business sector, an imperative need for forging collaboration between corporate sector and business schools has long been experienced in Nepal.

Meanwhile, the Industrial Enterprises Act, 2016 in its Section 48, has made it 'mandatory' for industries to allocate and spend at least 1 percent of their profit in CSR activities, and provided in Section 41 (5Kha) for slapping a penalty of 0.75 percent of the annual turnover upon the industries' failure to comply (MoI, 2017). It applies to medium industries (with fixed assets of NPR 100 to 250 million) and large industries (fixed assets of over NPR 250 million) as well as to cottage and small industries having annual turnover more than NPR 150 million. And, a CSR Regulation is being drafted to provide procedural arrangements to the Act.

With these legal provisions in action, the new imperatives on CSR have increased the requirements of companies towards the education and taking business graduates with the requisite skills and competences; it has made attention to CSR essential both for the industry and business schools.

The Study Environment Context:

Typically, a substantial amount of interface exists between the demand and supply of BE-CSR education. Generally, it is the corporate and business sector that demands the knowledge and information concerning management of business ethics and CSR and seeks the human resources well informed in this domain, while business schools are the supplier.

In some other specific cases, the corporate/ business sector becomes also a supplier of business experiences and antecedents concerning the CSR and ethical business practices, as the business schools demand business-specific case studies, inter alia, for designing their curricula. It is important for both the business schools and corporate managers to examine the practical approaches successful companies are using to integrate CSR strategies with the long-term needs of the business and evolve their strategies as business needs change.

Because of the inextricable inter-linkages between business activities and social issues; there is an urgency of academia-business community collaborations to promote and improve awareness and performance of CSR.

Hence, the unique interface between university and corporate/ industry sector should guide fresh discussions on business ethics and CSR as well as curriculum design. It has prepared the ground-work of this study to examine the status of CSR education in the syllabi of Nepali business schools. It is so, because previous studies offer extremely little insights into the CSR education in Nepali universities, although Sthapit's (2014) paper offered preliminary observations into the CSR curriculum issue; and Manandhar (2015) dealt with the emergence of ethical and CSR practices in Nepali private sector. Bajracharya, Chalise, Ghimire, Tamang and Baral (2013) studied the status of institutionalisation of CSR in Nepali firms and Sthapit (2015a) dealt with the international business dimensions to the CSR activities; both the studies however did not encompass the university syllabus in its scope. And in case of academia-industry initiatives towards the CSR education, no previous research work in Nepal was found during this study.

Therefore, the CSR issue in university syllabi is largely under-researched in Nepal, and hints at a noticeable lacuna existing in Nepali CSR literature.

METHODS:

The study— based on a descriptive approach and its ensuing qualitative methods— adopted an exploratory approach to data and thenceforth sought to draw out a perspective on the content and pedagogy of the BE and CSR module in existing business schools in Nepal, as well as on academia-industry linkages and initiatives to promote CSR education.

Population and Sample Organisations:

There are nine (9) universities in Nepal out of which Far Western University and Mid-Western University are still in the process of finalising business-management courses, and Nepal Sanskrit University and Nepal Agriculture & Forestry University have no business schools while Lumbini Bouddha University has not yet obtained any permission to run a business-management school. Therefore, to examine their BE and CSR modules and pedagogy, the present study has encompassed as its sample the following four universities that have been running management and business schools:

- Tribhuvan University (Student size: 331,816; affiliated campuses: 1,123),
- Pokhara University (Student size: 25,532; affiliated campuses: 62),
- Purbanchal University (Student size: 23,539; affiliated campuses: 131), and
- Kathmandu University (Student size: 15,653; affiliated campuses: 21)

Exhibit-1 **Universities in Nepal**

Modern-day higher education ushered in Nepal after the establishment Tri-Chandra College under India's Patna University in 1918. The college was brought under the umbrella of Tribhuvan University which was established in 1959. The evolution of university education in Nepal can be studied in two major phases:

a. Unitary university phase (Tribhuvan University)

Higher education in Nepal had long remained synonymous with Tribhuvan University, as it remained the only university for about four decades from 1959 to 1985 (Sthapit, 2005). Tribhuvan University, the only central and national university of Nepal, still stands as the biggest university in Nepal and 22nd biggest in the world with a huge number of students, more than 331,816 from all over Nepal and abroad (TU, 2017; Nepaluniversity, 2017).

