



An evaluation of Corporate Social Responsibility education initiatives: The case of Sun International

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this qualitative study was to evaluate the learnership and bursary corporate social responsibility (CSR) education initiatives of Sun International in South Africa in terms of its role in improving the beneficiaries' lives. The challenges that Sun International experienced in delivering these initiatives was also investigated.

The aims of the study were to: (i) determine the mechanisms and processes used by Sun International to identify beneficiaries; (ii) examine the support the company provides to beneficiaries of its CSR education initiatives; (iii) determine the experiences of beneficiaries of the Sun International CSR education initiatives; and (iv) identify the challenges experienced with CSR education initiatives.

A qualitative case study design was chosen to achieve the above aims. A purposive sampling strategy was used to select the research participants. The sample consisted of staff members and learnership and bursary beneficiaries of Sun International, a South African corporation in Johannesburg.

The data collection was conducted via open-ended email questionnaire surveys due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were nine participants in total. Four of them were Sun International staff members and the remaining five were or had taken part in the learnership or bursary initiatives. The data were analysed using thematic analysis. Four main themes emerged from the data. Theme 1 was the processes used in identifying beneficiaries. Theme 2 was beneficiary support. Theme 3 encompassed the beneficiaries' experiences. Lastly, Theme 4 was CSR education initiative challenges.

The study's findings suggested that the beneficiaries benefitted from the CSR learnerships and bursaries because they were thereby empowered. These education initiatives provide beneficiaries with the tools, skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the world of work. Furthermore, they provide opportunities for employment, which in turn enables them to become financially independent. It is recommended that future researchers investigate similar scenarios in South Africa, perhaps by means of longitudinal studies.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR); education; education initiatives; employment; quality of life; stakeholders; stakeholder theory

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world
– Nelson Mandela (1990)

1.1 General orientation

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a potentially powerful driving force of environmental and social progress (Glosenberg *et al.*, 2019:48). This is particularly so because the business sector has gradually grown since World War II, with some individual global corporations becoming more prominent economic players than even some countries (Henriques, 2010:29). As Babic *et al.* (2017:9) state, in 2016, the global top 100 financial entities consisted of 71 corporations and only 29 countries. Several corporations have higher revenues than some countries. For example, Walmart has higher revenues than Australia and Spain, and Apple has more capital than Switzerland, Mexico and Belgium. Thus, corporations are considerable socio-economic bodies in and of themselves (Babic *et al.*, 2017:9). The increased financial power of such corporations provides them with significant indirect control over environmental and social issues and, consequently, over the development and welfare of human beings (Glosenberg *et al.*, 2019:49-50). The promotion of CSR globally has resulted in increased awareness of environmental and social issues within the business community and society in general, and with it the acknowledgement that corporations have an essential role to play in solving many of the problems related to these areas of concern (Henriques, 2010:29-30).

CSR was initially considered a local business issue in the countries in which it originally developed. However, it has since become popular globally, with CSR initiatives being undertaken in almost all developed countries and in many developing countries (Carroll & Shabana, 2010:86). CSR relates to how a company functions and includes philanthropic projects in its strategies. In practice, CSR incorporates several activities related to environmental and social issues, including climate change, supply chain labour conditions and human rights abuses; communicating with stakeholders about their concerns; and reporting publicly on those activities. Moreover, several benchmarks of performance, codes of ethics, behaviour and concrete initiatives have been created, with

each intended to improve the impact of business on society, stakeholders and the environment (Henriques, 2010:24, 30). The United Nations (UN) drew up the UN Global Compact in 2000 to aid corporations with the creation of policies to support global standards relating to the environment, labour, human rights and corruption. Furthermore, it assists them in helping the world to meet the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, which are a set of universal goals designed to facilitate sustainable human progress. Since 2017, 9,000 corporations have pledged to change the world through ethical business practices (Glosenberg *et al.*, 2019:49).

