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ABSTRACT

The paper aims to identify the role of Universities in fostering public policies, through the promotion of social responsibility, and the implementation of social marketing initiatives. This innovative approach is particularly interesting since the literature does not cover, until now, the importance of adopting a social responsibility strategy within Universities, in order to foster public policies for development. First, Corporate Social Responsibility should be developed at Universities. For this purpose, an integrative approach that embraces marketing, economic, ecological, and social aspects is proposed, through the design of a strategic action plan, which includes three operational levels: analysis, implementation and assessment. Second, in order to foster the impact of public policies for development, social marketing initiatives should be implemented among institutional and social networks where Universities assume an increasing strategic role.

Key Words: Corporate Social Responsibility, Government Policy, Social Marketing.

JEL Classification Codes: I28, M14, M31.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become a global phenomenon that makes use of innovative approaches for solving social, environmental and economic problems with the aim to increase the benefits for society, in general, and for the stakeholders of organisations, in particular. There are many organisations that have not yet undertaken initiatives related to CSR. This is due to the lack of knowledge about this corporative "philosophy", and its implications, in terms of the subsequent mechanisms of social marketing.

The European Council that took place in Lisbon, in 2000, made a formal proposal for stimulating CSR across European Firms. This proposal stated best practices for lifelong learning, work organisation, equal opportunities, social inclusion and sustainable development. This European orientation is based on a long term strategic objective, that is: "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of maintaining sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" (Lisbon European Council, 2000:2). The European Commission also recognised in their final report that "much progress has been made on CSR since the stimulating proposal presented at the Lisbon Council" (COM, 2006:6).

In this context, the Green Paper (2001), the Communication of 2002, and the setting up of an EU Multi-Stakeholder Forum on CSR (CSR Forum) were important steps that should be stressed (COM, 2006:5). More recently, in the ambit of the *Estratégia Nacional de Desenvolvimento Sustentável* for Portugal, the CSR is presented as a strategic variable for promoting sustainable development. Furthermore, in the *Quadro de Referência Estratégico Nacional* (QREN, 2007) the public polices are orientated for attaining increasing levels of sustainable development, innovation, entrepreneurship, economic growth and competitiveness.

The present paper aims to identify the ways of promoting strategically CSR in a special kind of public organisations: the Universities. Why are they so special? Because, they are intended as key players in the promotion of institutional and social networks, that may foster public policies oriented to citizens, under a sustainable basis.

This paper also contributes for clarifying the relationship between CSR and social marketing, in the scope of Universities. Additionally, a proposal of a strategic action plan for developing CSR at Universities is presented, by using an integrative approach between marketing, economic, ecological and social aspects.

The paper is structured as follows. In the second section, in order to identify the missing link between CSR and Universities, the reference literature is reviewed and a state of the art is presented. In the third section, the target audience is defined and Social Marketing for fostering Public Policies is proposed. In the fourth section, a proposal of strategic action plan for promoting CSR at Universities is made. Finally, conclusions and future researches are presented.

2. CSR AND UNIVERSITIES: THE MISSING LINK

In the last decades the CSR has originated other related concepts and themes, many of which embraced CSR and were quite compatible with it. Further terms have become more or less synonymous of CSR, Corporate Sustainability (CS), Sustainable Development (SD), Corporate Citizenship (CC), Triple Bottom Line (TBL), Socially Responsible Behaviour (SRB) and Ethical Business (EB).

Carroll (1994:14), described CSR as "an eclectic field with those boundaries, multiple memberships, and differing training/perspectives; broadly rather than narrowly focused; multidisciplinary; wide breadth; brings in a wider range of literature; and interdisciplinary". In consequence, the CSR approach presents not only a set of theories but also a wide range of frameworks, which are complex and need further research.

The concept of CSR resulted from two simultaneous developments. The first consists on the efforts of policy makers and organisations in order to promote CSR practices. The second path comprises the academic contributions.

The European Commission is committed with the promotion of CSR. One of the leading initiatives that should be stressed is the launching of the Green Paper, in which CSR is defined as "a concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment" (Green Paper, 2001:5). In order to increase the productivity and competitiveness, the firms integrate social and environmental activities into their management practices and business operations.