Tribhuvan University is a non-profit making autonomous institution funded by the Government of Nepal. On January 8, 2013, the government of Nepal has in principle agreed to declare Tribhuvan University as the only Central University of the country (TU, 2017).

b. Multi-university phase

Nepal moved to a multi-university system, with Nepal Sanskrit University (formerly Mahendra Sanskrit University) established in December 1986 in Dang district of Mid-Western Development Region (Sthapit, 2015a). The country soon initiated potentially 'regional-level' universities, forming of a few other universities, namely, Kathmandu University (1990), Purbanchal University (1993), and Pokhara University (1997) (MoE, 2017) as well as a number of private colleges and institutes affiliated to these varsities (Sthapit, 2005; Sthapit, 2015).

In the new millennium, three more universities were established in the western part of the country. Lumbini Bouddha University (Lumbini, Rupandehi) was officially formed in 2004 and its legal status was confirmed in 2006 with the enactment of Lumbini Bouddha University Act 2006 (MoE, 2017; Wikipedia, 2017). Then, Mid-Western University (June) and Mid-Western University (August) in 2010 (FWU, 2017; MWU, 2017; Nepaluniversity, 2017); but they are still in the process of finalizing the programmes and curricula.

The universities in Nepal are all government supported public-sector entities with operational autonomy.

Source: Nepal Education in Figures, 2016, Ministry of Education. More details in Appendix-1

The study has focused only on business schools (school or faculty of management), because CSR and business ethics essentially concerns with the management education, which alone accounts for about 40 percent (168,927) of the total students (428,526) in all higher education institutions in Nepal (MoE, 2016). According to the Nepal Education in Figures (2016), management and education streams together constitute more than 82 percent of the total students in all higher education institutions in Nepal (MoE, 2016).

Nature of Data and Instruments:

The study is based on the secondary and primary data. The secondary data were collected from the documents officially published by the studied universities and/or their business schools either on their websites or in the printed documents. The data were tabulated, compared and analysed in order of accomplishing the study objectives.

Furthermore, a focus group technique was adopted to gather expert opinion-based primary data that would help identify the main problems facing the BE-CSR teaching-learning process in the business schools, for which the focus group discussion was administered on 11 key informants (KIs) at Prime College, a private business school affiliated to Tribhuvan University on March 5, 2017. The focus group comprised university professors/ curriculum designers, business school leaders and current CSR teachers at business schools. The researcher used a semi-structured questionnaire to streamline the discussion on the issues concerning the study objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

At the first stage, the study sought to explore the BE and CSR-related contents and pedagogical arrangements in different academic programmes of different universities in their business schools. Subsequently, it also explored the initiatives taken by the universities and corporate/ industry sector to promote BE and CSR education in their business schools. Finally, key issues and problems facing the CSR education in Nepal were identified.

Syllabi by CSR Content, Pedagogy and Programme:

The business school syllabi at different universities have been analysed by the CSR content, pedagogy and academic programme in the following paragraphs.

Tribhuvan University: Tribhuvan University, the largest and only central university of Nepal (TU, 2017), has offered more BE and CSR contents in its masters and bachelor programmes. Tribhuvan University’s Faculty of Management exclusively runs Masters in Business Studies (MBS) at its constituent campuses, and affiliated private colleges, whereas its younger, autonomous School of Management Tribhuvan University (SOMTU) offers Masters in Business Administration (MBA) at the university’s central official location in Kirtipur of Kathmandu. The SOMTU also has run MBA in Global Leadership and Management (MBA-GLM) and MBA in Information Technology (MBA-IT).

