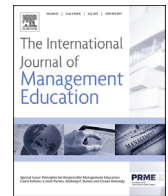




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The agenda 2030 for responsible management education: An applied methodology



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ABSTRACT

As well as UN Global Compact signatories are invited to adopt corporate social responsibility, the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) encourage educational institutions to implement sustainability in their programs, promoting the development of globally responsible leaders. Aiming to collaborate to this network, this study investigates an example of how to implement the PRME and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the school curricula by describing the methodology developed by Brazilian business school ISAE – Higher Institute of Administration and Economics. Structured from the perspective of transdisciplinary education, the subject of Sustainability in Organizations encourages research, provides discussions in the classroom and stimulates collective knowledge by integrating students to the corporate world – enabling the construction of knowledge in a practical and transformative way. As a result, students obtain a high degree of involvement, increasing awareness on their role in society and participation as protagonists of the changes the world needs.

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1. Introduction

Pointed out as a possible solution to chronic global problems, education is increasingly present in the agenda of society and companies. Increasing poverty, the scarcity of natural resources and climate change are some of the conflicts that could be partly resolved with a focus on values, such as ethics and corporate social responsibility.

As well as UN Global Compact signatories are invited to adopt corporate social responsibility, the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) encourage educational institutions to implement sustainability in their programs, promoting the development of globally responsible leaders.

Translating the six PRME principles into teaching programs has become a major challenge for business schools. In this way, exchanging researches and experiences through a collaborative network becomes a very strong strategy for signatories.

Thus, collaborating to this network, this study seeks ways to implement the PRME and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the school's curricula by describing the methodology developed by the Higher Institute of Administration and Economics – ISAE.

Based in Curitiba, southern Brazil, ISAE participated in the task-force that designed the PRME in 2006. It is also one of the first institutions to join the initiative. Currently ISAE is the head of PRME Chapter Brazil and articulates projects with other Brazilian institutions.

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In the master's program, most especially the subject of Sustainability in Organizations, students are encouraged to redesign management with a focus on corporate social responsibility, through a hybrid education method.

The following topics contextualize the subject's theoretical basis to explain the objectives of activities, which will be further detailed.

2. Background and context

The technological developments after the three major Industrial Revolutions (18th century: invention of the steam engine; 19th century: the discovery of electricity; 20th century: robotics and the integration of scientific knowledge with industrial production) led to many changes in the world economic scenario.

However, the positive points from these changes – the creation of companies and job generation – do not extinguish the social and environmental impacts on people lifestyles. For decades, unequal income distribution has increased the gap between rich and poor, the inconsequential use of natural resources has changed the planet's conditions, and high consumption has caused an imbalance in the relationship between man and nature.

The awakening to this scenario has showed society that these complications cannot be left for future generations, for we need to act now to ensure a healthy, fair future for the planet and for people.

Focused on that demand, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan launched the Global Compact (GC), an initiative that seeks to mobilize companies to work together with other social actors in order to contribute to the construction of a more inclusive and sustainable global economy.

According to this initiative, companies can help the certification, so that markets, trade, technology and finance advance in such way to benefit economies and societies throughout the world, promoting an inclusive process of globalization. (Arruda Filho, 2015)

The Global Compact disseminates 10 universal principles with the objective of integrating them into entrepreneurial activities around the world and catalyze actions in support of wider UN goals. The 10 Global Compact principles are:

- Principle 1:** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- Principle 2:** make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.
- Principle 3:** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- Principle 4:** the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor;
- Principle 5:** the effective abolition of child labor; and
- Principle 6:** the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.
- Principle 7:** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- Principle 8:** undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- Principle 9:** encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.
- Principle 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

To ensure the participation of this generation of leaders in the quest for sustainable development, it was necessary to integrate global responsibility into their visions, goals and practices.

Thus, in 2006, an initiative of the Global Forum “Business as an Agent of World Benefit: Management Knowledge Leading Positive Change” (promoted by the Academy of Management, UN Global Compact and Case Weatherhead School of Management) brought together 60 representatives from universities, business schools and academic institutions around the world to form the PRME task-force and establish six principles for higher education institutions (Escudero et al., 2007):

- **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.
- **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.
- **Method:** We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Dialogue:** We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

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