1.1.1. Corporate Social Responsibility in South Africa

In 2010, the Bench Marks Foundation began to evaluate public and private corporations' CSR policies in South Africa. After evaluating the environmental, social and economic impact of corporations in the diamond-mining sector in particular, it made recommendations relating to specific policies. For example, implementing CSR principles and reporting on the requirements of major CSR initiatives, establishing community projects to increase employment and decrease poverty levels, and understanding the legislative and regulatory framework encompassing the mining industry (Ford, 2010:86).

Because South Africa is plagued by poverty, community development through CSR initiatives can be life-changing for many individuals and communities. In 2011, almost half the South African population was living below the upper-bound poverty line (UBPL) (Stats SA, 2014:12). Individuals living below this line can afford to purchase basic necessities (Stats SA, 2014:7). The latest statistics report from Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) shows that the poverty levels based on the UBPL rose from 53.2% in 2011 to 55.5% in 2015, indicating that more than half the South African population were living in poverty in 2015 (Stats SA, 2017:14). Stats SA has been unable to conduct more recent research into the current poverty rate (Everatt, 2020). Thus, these statistics remain the latest poverty statistics.

While South Africa uses the UBPL to determine the level of poverty in the country, other countries use their own poverty lines. According to Roser (2021), wealthier countries set much higher poverty lines than poorer countries. Thus, poverty lines are context dependant. An individual's location determines whether they are considered poor or not. However, the international poverty line, which was set at \$1.25 in 2008 and increased to

\$1.90 per day in 2011, is used to determine countries' poverty levels on a global scale (Roser & Ortiz-Ospina, 2019). Although, this poverty line is based on extreme poverty (Roser & Ortiz-Ospina, 2019) and not poverty at the upper-bound level.

Due to COVID-19, poverty levels will be exacerbated and the quality of life for local communities will consequently be diminished even further. According to the UN Development Programme (UNDP) South Africa, the number of people living in poverty will increase, with female-headed households, those living in rural areas, individuals with an education level below the secondary level, and unskilled labourers and workers in the informal sector being the most affected by the pandemic (UNDP South Africa, 2020:14). Jain *et al.* (2020:1) state that active employment declined by 40% after only one month of intensive lockdown in South Africa, with half of this decline consisting of employment terminations. At the time of writing this dissertation, manual workers had experienced a 50% decline in active employment, which was 30% more than professionals (Jain *et al.*, 2020:8). Fifty-four percent of households had been forced out of permanent employment and had to join the informal sector, resulting in them possibly falling into poverty. Moreover, approximately 34% of those regarded as middle class had become vulnerable or fallen into poverty. In 2020, it was estimated that poverty levels would either increase by 0.45% (approximately 264,510 households) in the best-case scenario or by 0.66% (about 387,948 homes) in the worst-case scenario (UNDP South Africa, 2020:14, 21). This means that roughly 3 to 5.5 million people, including dependants, were expected to be pushed into poverty because of the impact of job losses caused by the coronavirus pandemic (Jain *et al.*, 2020:2-3).

Poverty has traditionally been considered a condition in which income cannot meet the minimum requirements of one's needs (Rowntree as cited in Beteille, 2003:4455). This definition, however, does not adequately define the word, because the meaning of poverty changes over time and according to context (Beteille, 2003:4455). Therefore, it can be defined in "absolute" or "relative" terms, whereby "absolute" poverty is when one cannot meet one's basic human needs, such as shelter and food, while "relative" poverty is when one cannot achieve the general living standards that exist elsewhere in society (Kawachi *et al.*, 2002:648-649). Measures of absolute poverty dominate poverty analyses in developing countries, including South Africa (Budlender *et al.*, 2015:2).