From Table 1, it becomes evident that Nepal’s pioneer Tribhuvan University has offered more of the BE and CSR contents in its business school syllabi, with at least two exclusive modules on BE and CSR in the MBA-GLM and BBA courses. A number subjects also have contained CSR contents, albeit at the varied proportions that form an integral part of other related subjects in a larger number of bachelors and masters programmes. Yet, in some cases, the university has not adequately and categorically specified and ameliorated pedagogical arrangements in some of the subjects.

Table 1: CSR and Business Ethics in Tribhuvan University Syllabi

Programme/ Level	Subject Modules	Content of CSR/ethics	Pedagogical Methods	Question types	Weight-age
MBA [#] , 4 th sem	International Business*	CSR, ethical business	Lecture, case, project works	Long-analytical, short answer	5%
MBA-Information Technology [#] , 2 nd Sem	Business Ethics and Cyber Crime	Business Ethics (esp. in IT firms)	Lecture, case, assignments, project works	Long-analytical, conceptual, short answer	50%
MBA-Global Leadership and Management [#] , 3 rd Sem	Global Business Ethics	Practising ethics in global business	Lecture, case, assignments, project works	Long-analytical, conceptual, short answer	100%

Programme/ Level	Subject Modules	Content of CSR/ethics	Pedagogical Methods	Question types	Weigh t-age
BBA, 4 th sem	Business environment	CSR	Lecture, project, case, seminars	Short & very brief answer	Appro x 3%
BBA, 7 th sem	Business Ethics & Social Responsibility	Business Ethics, Social Responsibility	Lecture, case project, seminar	Case, short & brief answer	100%
Master's in Business Studies ^{##} , 2 nd yr	Business Environment	A Chapter on CSR and Social Audit	Lecture method, class discussions	Long-analytical & short answer	**10%
Master's in Business Studies ^{##} , 2 nd yr	Strategic Management	CSR	Lecture, discussions	Short answer	Little
Master's in Business Studies ^{##} , 1 st yr	Managerial Finance	Ethics & SR of mgmt finance	Lecture	Short answer	Little

*At least one question is certain in the final exam

**It is a tutor-designed course/module where the instructor has the autonomy to enlarge any component or content (including CSR) in the syllabus.

These are the programmes offered at the School of Management Tribhuvan University (SOMTU), at the university's central official location in Kirtipur of Kathmandu

These are the programmes offered at constituent campuses, and affiliated private colleges under the Faculty of Management, Tribhuvan University, throughout the country

Source: <http://www.fomecd.edu.np/downloads.php>, the website of Faculty of Management, Tribhuvan University (2016); Syllabi at School of Management, Tribhuvan University

Pokhara University: Pokhara University, the youngest of the four, has also been running its business courses mostly through affiliated private colleges in the western and central regions of the country. The present study has discovered one module each in EMBA and BBA that contains exclusive BE and CSR contents as shown in Table 4. While BBA is a widely studied programme of the university, the EMBA is much limited to a couple of business schools that limits its access to wider student bases. The university has yet to provide for more modules on BE and CSR in its other business courses also.

Table 2: CSR and Business Ethics Pokhara University Syllabi

Programme/ Level	Subject (Course- module)	Content of CSR/ethics	Pedagogical Methods	Question types	Weight- age
BBA 6 th Sem	Business and Society		Lecture, case studies, project works	Long and short answer questions	100%
EMBA	Managerial Ethics/ Corporate Citizenship	NA	NA	NA	100%

Source: Website of Pokhara University (2016)

Purbanchal University: Purbanchal University, the varsity operating its business courses mostly through affiliated private colleges in the eastern and central regions of the country, offers some BE and CSR contents scattered across various modules in its masters and bachelor programmes as shown in Table 3.