The CSR concept may be presented under an evolutionary perspective, which combines different approaches: contribution to economic prosperity, environmental quality and social capital. Firms are facing a "triple bottom line" this also may be considered as a triple challenge, that is, to behave efficiently, environmentally and socially responsible.

CSR is also an interactive process, which embraces their stakeholders on a voluntary basis. Stakeholders may be internal (employees) or external (customers, suppliers, shareholders, investors and local community).

The main responsibility of a firm is to assure profitability for shareholders. In a simultaneous way, firms may prosecute social and environmental objectives, through the incorporation of CSR, as a strategic investment, that provides, directly or indirectly, positive effects, in terms of value added (Green Paper, 2001).

In a direct way, positive effects may be provided through the promotion of a better working environment. This will contribute for reaching a more committed and productive workforce, or for using natural resources, in a more efficient way. Firms are also increasingly "going global", by committing in internationalisation strategies. These global firms need to increase confidence and trust with their stakeholders. CSR makes it easier for them, especially, in terms of the promotion of strategic alliances with leading firms in other countries.

In an indirect way, CSR catches the attention of consumers and investors, in a sustainable and responsible basis (Green Paper, 2001). This kind of positive effects may also influence the core assets of the firm, for example, its brand image or goodwill. This way, CSR may promote, in the long term, the sustainable growth of the firm.

From the second half of the 20th century, further discussions about CSR have been taking place. A seminal contribution about CSR is presented in the work of Bowen (1953): *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*. Bowen (1953:6) defined CSR as: the "obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society".

The contribution of Drucker (1984) must be stressed. He proposed a "new meaning" for CSR, with special focus in the role of the Third Sector: the Social. The contribution of Drucker pointed out profitability and responsibility are complementary notions. At that time, this contribution opened up unexplored "roads", namely, by providing the possibility of transforming social responsibilities in windows opportunities for new businesses.

According to Drucker (1984:62) "the proper social responsibility of business is to tame the dragon that is to turn a social problem into economic opportunity and economic benefit, into productive capacity, into human competence, into well-paid jobs, and into wealth". Thus, the first social responsibility of the entrepreneur is to make profit to cover the future costs.

In order to review the most important reference studies about the CSR concept, under an evolutionary basis, a chronological approach is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – Evolution of the CSR Concept

Reference Studies	Main Topics	CSR Concept
Davis (1960, 1967) McGuire (1963) Walton (1967)	Significant attempts to formalise the meaning of CSR.	It supposes that organisations have not only economic and legal obligations, but also certain responsibilities relative to society.
Johnson (1971) Steiner (1971) Davis (1973) Sethi (1975) Preston and Post (1975) Carroll (1979)	Proliferation of CSR definitions and attempts to define distinctive features and rules of CSR. The analysis of the relationship between CSR and performance did start.	It is the pursuit of socioeconomic goals through the elaboration of social norms in prescribed business roles. The firms have the responsibility to produce goods and services that society wants and to obtain profit.
Jones (1980) Carroll, (1983) Drucker (1984) Freeman (1984) Frederick (1986)	Few definitions did appear. There are additional research and alternatives themes.	It involves the strategic conduct of firms and is composed by four parts: economic, legal, ethical and voluntary or philanthropic.
Wood (1991) Carroll (1991, 1994, 1999) Donaldson and Preston (1995)	CSR is integrated in alternative topics of research. The importance of stakeholders did increase.	It was oriented to alternative themes, such as, business ethics, international social issues, and corporate social performance.

Source: Own elaboration.

The 90's were also very rich, in what concerns the introduction of complementary concepts to social responsibility, such as, corporate social responsiveness, corporate social performance, ethics in business and management of the relationships established between the stakeholders, and public policies.

In the last Decades, the CSR concept has been improved along several "swarms" of the Theory of the Firm: (i) Stakeholder Theory; (ii) Institutional Theory; and (iii) Resource-Based Perspectives (see Table 2).