Education is said to play an important role, not only in the reduction of poverty, but also in the improvement of people's quality of life. In 2015, "while two-thirds (66.0%) of adults with no formal education were found to be poor, this was true for only 5.5% of those with a post-matric qualification" (Stats SA, 2014:36). This shows that those who have a tertiary education have a better quality of life than those who do not (Jain *et al.*, 2020:8). It has been shown that when the head of a household has a higher level of education, the likelihood of this household falling into poverty is lower (UNDP South Africa, 2020:18). Also, if the head of a household has a post-matric qualification, that household is less likely to experience extended periods of poverty, even if the family does fall into poverty. Where household heads have an education level that is lower than matric, their households have a greater chance of experiencing many periods of poverty than those in which the household heads are better educated (Zizzamia *et al.*, 2019:12). Furthermore, research shows that individuals with the highest levels of education and employment experience the lowest levels of poverty (Stats SA, 2017:64).

While education is vital and can help reduce poverty levels, there are other factors that contribute to poverty reduction. For example, employment is crucial in the fight against poverty because unemployment has a direct effect on poverty (see subsection 3.3.2). Moreover, unemployment drives inequality, which also impacts poverty (Chibba & Luiz, 2011:308, 311). However, education in South Africa also impacts inequality. The education system has all the features of an inequality trap:

barriers that prevent historically poorer groups from attaining high levels of education; a relatively scarce supply of highly educated workers in the labour force; and a large rate of return to tertiary qualifications. A comprehensive approach to poverty and inequality will thus have to address the severe imbalances within the education system not only in terms of increasing access (which has been the primary focus of the post-apartheid government), but more importantly in upgrading the quality of both the inputs and output of the education production function (Chibba & Luiz, 2011:311).

Education can thus provide opportunities for a better life. It can reduce the poverty burden (Devereux, 2002:659) that faces many developing countries, such as South Africa. Ojha (2012:55) states that, in India, a "good primary education is likely to provide a solid foundation to the rural poor for acquiring higher education, professional skills and

employment, thereby reducing poverty for them and enabling sustained economic growth for the country". The same could be said for the South African context. As the National Development Plan states, education is central to eliminating poverty and empowering individuals (National Planning Commission, 2011:261). However, access to quality education needs to be combined with employment and a more equal society to adequately reduce poverty in South Africa.

Morally speaking, it is not only the responsibility of the South African government to provide better lives for its citizens. It is the responsibility of corporations as well. This is especially true when governments are unable to protect, facilitate and enable citizens' rights. Corporations can then help by pursuing CSR initiatives that support such rights, particularly social rights. These include providing access to basic goods and services, such as education, healthcare and welfare (Matten, 2006:34).

Many corporations worldwide have, in fact, been involved in supporting education (Carroll, 2008:33). Historically, education has been an important focus for CSR, particularly since World War II, predominantly in the United States. Large corporations' leaders and founders were the key drivers of the growth of higher education via philanthropy (Giacomin *et al.*, 2019:2), in which altruism is combined with a vision of investing in developing nations, revealing how corporate philanthropy meets social and corporate objectives. This corporate philanthropy also assists with helping employees feel part of a corporation that "does good" for humankind (Van Fleet, 2012:164). CSR educational initiatives and training measures benefit the corporation, its employees and the local communities. Employees receive suitable training for career advancement and local community members can obtain the skills needed in today's corporate world, thereby enabling both corporations and society to benefit from this approach (Pohl, 2006:56). Furthermore, corporations can build a talent pool in the geographical areas in which they run their education initiatives, strengthen their relationships with the local communities, promote their brand and build brand trust, and can offer potential opportunities for those in education to go further with corporate philanthropy (Van Fleet, 2012:165-166). Lastly, corporations can improve their competitive position in the corporate world (Ray, 2006:105).

However, CSR education programmes in developing economies have been criticised for being slow and steady in the support of education instead of being high-impact catalysts

for development. Furthermore, many CSR education initiatives do not provide large enough financial investments to adequately benefit local communities or resolve existing educational obstacles. Moreover, many CSR projects are only focused on providing basic needs such as infrastructure to schools around sites of interest, whereas a few corporations centre their programmes around education quality (Sengupta, 2020:58, 59).