But, like Kathmandu University, it also has no exclusive module on BE and CSR. The information on the weightage of BE and CSR contents and the pedagogical arrangements in most of the modules was not available to the researcher.

Table 3: CSR and Business Ethics in Purbanchal University Syllabi

Program/Level	Subject (Course-module)	Content of CSR/ethics	Pedagogical Methods	Question types	Weight-age
MBA, 4 th sem	Strategic Management	CSR, Business Ethics, Social Responsiveness	Lecture method, case studies	NA	NA
MBA	Legal Environment of Business	CSR	Lecture method	NA	NA
MBA	Financial Mgmt & Analysis	Business ethics & SR	Lecture method	NA	NA
MBA-IV	International Business	Ethical dilemmas in IB, SR issues	Lecture method, case, projects	short answer	Approx 3%
MBA (in HR specialisation)	Ind/Labour Legislation	CSR	Lecture method, case studies	Short answer	NA

Source: Website of Purbanchal University (2016)

Kathmandu University: Kathmandu University, the younger varsity that enjoys more autonomy from the state mechanism offers only a few BE and CSR contents scattered across various modules in its masters and bachelor programmes, mostly as a part of the sub-units of the main module; but there is no exclusive module on BE and CSR (Table 2). The present study also could not discover information on the weightage of BE and CSR contents in each module and the pedagogical arrangements. It may partly be ascribed to the university practice that largely adheres to a uniform, centralised set of guidelines on pedagogy.

Table 4: CSR and Business Ethics in Kathmandu University Syllabi

Program / Level	Subject (Module)	Content of CSR/ethics	Pedagogical Methods	Question types	Weight-age
BBA/BBIS*/BHTM**	Business Management	-Management's social responsibility -Ethical behaviours of managers	NA	NA	NA
BBA	Consumer Behaviour#	Marketing ethics, social responsibility	NA	NA	NA
BBA/BBIS	Strategic Management	Social responsibility, ethics	NA	NA	NA
BBA	Marketing Research	Ethical issues	NA	NA	NA
BBA	Sales Management	Ethical issues	NA	NA	NA
BBA	Service Marketing	Ethical concerns	NA	NA	NA
BBA	Small Business Management	Social, Ethical Issues, SR	NA	NA	NA

Offered only to the Marketing specialisation students

*Bachelor in Business Information System

** Bachelor in Hotel and Travel Management

Source: Website of KUSOM (2016)

Hence, Tribhuvan University offers two full-fledged modules on CSR in its MBA-GLM and BBA programmes, as well as one with 50 percent CSR module in the MBA-IT, but since TU’s MBAs are the centralised programme run only at the School of Management of TU (SOMTU), the issue of empowering the teachers on CSR does not create as much hype as in BBA, which is run at TU colleges across the country.

In business school syllabi in Nepal where there is no separate paper on BE and CSR, the CSR contents are, instead, spread around or integrated into some other modules, viz.; international business, strategic management, and business environment.

Academic-Industry Initiatives to Promote CSR Education:

Since business ethics and CSR are relatively much younger modules in the business schools in Nepal, academic institutions and corporate firms have started forging collaboration in ameliorating the CSR syllabi. Table 5 presents a chronological account of such academia-industry initiatives to promote BE-CSR education in Nepal.