Table 2 – Theoretical "Swarms" of CSR

"Swarms" of the Theory of the Firm	Key-concepts and proposals	Author(s)
Stakeholder Theory	Managers should tailor their policies to satisfy numerous constituents, not just shareholders. These stakeholders include workers, customers, suppliers, and community organisations.	Freeman (1984)
	Stressed the moral and ethical dimensions of stakeholder theory, as well as the business case for engaging in CSR.	Donaldson and Preston (1995)
	Firms involved in repeated transactions with stakeholders, in a cooperative and trustable basis, have an incentive to be honest and ethical, since such behaviour is good for the firm.	Jones (1995)
Institutional Theory	Institutions play an important role in shaping the consensus within a firm regarding the establishment of an 'ecologically sustainable' organisation.	Jennings and Zandbergen (1995)
Resource-Based Perspectives	For certain firms, environmental social responsibility may constitute a resource or capability that leads to sustainable competitive advantage.	Hart (1995)
	Presents a supply/demand perspective on CSR, which implies that the ideal level of CSR may be determined through cost benefit analysis.	McWilliams and Siegel (2001)
	CSR strategies, when supported by political strategies, may be used to create sustainable competitive advantage.	McWilliams *et al.* (2002)

Source: Adapted from McWilliams *et al.* (2006:7).

More recently, McWilliams and Siegel (2001:117) defined CSR as the set of "actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law".

The body of knowledge on CSR was developed because policy makers and many organisations consider adequate the implementation of CSR, in terms of the future accomplishment of their economic, financial and social objectives. Both emphasise the integration of social and environmental concerns in their organisations, and the interaction with their stakeholders.

Nevertheless, there is a generalised recognition of the importance of CSR; it may originate different interpretations, according to different groups, sectors and stakeholders. CSR is relevant in all types of industries and firms, including micro, small, medium, large, and multinational levels.

Although, CSR is mainly promoted by large companies, mainly multinational enterprises, it is also important for other type of organisations such as universities. Its wider application towards Universities is of central importance, since they are the greatest contributors for the formation of forthcoming entrepreneurs, business leaders, managers and employees.

The new challenges of CSR raise the motivation and engagement for organisations, especially Universities so they can acquire skills and competences to develop appropriate CSR initiatives. The implementation of CSR in an organisation requires a systematic, methodical, transversal, and especially strategic approach, for the whole organisation.

The implementation of CSR initiatives in the Universities, contribute towards awareness-raising and dissemination of the concept and best practices among students, professors and other professionals networked with this special kind of public organisation.

The rising of the collective awareness about best practices of CSR in other kind of learning organisations, creates a need for developing innovative studies about the impact of the CSR on the performance of Universities. In fact CSR is a new challenge for Universities.

Adomssent and Michelsen (2006: 86) state that Universities "do not only need to become more open minded, it also needs to transform itself into a learning academia, constantly adapting itself to new challenges and comprehending itself as one player interacting with others".

The learning organisations spread and promote the CSR practices at every level, through initiatives and programmes, emphasising the desired role for Universities (see Table 3).

Table 3 – Education for CSR: The Desired Role for Universities

- *United Nations'* (UN) Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) presents an opportunity for higher education institutions to promote, training and awareness for a more sustainable future. (http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=27234&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

- *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1992)* in Chapter 36 of Agenda 21, "Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training," in social responsibility and environmental awareness. (http://www.un.org/geninfo/bp/enviro.html)

- *COPERNICUS University Charter for Sustainable Development*, constitutes today the principle guidance for the majority of higher education institutions in Europe, due to their efforts to contribution towards sustainable development. (http://www.copernicus-campus.org/sites/uni.html)

- *Bologna Process*, have setting goals and priorities for 2010. The Higher Education European Area can contribute towards the achievement of education for all, that should be based on the principle of sustainable development. (http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050520_Bergen_Communique.pdf)

Source: Own elaboration.

In the context of the United Nations' (UN) Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, Universities are presented as development levers for training and promoting a collective awareness about the need for growth, in a sustainable basis.

Universities assume a special importance in promoting a collective strategy for growth in a sustainable basis, throughout the development of an adequate educational offer and scientific research, in the scope of social responsibility and sustainable development. Furthermore, it should assume the role of strategic catalyst of a multidisciplinary network of stakeholders through the promotion of social responsibility and environmental awareness.