Nevertheless, CSR educational initiatives can provide access to education and can create opportunities for those who were previously marginalised to realise their full potential and live quality lives (Werner, 2009:545). Furthermore, as the stakeholder model suggests (see section 2.4 below), it is in the interests of corporations to respond to specific issues raised by stakeholder groups (Hamann, 2008:13).

Two stakeholder group types have been identified: primary and secondary stakeholders (Clarkson as cited in Hamann, 2008:12; Sweeney & Coughlan, 2008:114). Primary stakeholders are individuals or institutions that participate in a corporation and are essential to its lifespan, for example, shareholders, employees and governments (Pirsch *et al.*, 2007:127). Secondary stakeholders are groups that are not essential to the survival of a corporation but who are affected by it and rely on its ethical obligations (Hamann, 2008:12-13; Sweeney & Coughlan, 2008:114). These include, for example: other companies, researchers and national civil society corporations (Hamann, 2008:14).

Local communities fall into the primary stakeholder category. While they do not have any legal claim to the corporation, they do hold the power to protest against it. Moreover, they are essential to a corporation's survival and they are affected by the corporation, especially if that corporation's activities affect their immediate environment, such as in the case of a mining community. Poverty and a lack of education are examples of specific issues that stakeholders, especially local communities, could raise. Therefore, it would be in the corporations' best interests to address issues such as these to ensure that there is a mutually-beneficial relationship between the company and the community (Hamann, 2008:13).

For the above reasons, many corporations have included education initiatives in their CSR programmes to improve the lives of local communities. In South Africa, CSR education initiatives that corporations execute include teachers being paid directly by the companies, the construction of classrooms (Eweje, 2006:105) and the issuing of

scholarships and education bursaries for job-related skills development (Rajak, 2008:311).

However, some CSR initiatives are viewed by local communities as nothing but “tokenism”. Tokenism is a term used to describe corporations’ CSR practices as cleverly orchestrated plans used to demean and control a dissatisfied and restless local community (Ibun *et al.*, 2015:42). Therefore, for corporations’ CSR projects to not be considered as tokenism, the companies need to allow for collaboration with their stakeholder groups. In other words, the local community should be actively involved in the corporations’ CSR initiatives to identify and resolve common issues. This can be done by enabling the community to participate in strategic decision making and share in responsibilities and benefits. Moreover, each party should have equal power during the decision-making process (Li & Hunter, 2015:251). Furthermore, corporations require a social licence to operate, which means that they have responsibilities towards their stakeholders and not just shareholders. If they do not fulfil their responsibilities, they risk losing community support and ultimately their licence to operate (Hanlon, 2014:16).

1.1.2. Sun International

One company that has implemented education initiatives as part of its CSR programme is Sun International. The corporation is based in Johannesburg, South Africa. According to Sun International (2020), its educational initiatives involve renovating and providing new appliances to hospitality classrooms in schools in communities that are both indirectly and directly affected by its operations. It has also launched a project called the Digital Hospitality Curriculum Programme, which was created in partnership with the Department of Basic Education. This initiative aims to ensure that every grade 10, 11 and 12 hospitality studies student has access to an online hospitality curriculum (Sun International, 2020). Every student and teacher can gain access to the programme via their mobile devices and it is available in the hospitality classrooms sponsored by Sun International. Additionally, the corporation provides learnerships and bursaries to students to provide them with quality education opportunities (Sun International, 2019:2).

Learnerships are formal accredited training programmes linked with work experience. They are used nationwide to improve the employment opportunities of those entering the job market. Their purpose is to increase the possibility of employment by improving the

workforce's skills. They are different to apprenticeships in that they provide training and skills and are academically-accredited programmes. Learnerships in South Africa are created and registered by various sectoral education and training authorities, which were established by the Skills Development Act of 1998. Learnerships are graded in the South African Qualifications Authority's National Qualification Framework (OECD, 2010:107). They are available to young people (OECD, 2010:107), who have matriculated (completed Grade 12) or received a formal qualification from a college or other training institution (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011:15). Additionally, it is also available to employed and unemployed South Africans aged 16 to 35 (OECD, 2017:50). Learnerships must result in a qualification defined by the South African Qualifications Authority as a minimum of 120 credits. It takes approximately 12 months to obtain 120 credits (Davies & Farquharson, 2004:185).