Table 5: Academic-Industry Initiatives on CSR Education

Academic-Corporate CSR Initiatives	Methodology	Participants	Outcomes
a) August 22, 2014: Seminar on ‘Status of CSR Education in University Syllabi in Nepal,’ organised by National Business Initiative (NBI), CSR Alliance and Prime College of Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu	Academic-corporate interaction on Discussion Paper by Arhan Sthapit: “CSR and Business Ethics in University Syllabi: What we need to do?”	28 ⁱ	Commitment to promote academic-corporate collaboration on CSR
b) 16-17 th December 2014: 1 st Nepal Responsible Business Summit by NBI in partnership with GIZ, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu University, and Himalayan Climate Initiative in Kathmandu	Discussion on five key themes and various sub-theme sessions	400 ⁱⁱ	Publication of ‘Responsible Business in Nepal: A Guide for Executives’
c) January 7, 2016: Interaction between Business Schools and Resource Persons on CSR-BE Education in Universities; organised by Prime College	Round table discussion to manage upcoming CSR-BE module in BBA (Tribhuvan University): Moderated by Dr. Narayan Manandhar	27 ⁱⁱⁱ	Commitment to organise a ToT for CSR BBA teachers
d) 15-19 th March 2016: A 5-day Training of Trainers (ToT) on “Business Ethics and Social Responsibility” organised by Prime College (Tribhuvan University), NBI and Peace Nexus in Kathmandu	15 sessions: Lectures, case discussions, panel discussions, field visits, useful material sharing: Coordinator: Dr. Narayan Manandhar	49 ^{iv}	-Developed Teachers for CSR education -Teaching Materials
e) 3-4 th August 2017: 2 nd Responsible Business Summit organised by NBI in partnership with Tribhuvan University and Kathmandu University in Kathmandu	-Multi-stakeholder discussion on four key themes, 16 sessions, 48 national and international speakers -Panel discussion comprising international experts	460 ^v	Separate theme on Academia and Regulation and special session on Academia-Industry Linkages

- i. It comprised university academicians and curriculum-designers and industry leaders
- ii. It included government officials, political and business leaders and few academicians

- iii. It included 22 business school heads, and 5 resource persons
- iv. It comprised teachers, experts, researchers, business leaders
- v. It had business leaders, university academicians government officials, regulators, development partners, and students as speakers, discussants and participants

Source: Author’s data collection except for No. c) and d) which was collected from NBI (2015; 2017b)

NBI and Prime College of Tribhuvan University are substantially active in taking the academic-industry initiatives to promote CSR education in business schools. More specifically, the bigger initiatives were taken only after the TU had designed and implemented its full-fledged module on CSR in its BBA course which would be offered in business schools through the country.

Universities are recognised as the genesis and hub for innovations where ingenious minds from diverse disciplines gather to share their ideas and previous literature for the innovation and modification of new technologies, process, procedures and systems. It has been fashionable and desirable that industries are attracted by the inventions in the university. Strong inventions are underpinned by the efficient networking of triple helix of competitiveness, i.e., 1. Innovations at universities, 2. Innovations in industry and 3. Innovation contributed by creative individuals.

Therefore, Academia-Industry Linkage (AIL) is expected to ensure research and development (R&D) initiatives are oriented towards market driven-demand and encourage an enabling environment to bolster creativity and competitiveness among young minds. Hence, there is the need to review current practices and identify windows of opportunities for promoting industry-academia collaboration and disseminating practices of selected institutions.

Issues and Problems facing the CSR Teaching-Learning Process:

A survey based on a focus group discussion was organised at Prime College, an affiliate business school of Tribhuvan University on March 5, 2017 to zero in on the key issues and problems identified in the seminar/concept paper of Sthapit (2016). The discussion was participated in by university professors/curriculum developers, business school principals, and CSR teaching faculty. The survey had each key informant interviewee indicated his/her most prioritised problem or issue. The study prioritised and further validated the five key issues and problems facing the CSR teaching-learning process as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Key Issues and Problems (by Priority) in CSR Teaching-Learning Process

Key Issues and Problems	No. of experts prioritising the problem		Rank
	N	%	
Shortage of customised reading materials and textbooks	4	36.36%	First
Lack of faculty development	3	27.27%	Second
Shortage of effective teaching pedagogy	1	9.09%	Third
Shortage of academia-business community dialogue and collaboration	1	9.09%	Fourth
Challenge to create internship opportunities for students	1	9.09%	Fifth
	11	100	