These principles are crucial to promote sustainable development and improve the capability of people to address social and environmental issues which have been contemplated since 1992 in Chapter 36 of Agenda 21, on "Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training," (UNCED, 1992).

Despite many efforts on the behalf of sustainability and social responsibility, most social and environmental trends have not been effective. However, Universities are presently open to promote a sustainable growth strategy. Therefore the theoretical framework and operational models are being clarified; the knowledge, the skills, and the sensibilities are emerging.

In the European framework, the guidelines for Universities are clearly defined in the COPERNICUS-Programme (Cooperation Programme in Europe for Research on Nature and Industry through Coordinated University Studies). The signing of the COPERNICUS University Charter for Sustainable Development in 1993 as a reply function to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro has represented a breakthrough in raising consciousness within European Universities about the need for working together in the promotion of a sustainable growth strategy. Since then, the number of Universities that belong to the COPERNICUS network is increasing. Nowadays, more than 320 Universities and higher education institutions, from 38 European countries, have signed the COPERNICUS Charter, thereby declaring that they will give sustainable development an important place in their activities.

In signing the Charter, Universities voluntarily commit to 10 principles of action, encompassing institutional commitment, environmental ethics, university employees' education, environmental education, interdisciplinary approaches, knowledge dissemination, networking, strategic partnerships and alliances, continuing education programmes and technology transfer.

COPERNICUS-CAMPUS promotes both the transfer of know-how, and of best practices and strategies for making sustainability more central to university life, since this will contribute for sustainable development in Europe. It also constitutes a pro-active approach on what Universities could do to achieve the Bologna reforms in order to face globalisation, and to contribute to the "Knowledge Europeland".

In this sense, COPERNICUS-CAMPUS should be viewed as an opportunity window for promoting strategic alliances between Universities. This will promote, in a clear way, a sustainable development strategy in higher education, by exploring synergies with the implementation of the Bologna Process. Additionally, it will contribute for creating an Excellence Pole in Europe, in what concerns the CSR dynamics for supporting sustainable economic growth of institutions and firms.

The European Commission intends to establish the foundations of a European Alliance for CSR. "The Alliance is built on the understanding that CSR can contribute to sustainable development, while enhancing Europe's innovative potential and competitiveness, thereby also contributing to employability and job creation. The Alliance seeks to promote CSR as a business opportunity creating win-win situations for companies and society and recognises that CSR is a voluntary business approach which reflects the diversity of European business." (COM, 2006:11).

In order to reinforce the cooperation with EU, and to accelerate the implementation of CSR practices in the new EU member states, it was also launched the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in last January 2007.

The CSR practices are of major importance and emerge as a big challenge for the firms and other public organisations all over the world. Universities are more or less independent organisations, but they should assume their responsibility in social and institutional networks. They have the freedom to decide whether or not to teach themes such as social responsibility and sustainable development. They should also not ignore the norms and guidelines of organisations such as UNESCO, UNDP and EU, since they are in fact key players in promoting CSR through social marketing, for a better and sustainable society and economy.

3. SOCIAL MARKETING

3.1. WHAT IS THE DESIRED TARGET-AUDIENCE?

The Social Marketing has been contributing, historically, for a better application of public politics: health, environment, education, safety, civic actuation or human rights. However, it faces new current challenges of the need of making possible great campaigns endowed high budgets, without many times to obtain the such wanted return. It is enough to think about the results campaigns for civic actuation and education.

The implementation of Social Marketing strategies misses, usually, the use of management and commercial tools. This situation should be surpassed, by adopting commercial and marketing procedures, in order to guarantee the effectiveness of promotional strategies.

The seminal contribution of Kotler and Zaltman (1971) in the field of Social Marketing, has been coming to be explored and expanded, in the international context, for: (i) Universities (University of South Florida - US, and University of Strathclyde - Scotland); and (ii) Public Entities (Disease Control and Prevention, Turning Point Social Marketing National Excellence Collaborative, and Social Marketing Network – all in US).