According to the Oxford advanced learner's dictionary, a bursary is a sum of money given to an individual to study at a college or university (Oxford University Press, 2021). Therefore, bursaries provide financial assistance to students who require financial aid (Callender, 2010:46). Bursaries cover the cost of tuition, accommodation and some books (Hanoman, 2018:114-115). In South Africa, the government established the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) to assist poor and disadvantaged but academically able students with bursaries and loans. The bursaries and loans are given to eligible first-time students attending universities and public technical and vocational education and training colleges in South Africa (Matsolo, 2018:65). The NSFAS is unable to assist every eligible student because of the increasing demand for higher education (Calitz, 2018:9). However, some students are able to receive bursaries from industries or donors (such as corporations) (Naidoo & McKay, 2018:159).

1.2 Problem statement

The effectiveness of CSR initiatives, including education initiatives that corporations implement, are not assessed or reported on. Moreover, companies do not report on the effectiveness of their CSR education programmes from their beneficiaries' perspectives. As a result, there is little information about the outcomes of CSR initiatives for the intended beneficiaries. This is particularly true in developing countries, where the statements made regarding the part CSR plays in economic and social development are generally unconfirmed (Blowfield, 2007a:683). This not only prevents corporations from learning

from each other in terms of how they have succeeded, but it also prevents them from improving their current initiatives to ensure that what they set out to achieve is accomplished and that those who are meant to benefit from their initiatives do indeed do so. Furthermore, by evaluating the effectiveness of education initiatives that corporations include in their CSR programmes, one can assess the impact of these initiatives on the lives of their beneficiaries. Additionally, it can ensure that the beneficiaries are not at all harmed and instead receive maximum benefit from the initiatives (Glosenberg *et al.*, 2019:50). Such benefits include career and personal development through education and skills acquisition and an increased earning potential (Farooq *et al.*, 2017:957; Gyves & O'Higgins, 2008:210, 215).

Thus, the problem under investigation is whether the learnership and bursary CSR education initiatives of Sun International in South Africa improve the lives of its beneficiaries from the beneficiaries' perspectives. The study evaluates the effectiveness of the corporation's CSR education initiatives against the framework set out in section 3.10.

1.3 Research objectives

The main objective of this study was to evaluate the learnership and bursary CSR education initiatives of Sun International in South Africa in terms of their role in improving the lives of its beneficiaries.

To achieve the main objective, the following specific objectives were set:

- To establish the theoretical orientation of CSR.
- To explore CSR education initiatives and quality of life.
- To determine the mechanisms and processes used by Sun International to identify equitable beneficiaries.
- To examine the support Sun International provides for beneficiaries of its CSR education initiatives.
- To determine the experiences of beneficiaries of the Sun International CSR education initiatives.
- Identify the challenges experienced with CSR education initiatives.

- To provide recommendations to Sun International regarding its CSR education initiatives.

1.4 Research questions

In light of the overarching research objectives, the following primary research question was formulated:

- Do Sun International's CSR learnership and bursary initiatives improve the lives of its beneficiaries?

The following sub-questions were formulated to assist in answering the primary research question:

- What is the theoretical orientation of CSR?
- What CSR education initiatives do corporations engage in and are they effective in improving beneficiaries' quality of life?
- What mechanisms and processes do Sun International utilise to identify equitable beneficiaries?
- What support does Sun International provide for beneficiaries of its CSR education initiatives?
- What are the experiences of the beneficiaries of the Sun International CSR education initiatives?
- What challenges are experienced with CSR education initiatives?
- What recommendations can be given to Sun International regarding its CSR education initiatives?