Source: Focus group discussion moderated by author, 2017

Asked to indicate the problem/issue they think the most critical and accorded highest priority to, most (63.63% or seven out of 11) of the key informants opined for shortage of customised reading materials and textbooks and lack of faculty development. Other problems include shortage of effective teaching pedagogy and academia-business community dialogue and collaboration, and lack of internship opportunities for students. They are discussed in the following paragraphs:

- a. **Shortage of customised reading materials and textbooks:** A large majority of focus group participants (key informants) prioritised it as the most critical problem. They pointed out to the shortage of academic resources customised to the Nepalese context. They agreed to delineate the following issues under this problem:
 - Limited academic resources available
 - Lack of requisite Nepalese context
 - Not contextualised to Nepalese businesses
 - Shortage of Nepal-specific, contextualised cases
- b. **Lack of faculty development:** Since CSR and BE module is relatively younger one, there is shortage of initiatives to develop its faculty through teacher training and development programmes; in addition to incentives for the teachers to undergo such development packages. In recognition of the gravity of the problem, a 5-day Training of Trainers (ToT) on “Business Ethics and Social Responsibility” was organised by NBI and Prime College (Tribhuvan University), and Peace Nexus. It was only the beginning; more of such programmes and refresher courses should be organised in regular intervals as opined by the key informants.
- c. **Shortage of effective teaching pedagogy:** The key informants underscored the need for developing a teaching pedagogy which makes the CSR teaching-learning process more effective. It is imperative to develop a pedagogy that best suits the Nepalese context, especially, the target students and syllabi.
- d. **Shortage of academia-business community dialogue and collaboration:** The importance of promoting academia-business community dialogue and collaboration cannot be over-emphasised. But a few such initiatives have come only from NBI and a number of University colleges that have yet to make significant impact on the CSR syllabi and education process. There is a big shortage of such dialogue and collaboration with other stakeholders.
- e. **Challenge to create internship opportunities for students:** Even though there is an internship provision for MBA and BBA students for learning general aspects at various organisations, there is no such opportunity to concentrate internship studies specifically on CSR and business ethics; it could weaken the learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION:

From the discussions of the findings, it is deduced that Tribhuvan University, the only central university of Nepal (TU, 2017), has offered more the BE and CSR contents either as a separate, independent module or as an integral part of other related subjects in a larger number of bachelors and masters programmes. Yet, pedagogical arrangements have to be specified and ameliorated in most of the universities in Nepal.

In Nepal, business schools of other relatively much younger universities, which are believed to have less intervention of the government than Tribhuvan University, have yet to justify their existence and operation in the country by according higher priority to CSR modules and contents in their syllabi. BE and CSR education has been incorporated only in management and business schools in Nepalese universities, that too in perfunctory fashion.

Since BE and CSR are relatively much newer modules in graduate and post graduate levels, the study findings should prove instrumental for Nepali universities to prepare the groundwork for formulating curricular plans and strategies vis-à-vis foreign business schools in the days to come. There should be closer academia-industry linkages to ameliorate the CSR education in terms of module-contents, case studies, and internship arrangements.

IMPLICATIONS:

Developing a critical understanding of CSR has become more important to both industry and business schools, as the Industrial Enterprises Act, 2016 has made it ‘mandatory’ for industries to spend at least 1 percent of their profit in CSR activities. Integrating CSR into business education curriculum helps develop the capabilities of Nepalese business students to work for inclusive and sustainable economy by making CSR a natural and indispensable part of their thought process. It

is important for Nepalese universities to incorporate CSR into curricula in order to better prepare students for entrepreneurship and employment today. In order to promote CSR studies in universities in Nepal, initiatives should be taken to accelerate the academia and industry dialogue and collaboration. University curriculum reform is a long way process. Short-term actions such as organising workshops for students and teachers, creating short-term CSR courses for students, organising dialogue with university streams and facilitating a multi-stakeholder collaboration among business community, academia, NGOs, media, and government agencies and others concerned to promote CSR education in universities need to be taken.