The implementation of an initiative of social marketing implies the definition of the following critical elements: (i) a consumer orientation (Lefebvre and Flora, 1988; Lefebvre, 1992; Andreasen, 1995); (ii) an exchange (Lefebvre and Flora, 1988; Lefebvre, 1996; Leathar and Hastings, 1987; Smith, 1997); (iii) and a long-term planning (Andreasen, 1995).

In this sense, social marketing implies a positioning that requires the application of concepts and tools that are "imported" from the commercial world, in order to influence the voluntary behaviour of target audiences, and to improve their life quality (Andreasen, 1995).

For example, social marketing is a powerful tool for persuading people to stop polluting, to adopt healthier diets, to engage in family planning, etc. It is essentially a method for achieving social dynamics. In this sense, it should not be confused with campaigns that merely seek to provide education or change attitudes, and it is certainly not merely a form of advertising.

In this sense the traditional logic of the "4Ps": Product, Price, Placement and Promotion, should be complemented with Social Marketing for Public Policies ("SM2P").

Social Marketing efforts must incorporate all of the "4 Ps": (1) Create an enhancing product (that is, the package of benefits associated with the desired action); (2) Minimise the reservation price that target audience believes it must pay in the exchange; (3) Make the exchange and its opportunities available in places that fits their current lifestyles; (4) Promote the exchange opportunity with creativity and through channels and tactics that promote the positive reaction of target audiences.

Nevertheless, to make this possible, in terms of social dynamics and networks, "SM2P" is required, public policies for social marketing are required, not just for promoting social values and healthier life styles, but also for administrating efficient campaigns that should attend to the results obtained through cost benefit analysis.

According to Kotler (1970), the social marketing presents as target audiences: the citizens. For this reason, researches about behaviour profiles and specific characteristics should be conducted, even if they are extremely negative or reactive. An improved understanding about those profiles will provide the possibility of introducing corrective measures, under a perspective of implementing public policies for development.

The main aim of Social Marketing is simple: to improve, in an effective way, the standard behaviours, in order to increase the quality level of citizens (Kotler, 1970). In this particular field, Universities assume a special importance; since, on the one hand, they contribute for the human capital formation, and on the other hand, they act as catalyst for establishing institutional networks that should involve key players of the environmental systems, especially, of the Regional Innovation Systems. Just by implementing this kind of actions oriented to social responsibility and sustainability, a new social dynamics can be assured, whose focus is the object of social marketing, i.e., the citizens.

Solomon (1989), and Kotler, Roberto and Lee (2002) state that social marketing assumes a differentiating nature, in terms of the following dimensions of analysis: (i) the "social" products assume a different nature, due to the components of social change, which undertake the profiles of standard behaviours of the citizens; (ii) the aim of obtaining gains for the citizens and the society is difficult, since some "social" products are considered unnecessary, from the part of certain elements of the target-audience; (iii) the difficulty in identifying and confronting the competitors, since there are some persistent behaviours due to strongly rooted cultural values of the citizens; (iv) the financing is difficult, because of the diffusion and of the non visibility of the obtained profits; (v) the expansion of demand may be not possible, due to scarce resources; and (vi) the political dimension of social marketing for fostering public policies, may generate controversies and fragmentations.

But, what are the main actions to social marketing in association with public policies for development? The answers that are here proposed are the following: (1) to place the citizens as the core focus of Social Marketing?; and (2) to help in the improvement of objectives of public policies oriented to: knowledge, education, innovation and technology.

In operational terms, the social marketing will provide new dynamics, in terms of the execution of the guidelines of public policies, through the promotion of initiatives to be supported by Universities and developed by the citizens.

The "importing" of the commercial philosophy into the public framework, should prosecute the following aims: (i) to educate and qualify the Human Capital (ii) to mobilise the human actives for the development of the Knowledge Society; (iii) to promote the long life learning; (iv) to surpass the delay, in terms of the scientific and technological delay; (v) to reinforce scientific and technological competences, both public and private; (vi) to recognise and motivate the firms for creating qualified employment and research and development activities; (vii) to promote innovation activities, especially, in micro and small firms; and (viii) to disseminate new organisation forms, technologies and, especially, innovations in products and processes.