1.5 Central theoretical statements

The following theoretical statements formed the basis of this study:

- As stakeholder theory suggests, corporations have begun to acknowledge their responsibility towards their stakeholders (Eweje, 2006:104), leading to an awareness of the importance of CSR for corporations and the community. It is vital to understand the role that CSR plays and how it can assist the South African government to improve local communities' lives, which is not only the responsibility of the government. Corporations need to respond to specific issues raised by

stakeholder groups such as communities (Hamann, 2008:13). As Eweje (2006:97) states: “Multinational Enterprises (MNE) may be called on to assume added responsibilities where other actors, including governments, do not or cannot carry out critical duties.”

- Education initiatives can reduce poverty (Devereux, 2002:659) and improve people’s quality of life (UNESCO, 2020:6); therefore, Sun International’s education initiatives have been assessed to determine whether they help improve the beneficiaries’ quality of life.
- Educational initiatives are seen as “one of the most important development initiatives at the local level” (Eweje, 2006:102). According to Eweje (2006:104), because of apartheid education policies, many Black people could not access education or did not have the opportunity to further their education.
- Poor communities are sometimes caught in poverty traps. A poverty trap is “a self-reinforcing mechanism which causes poverty to persist” (Azariadis & Stachurski, 2005:326). In other words, if an individual is poor, he or she will remain poor because he or she will continue to be trapped in poverty. Because education can lead to poverty reduction (Maile, 2008:xi) and an improved quality of life (Spull, 2015:37), CSR in education is “imperative to the nation’s transformation efforts” (Nzekwu, 2008:215). Due to South Africa’s past, “historical backlogs make the national budget insufficient to provide for the needs of all schools” (Nzekwu, 2008:215). Therefore, assistance from corporations is needed to assist with education initiatives to aid in the battle against poverty (Nzekwu, 2008:215) and to improve local communities’ quality of life (Babarinde, 2009:364).

1.6 Methodology

The research design and methodology that were used in this study are described in this section.

1.6.1. Survey of the literature

A preliminary assessment of the literature on CSR educational initiatives and their impact on improving beneficiaries’ quality of life indicated that there was sufficient literature available to inform the study. The following sources were consulted to ascertain the

available material for this research: journal articles, scholarly books, reports, and other studies conducted on the topic.

The literature review was used to:

- Explore the concepts and theories that were relevant to CSR educational initiatives and quality of life.
- Discover what research had already been done on CSR educational initiatives and their impact on quality of life.
- Determine what research methods had been used to conduct similar research.
- Identify gaps in the literature.

The advantages of doing a literature review include preventing researchers from covering old ground and enabling them to link their research findings to the existing literature, as well as assisting them to demonstrate credibility and the contribution that the research has made to the existing body of literature. The limitation of a literature review is that a researcher is unable to conduct an all-inclusive review of the existing literature (Bryman, 2012:8).

1.6.2. Approach

A qualitative approach was adopted for this study. Qualitative research consists of investigating the meaning people attribute to a social or human issue (Creswell, 2007:37). A qualitative approach involves observation and interviewing research participants (Padgett, 2017:2) in a standard setting that is acceptable to the individuals and appropriate for the sites being studied (Creswell, 2007:37). Observation and interviewing enable one to investigate human beings, including their societies and cultures, social activities and ideas, traditions, values and beliefs. This type of data cannot be quantified and calculated because it is descriptive. Therefore, this type of research generates rich insights into human civilisation (Walliman, 2011:72-73) and an understanding of the social world from the research participants' viewpoint (Bryman, 2012:380) once it has been analysed. The data is analysed logically and is broken down into patterns or themes. A report is then written, which includes information on the participants' sentiments, an evaluation made by the researcher, and a detailed explanation and interpretation of the research findings (Creswell, 2007:37).

Since qualitative research is concerned with words rather than numbers (Bryman, 2012:380), and because qualitative data relies on human evaluation and interpretation, the reliability and completeness of the data can be checked by consulting a variety of data sources that relate to the same event. This process is called “triangulation” (Walliman, 2011:73).