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APPENDIX:

Appendix-1: Higher Education Institutions, Enrolment and Teachers in Nepal

University	Institutions				Enrolment				Teachers in Constituent Campuses
	Communi-ty	Consti-tuent	Private	Total	Communi-ty	Consti-tuent	Private	Total	
Universities									
Tribhuvan University	425	60	638	1,123	127,963	108,605	95,248	331,816	7,966
Nepal Sanskrit University	2	14	2	18	73	1,368	241	1,682	739
Kathmandu University	0	6	15	21	0	5,958	9,695	15,653	195
Purbanchal University	6	5	120	131	802	950	21,787	23,539	61
Pokhara University	0	4	58	62	0	1,936	23,596	25,532	156
Lumbini Bauddha University	0	1	5	6	0	112	129	241	65
Mid-Western University	0	1	0	1	0	2,522	0	2,522	156
Far Western University	0	1	0	1	0	1,829	0	1,829	79
Agriculture and Forestry University	0	2	0	2	0	1,126	0	1,126	81
National Institutes/ Academies									
Patan Academy of Health Science	0	1	0	1	0	295	0	295	127
BP Koirala Institute for Health Sciences	0	1	0	1	0	1419	0	1419	208
National Academy of Medical Sciences	0	1	0	1	0	373	0	373	205
Karnali Academy of Health Sciences	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	NA
Total	433	98	838	1,369	128,838	126,493	150,696	406,027	10,038

Source: Higher Education (UGC, 2016) in Nepal Education in Figures, 2016, Ministry of Education

Appendix-2: Total Enrolment by Academic Levels and Regions

	Bachelor		Master		M. Phil		PGD		PhD		Total
	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	
Total	189,567	356455	22278	48588	77	431	76	105	68	448	428,526
Aayurveda	20	105	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	105
Buddism	0	0	84	215	0	0	0	0	3	26	328
Education*	75094	111831	8304	15544	62	332	72	79	7	81	136312
Engineering	3336	15567	53	311	0	0	0	0	1	8	15940
HSS	17985	33026	5481	13047	0	0	0	0	10	18	51582
Law	1476	4546	100	379	0	0	0	0	0	0	5025
Management**	71899	144736	7391	16674	12	69	4	26	5	10	168,927
Medicine	11516	20082	531	1162	0	0	0	0	0	0	21775
S&T	8057	25701	290	850	3	30	0	0	20	58	26952
Sanskrit	184	861	44	406	0	0	0	0	22	247	1580

Source: Higher Education (UGC, 2016) in Nepal Education in Figures, 2016, Ministry of Education

*31.8 percent of total students in higher education are in education

**39.42 % or about 40 percent of total students in higher education are in Management

Appendix 3: Total Enrolment by Faculty and Regions

Regions	Bachelor		Master		M. Phil.		PGD		Ph.D.	
	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total
Total	189567	356455	22278	48588	77	431	76	105	68	448
Eastern	28379	50357	2268	4791	0	0	0	0	0	0
Central	92951	184499	14221	32115	77	431	76	105	56	412
Western	36548	61606	3501	6237	0	0	0	0	12	36
Mid-Western	16394	30527	1116	2889	0	0	0	0	0	0
Far-Western	15295	29466	1172	2556	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Higher Education (UGC, 2016) in Nepal Education in Figures, 2016, Ministry of Education

Appendix 4: Instruments of Voluntary Codes of Conduct for Responsible Business

- i) **UN Global Compact:** It comprises 10 principles of responsible business organised into four categories, viz., human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. The UN initiative asks companies to act upon these principles in their corporate domains and promote global corporate citizenship and social responsibility.
- ii) **Global Reporting Initiative (GRI):** It was launched as a permanent global institution with a mandate as an international standards body to make sustainability reporting as routine as financial reporting at the United Nations
- iii) **OECD Guidelines:** They were guidelines by Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. The OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises cover appropriate business conduct for companies operating in the OECD member countries. Since Nepal does not belong to this organisation, these guidelines are not relevant for this country.