3.2 SOCIAL MARKETING FOR PUBLIC POLICIES

In the first decade of the XXI Century, one of the challenges faced by Universities is to assume the role of key-player in fostering public policies for development, taking as target audience, the main agents of regional innovation systems: the citizens.

Beyond urgent, the formalisation of a differentiated strategy for Social Responsibility is a hard working task. It assumes a fundamental strategic importance, since to communicate, clearly, the mission of Universities, and to foster the impact of public policies, it is necessary to design a strategic action plan, and to promote it, under a *rationale* of social marketing.

According to the definition, generally, accepted in the EU, this kind of orientation to citizens implies the voluntary integration of environmental and social needs on the part of the Universities. This aims to provide not only a communication channel, but also an interactive channel with the target audience. Consequently, the definition of a CSR strategy from the part of Universities, will impact on the regional competitive capability of the local system.

To implement a generic strategy of differentiation, in a Porterian sense, it is necessary not only to identify institutional networks, but also to support relational networks that embrace the key players of the environmental system of Universities (Porter, 1990, 2006).

The capital provided by the relational and institutional networks will help to create a strong reputation and to build up a strong institutional and academic goodwill, which should be supported by high quality research and education.

In this context, the bet in the formation of the human capital is a differentiating characteristic that will work, in a positive way, also for Universities, especially, in terms of the reinforcement of their capability to attract and retain national and foreign students, both at graduation and post-graduation level.

There are two fundamental dimensions of CSR that should be "exported" to the framework of Universities. First, the promotion of a true culture of Social Responsibility, within the organisation, using a permanent question: How University is socially responsible? This may be evaluated through the elaboration of annual reports that should be prepared by top managers that are responsible by the CSR. Second, the development of social marketing actions should be executed, in order to better communicate and interact with citizens. This kind of actions should be based on an integrative approach oriented to cooperating actions with distinct organizations.

Paraphrasing the Brazilian minister poet and singer Gilberto Gil, in a recent public intervention, "the Universities, beyond an educational role for increasing knowledge, they assume also a civic role for disseminating values. In that case, the most important human value is solidarity".

The implementation of social responsibility in Universities implies the development of an internal process for certifying the quality of their CSR. In operational terms, several sequential actions are required: (i) the creation of a responsible team by CSR and Social Marketing; (ii) the identification of social and environmental needs; (iii) the creation of an indicator of Social Responsibility; (iv) the internal and external communication of the results; (v) the definition of strategic aims; and (vi) the design of a strategic action plan for CSR.

The clear communication of the CSR mission of Universities to all the agents that integrate the institutional and social networks is fundamental to create the necessary conditions for social marketing being successful.

This way, Universities assume a special role in fostering the value added proposals associated with distinct public policies for Development, through Knowledge, Education, Innovation and Technology. Because, when they communicate with the target audience, they are democratising the access to coded information that is not, equally, perceived and valued by the distinct agents of the environmental system. Social Marketing that should be operated through the previous adoption of a strategic action plan, creates the possibility to reach all the agents in a more equal and participative basis. This will be strongly positive for the players, specially the target audience: the citizens.

4. STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOR UNIVERSITIES: HOW TO PROMOTE CSR

Universities are key players in promoting dynamics of CSR, since they take part of environmental systems, whose performance should also be promoted in social terms. This way, they should include as a part of their mission: the promotion of CSR; which should also lead to the design of a strategic action plan for promoting it, through the use of social marketing, both internally and externally (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Strategic Action Plan for promoting CSR

Source: Own elaboration.

As it was previously presented in Figure 1, before developing internal and external initiatives of social marketing, three levels of the strategic action plan should be surpassed: (i) analysis; (ii) implementation; and (iii) assessment.

Firstly, the analysis is based on the execution of a strategic diagnosis, by including external and internal factors, in order to provide the identification of adequate policies of social responsibility. Secondly, at an operational level, the action fields for implementing the strategic action plan should be identified. Thirdly, the mechanism of assessment is based on the production of an impact report.