Qualitative research has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include the ability to provide explanations for certain human behaviours and to delve deeply into people’s experiences. It can be utilised for small research samples, for which it does not make sense to use quantification. Moreover, it is flexible in that it allows the researcher to change direction more easily than with quantitative research (Bryman, 2012:404; Heyink & Tymstra, 1993:301). The disadvantages include that the research might be too subjective and difficult to replicate because the researcher decides what is important or irrelevant, which varies from researcher to researcher; it is difficult to generalise the findings to other situations; and it is difficult to ascertain what the researcher did and how the researcher arrived at his or her findings (Bryman, 2012:405-406).

A qualitative research approach was appropriate for this study, despite its disadvantages, because the aim was to gain a deeper understanding of the education initiatives from the perspectives of Sun International’s employees and of their beneficiaries. Qualitative research made it possible to acquire an in-depth understanding of the corporation’s education initiatives, whether those involved in the initiatives experienced challenges and whether they believed these initiatives had the potential to improve the quality of the beneficiaries’ lives.

1.6.3. Case study design

The research design of a study is a specification of how data will be generated, collected, assembled, evaluated and interpreted to assist the researcher to solve the research problem (6 & Bellamy, 2012:20). In other words, it clarifies the steps that need to be taken during a research project to solve the research problem (Sahu, 2013:25).

A case study design was utilised for this study. Case studies entail a detailed analysis of a single case such as a particular community, school, family, organisation, person or event (Bryman, 2012:66-67). A case study can be an in-depth study of several characteristics of such a social unit to understand the behavioural patterns of the unit

(Sahu, 2013:72) or it can consist of an investigation of a problem by examining one or multiple cases within a confined system, specifically a site or context (Creswell, 2007:73). Case study researchers usually focus on complex issues such as a community's way of tackling an existing social problem, a plan's usefulness or a policy's efficacy (Mabry, 2008:214). For this dissertation, the researcher chose Sun International because the researcher had heard about the corporation's educational initiatives and was interested in what impact they had on the lives of their beneficiaries. The researcher wanted to discern whether the initiatives had the potential to improve the beneficiaries' lives.

The case study design has both advantages and disadvantages, which need to be considered when utilising such a design. The advantage is that it facilitates in-depth and detailed analysis of a case (Bryman, 2012:66). It can be valuable in terms of discovering and recording patterns of normal events, the social and political structures that maintain them, and participants' core views and values, thus exposing a phenomenon's status quo (Mabry, 2008:217). The case study design was useful in learning more about Sun International's education initiatives and in determining the effectiveness of the initiatives from the beneficiaries' perspectives. The disadvantage is that the findings cannot necessarily be generalised to other situations (Bryman, 2012:71). As Cargan (2007:204) states, the results of case studies cannot be reproduced because the conditions that case studies contend with are occasionally unique and, therefore, might be tough to replicate. The findings of this study would not be generalisable to other cases because Sun International's education initiatives are unique to the organisation since the corporation solely focuses on providing education initiatives to hospitality and tourism beneficiaries. Furthermore, other corporations may engage in different initiatives as part of their CSR because not every South African company engages in education initiatives. However, it has been argued that single case studies are not intended to generate findings that can be generalised to other cases or populations beyond the case. Instead, the findings are intended to be used in a theoretical analysis (Bryman, 2012:71; Cargan, 2007:204).

1.6.4. Study area

The empirical study took place in Sandton, Johannesburg, in the Gauteng Province of South Africa. This site was purposefully chosen because it was where the head office of Sun International was based. However, the study was conducted remotely via the internet

and email because the researcher was based in South Korea at the time of the investigation.

1.6.5. Data collection method

The use of online research methods has increased in all fields of social science since the development of the internet. These research methods make it possible to overcome certain challenges, such as distance, travel costs and contacting groups or individuals who might be difficult to reach (O'Connor & Madge, 2017:416).

Online surveys and email interviews are two examples of online research methods that have become popular in many sub-disciplines of the social sciences. Email interviews, in particular, are now widely used as an online research method (Hawkins, 2018:494,495; O'Connor & Madge, 2017:416, 417).

