CSR in Education:
The Case Study of the University of Birmingham

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The chapter will focus on corporate social responsibility in the education industry, specifically focusing on universities and how they can and are becoming more sustainable in accordance to the environment and the way the University of Birmingham is implementing Goal 12 of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals that will be mentioned in further detail. The fast-paced times of today means that there is constant evolution to create new opportunities and to improve our surroundings, so corporate social responsibility can help identify the needs for specific areas in which to thrive in this space.

ORGANISATION BACKGROUND

The University of Birmingham was established in the early 1900's by Queen Victoria through Royal Charter and was one of the first 'redbrick' universities in the UK. Chancellor Joseph Chamberlain founded the university to signify it as a fine example of higher education. It was the first civic university in England and all students with different religions and backgrounds were admitted on an equal basis. The respected architect, Sir Aston Webb, created the first stage of building on the campus that was completed in 1909.

With the Victorian style buildings of the early 20th century, modern buildings have since been implemented and the university now owns 600,000 m2 of building space that exceeds over £1 billion in value. The university holds over 620 acres of land ranging from the campus to spots in the Lake District and Stratford-upon-Avon. The main sites are located in Birmingham, with the 250 acre campus in Edgbaston and the Selly Oak campus located within a mile of it. Other amenities include their own railway station, concert hall, botanic gardens, geographical museum, art gallery and a Student Union deemed one of the largest in the UK. The academic library is one of the most ample in the country and home to a wide range of literature.

There are over 30,000 students that hail from over 150 different countries (4,000 international students) studying undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, making it one of the largest international student hubs in the UK, as well as Europe. Within six months of a student's graduation, an impressive 96% of students are either employed or in further education. In terms of staff, there are over 3,000 employees with over £0.5 billion in turnover.

The University has been proud to address issues in society and take on new challenges. The National Union of Students has been one of their achievements as founding members and is the first university in the country to be built using the campus model and form a building dedicated to the Student Union. As well as this, they have managed to:

- Offer dentistry degrees
- Create a hall of residence just for women
- Integrate a medical school
- Launch a faculty of commerce

According to an article published by Weiss 2016, Craig Mahoney, vice-chancellor of the University of the West of Scotland in the United Kingdom, it was mentioned that universities "cannot be sustainable without being socially responsible", specifically when referring to exposing all socio economic backgrounds to higher education by obtaining the adequate funding needed to do this.

SETTING THE STAGE

Corporate Social Responsibility covers many areas in business from health and safety to employee well-being to climate change and more. In recent years, its prominence in the workplace has led to increased environmentally friendly actions, with some institutions now taking it a step further by practicing and using CSR in their companies to ensure sustainable measures are taken. The recent trends in taking care of our environment and being aware of our 'carbon footprint' has led individuals and governments to put pressure on said organisations. This is to ensure that they not only become familiar with CSR, but that they take the adequate action to evolve positively when making these changes.

According to the International Organization for Standardization website: ''*Businesses and organisations do not operate in a vacuum. Their relationship to the society and environment in which they operate is a critical factor in their ability to continue to operate effectively. It is also increasingly being used as a measure of their overall performance.*''

The pyramid below displays the four different components of CSR. The first begins with the notion that the economic responsibilities are the main structures of the building block and 'hold up' the rest. Next is legal, as all businesses are expected to remain law-abiding and professional followed by the ethical responsibilities in 'doing the right thing' and finally, philanthropic responsibilities to improve quality of life, Carroll (1991).

Education in Sustainable Development

The University has six main areas where they focus on teaching sustainable development through a variety of departments:

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