The strategic action plan for Universities should be adjusted along time, through the incorporation of new dynamics observed both at internal and external levels. Diagnosis can be applied to one or more of the planning, implementation, checking, and improvement modes of corporate operations.

The mission can promote the social responsibility. Therefore, Universities may need to redefine their competitive positioning, in order to incorporate wider social responsibility goals. Universities should fully integrate public policies for social responsibility into their activities, by considering all the visions of stakeholders. In this regard, Universities should contribute to economic, social and environmental progress with a view oriented towards achieving sustainable development. Thus, the main objectives are concerned to social, economic and environmental commitments that should be promoted and developed in a social marketing context.

The strategic action plan is focused on the following action fields: (1) Teaching and learning; (2) Research framework; and (3) Community integration.

In some cases the Impact Report may be focused on one element of CSR such as environmental protection, whereas, in other cases, it may be more comprehensive such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI, 2007). The GRI's vision is that reporting on economic, environmental, and social performance by all organisations is a routine, and is also comparable to financial reporting.

Another fundamental level of the strategic action plan involves the assessment of the institution performance in terms of CSR. This procedure includes the definition and the computation of indicators for measuring performance, account and report on corporate performance. It will provide the assessment of CSR performance, by developing benchmarking exercises, according to their past activities and the performance of other Universities, in terms of CSR. From here, it will result the measurement of strategic gaps and afterwards the proposal of corrective measures.

Universities will obtain value added, in a sustainable basis, by achieving credibility within the marketplace and the regional systems where they operate. To accomplish this, it will be necessary to use indicators, measuring approaches, accounting, reporting, assessments and benchmarking. A strategic action plan can enhance the Universities' performance, in terms of CSR, through planning, implementation, checking, and improving areas. A strategic action plan embraces the need for transparency of Universities, in the ambit of their CSR, by making public this strategic orientation. For this, it will be necessary to develop mechanisms of internal and external marketing.

5. CONCLUSIONS

After presenting a review of the literature, this paper explores the missing link between social responsibility and social marketing, in the scope of Universities. It contributes for revealing the strategic role of Universities in fostering Public Policies for Development. This requires, the previous adoption of a CSR culture, and afterwards the need for promotion should be addressed through the development of social marketing initiatives.

The strategic action plan now proposed, offers a logical planning process involving: market research; market segmentation; objective setting; design of strategies and tactics; and social marketing at internal and external level.

The development of social marketing initiatives not only shares generic marketing's underlying philosophy of consumer orientation, but it also provides a key mechanism for fostering public policies. This way, marketing principles can be, positively, applied, in order to broadly disseminate the generic strategy for development in a sustainable basis. Several strategic programs may be promoted through the direct action of Universities, in related areas, such as, Knowledge, Education, Innovation and Technology.

The present paper has limitations, since it provides an early stage proposal of strategic action plan, for Universities. This needs to be expanded through the use of other strategic management and analytical tools. Further studies about the application of this proposal, are needed, especially, in what concerns the identification of adequate mechanisms for reinforcing the embeddeness of social responsibility in Regional Innovation Systems.

Universities are key players in promoting new dynamics at institutional and social networks. They face a double bottom line, on the one hand, to improve the citizens' quality of life, in a sustainable basis, and on the other hand, to face an (im)possible mission: Educate with values oriented for social and human values. An innovative approach, which mixes the classic 4P's with other kind of P's, i.e., the ones that are related to Public Policies, should be promoted. This way, social marketing may be used to improve the networking between Universities and Regional Innovation Systems, and also to assure the participation of all citizens in the critical areas for developing nations, under a strategic and sustainable approach.

Finally, future researches may expand the proposal of strategic action plan for CSR, through the use of other strategic management tools, such as, Balanced Scorecard. This aims to provide indicators for measuring the impact of adopting CSR at Universities, on the performance level of Regional Innovation Systems. It is also important to evaluate how the implementation of CSR at Universities will reinforce the credibility of this special kind of public organisations. It will be also fundamental to assess how the promotion of CSR culture will determine the levels of social and human capital, since they are fundamental to create a new dynamics in institutional and social networks, and this way to foster, even more, Public Policies for Development.

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