



## Educational initiatives

# United Nations supported Principles for Responsible Management Education: purpose, progress and prospects



Jasmin Godemann<sup>a,\*</sup>, Jonas Haertle<sup>b</sup>, Christian Herzig<sup>c</sup>, Jeremy Moon<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Nottingham University Business School, International Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility (ICCSR), Jubilee Campus, Wollaton Road, Nottingham NG8 1BB, UK

<sup>b</sup> PRME Secretariat, UN Global Compact Office, 801 2nd Ave., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10017, USA

<sup>c</sup> Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham Business School, 607 Newton Building, Burton Street, Nottingham NG1 4BU, UK

## ARTICLE INFO

## Article history:

Received 19 June 2013

Received in revised form

17 July 2013

Accepted 18 July 2013

Available online 17 August 2013

## Keywords:

United Nations

Principles for Responsible Management

Education

PRME

Responsible management education

Sharing information in progress reports

Business schools' self-presentations

## ABSTRACT

The expectation that management education institutions should be leading thought and action on issues related to corporate responsibility and sustainability has been reinforced in the light of their association with business leaders' failings, including corporate corruption, the financial crisis and various ecological system crises. The United Nations supported Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative is an important catalyst for the transformation of management education and a global initiative to change and reform management education in order to meet the increasing societal demands for responsible business. This paper introduces the initiative and illustrates progress made by PRME signatories drawing upon analysis of their self-presentations in their Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) reports. The paper synthesizes the studies' findings and concludes with some thoughts on current and future directions and prospects of the initiative.

© 2013 Published by Elsevier Ltd.

## 1. Introduction

The expectation that management education institutions should be leading thought and action on issues related to corporate responsibility and sustainability has been reinforced in the light of their association with business leaders' failings, including corporate corruption, the financial crisis and various ecological system crises. This paper reviews the purpose and achievements of a key initiative to transform management education in order to meet the increasing societal demands for responsible business, the United Nations supported Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME). It also critically reflects on issues affecting current and future directions of the Initiative.

In the following section the Initiative's purpose and mission are described. Two core elements of the Initiative, the six plus one principles and the Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) reports, are introduced. In Section 3, the paper draws upon analysis of signatories' self-presentations in their SIP reports to describe the

progress made since the Initiative's launch in 2007. Finally, in Section 4 concluding thoughts on current and future directions and prospects of the Initiative are given.

## 2. The purpose of PRME

The United Nations supported initiative "Principles for Responsible Management Education" (PRME) addresses the responsibilities of management education institutions in preparing today's and tomorrow's business professions for the challenge of bringing about more responsible and sustainable business. It expects fundamental changes to the conduct of business, on the assumption that companies have wider responsibilities for society and the environment than simply profitability and meeting shareholders' interest. The expectation that management education institutions should be leading thought and action on issues related to social responsibility and sustainability has been reinforced in the light of their association with business leaders' failings, regarding corporate corruption (e.g. Enron, Siemens, UBS), and economic (e.g. the financial sector meltdown) and ecological (e.g. regarding global warming) system failings. Given their critical role in management education (e.g. as one of the financial sector's

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +44 1159250962.

E-mail address: [godemann@uni.leuphana.de](mailto:godemann@uni.leuphana.de) (J. Godemann).

main recruitment source) they have frequently been singled out by their stakeholders as having a particular responsibility in the broad agenda for social, economic and ecological sustainability (e.g. Khurana, 2010; Khurana and Nohria, 2008). In response to these criticisms, some efforts have been made to advance business ethics and corporate social responsibility education (Matten and Moon, 2005; Moon and Orlitzky, 2011; Orlitzky and Moon, 2010). Nonetheless the challenge remains rethinking management and leadership education (GRLI, 2012). In this context, PRME has been referred to as the key catalyst for the transformation of management education and for necessary changes required to meet the increasing societal demands for a responsible economy (Waddock et al., 2011; Rasche and Kell, 2010; Haertle, 2012).

The PRME initiative, launched in 2007 by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at the Global Compact Leaders Summit, was developed by an international group of deans, university presidents, and representatives of sixty business schools in collaboration with several other institutions including the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC which hosts the PRME Secretariat), the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the Aspen Institute's Business and Society Program, the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI), the European Academy of Business in Society (EABIS – now simply ABIS), and NetImpact, a student organization with more than 13,000 members. They all have remained partners of the initiative whilst the steering committee that guides the initiative has received further support from the Graduate Management Admission Council, the African Association of Business Schools (AABS), the Latin American Business School Council (CLADEA), CEEMAN, representing management schools in transforming markets, and the Association of Asia-Pacific Business Schools (AAPBS). As such, the initiative represents a multilateral effort to embed social responsibility and sustainability into management education institutions and core areas of education, research and organization/operations.

The mission of PRME is to inspire and foster responsible management education, research and thought leadership for long-term oriented, socially responsible business. It aims to support management education institutions adapt their curricula, research, teaching methodologies and institutional strategies in order to develop a generation of responsible business leaders and enhance research on PRME related issues. Although the initiative is not yet part of any accreditation process, it has been endorsed by two leading management education accreditation organizations. AACSB International has endorsed it as a complement to and continuous framework for management education. EFMD has referred to it in the context of an update of its EQUIS accreditation standards (see Section 3.2) (Waddock et al., 2011). Besides being a framework for implementing responsible management education, PRME has also grown as a network serving as a platform for exchanging ideas and enabling learning among the signatories through various mechanisms (e.g. local chapters, working groups – see below).

Like the UNGC, which expects signatory companies to commit to ten principles of responsible business, the PRME initiative offers principles for business and management schools to follow, and provides an environment for information sharing and learning. The initiative stresses the importance of continuous improvement along six (plus one) principles and of transparency in the form of regular Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) reports, as described in the following sections.

### 2.1. Alignment with the 6 + 1 principles

Signatories to the PRME are required to commit to six (plus one) principles when developing research, curricula and teaching methodologies, and in developing organizational practices for a

more sustainable future. To embrace the increased demands upon and societal expectations of managers the first three principles focus on a shift in business education:

*Purpose: “We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy”. (Principle 1)*

*Values: “We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact”. (Principle 2)*

*Method: “We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership”. (Principle 3)*

The fourth principle addresses the relationship of knowledge generation and the businesses' role in and interaction with society and the natural environment:

*Research: “We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value”. (Principle 4)*

In relation to the mission of educating responsible managers and enabling them to deal with complex global problems, two further principles are formulated: Partnership and Dialog. These two principles stress that business education has an important role in fostering a stakeholder-oriented ethic to managers. More broadly, they highlight the role of business schools in developing a debate about social responsibility and sustainability and the importance of engaging with stakeholders to better understand and meet future challenges.

*Partnership: “We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges”. (Principle 5)*

*Dialog: “We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.” (Principle 6)*

Finally, the initiative also stresses the necessity to transform organizational practices to reflect the business schools' overall commitment to responsibility and sustainability.

*Operations: “We understand that our own organizational practices should serve as example of the values and attitudes we convey to our students.” (Additional/Addendum Principle).*

### 2.2. Sharing Information on Progress

Another parallel to the UNGC is the PRME initiative's requirement, with effect from 2010, to regularly disclose information in progress by individual institutions. Reporting on progress to other business schools and stakeholders by signatory institutions is an essential part of the active commitment to the UN PRME initiative. The purpose of SIP reports is twofold (UN PRME, 2012): a key learning opportunity through sharing experience and good practice among the PRME network and the provision of a regular account of achievements made by the signatories to all stakeholders (at least every 24 months; although yearly communication is encouraged).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1745077>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1745077>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)