For the purposes of this investigation, data was collected from the research participants via email interviews in the form of open-ended questionnaire surveys that were emailed to respondents. When using this method, the survey forms can be either added to the main body of the email or sent as an attachment (Bryman, 2012:670). For this study, the researcher used Microsoft Word to create the questionnaires for both the Sun International staff and beneficiaries. The document was attached to the emails that were sent to the participants. Normally, once the email is received, recipients open the attachment and respond to the questions in the document before returning it to the sender as an email attachment again (Clark *et al.*, 2021:222). All but one respondent answered the questions on the document. The remaining participant answered the questions directly in the body of the response email.

Survey questions are either open-ended or closed. Open-ended questions are not often used in surveys (Clark *et al.*, 2021:211, 213). However, for this study, they were utilised to collect as much data as possible from the recipients. The Sun International staff members were asked 15 open-ended questions, whereas the beneficiaries were asked eight questions (see Annexures C and D for the list of survey questions). The staff members were asked additional questions to ascertain whether the mechanisms and processes used by the company to select beneficiaries were equitable.

The benefits of conducting email questionnaire surveys include:

- They are less expensive to administer, particularly when the participants are geographically dispersed. Moreover, it would be costly in terms of time and travel to interview the respondents face-to-face.
- They can be administered faster because email surveys can be sent to multiple recipients at once.
- They are convenient for the respondents because they can answer the questions when it suits them and at their preferred speed (Clark *et al.*, 2021:212, 213).
- It is easier for the recipients to type their responses onto an attachment such as a Microsoft Word document (Bryman, 2012:671).
- There are no time constraints when participants live in a different time zone to the researcher.
- The respondents have ample time to consider and reflect upon their answers to the research questions (Hawkins, 2018:494,495; O'Connor & Madge, 2017:416, 417).
- Email interviews save the researcher both the time and money that would have had to be spent on transcriptions (Hawkins, 2018:495).

While there are advantages to utilising emails to conduct research, there are some challenges. For example, it is difficult to probe or ask research participants follow-up questions. Face-to-face interviews allow for probing, enabling interviewees to provide further information or clarify their responses. However, researchers cannot easily probe respondents when conducting e-mail surveys, even if they send follow-up e-mails, because participants may not respond to follow-up questions (Meho, 2006:1290). The researcher experienced this challenge during the study. Most of the participants did not respond to emails asking follow-up questions. An additional example is that of non-response or a low response rate. Online survey response rates are generally low or vary substantially. This is due to the email not being delivered because of an email address error or the email is overlooked or treated as spam by the intended respondents. Moreover, some participants answer questions selectively (Vehovar & Manfreda, 2017:182). These challenges were experienced during the data collection process. Of the 27 potential participants that were contacted, only nine responded to the emails (see subsection 1.6.7 for more information on how the email questionnaires were sent out and how the researcher attempted to improve the response rate). Additionally, some of the respondents did not answer all of the survey questions. Upon reflection, other researchers

who may be interested in conducting similar research using email surveys should consider contacting more potential participants than the researcher of this study did to circumvent the challenge of non-response or low response. Furthermore, they could acquire additional contact information should they need to contact the participants to remind them to complete the email surveys.

In addition to the challenges of email questionnaire surveys, there are some practical considerations. For example, one can observe body language and hear a participant's tone of voice during a face-to-face interview, which comprises valuable nonverbal data. However, body language clues cannot be gathered when conducting research via email. Nor can one detect the respondents' tone of voice when reading their email responses (O'Connor & Madge, 2017:419). Another example is that it is easy for participants to ignore or delete emails if they are too busy or lose interest in the survey process (O'Connor & Madge, 2017:419). For this study, some of the participants did not return emails despite follow-up emails sent. It was also not possible for the researcher to contact those participants who had not responded to emails via telephone or cellular phone because the researcher was based overseas at the time of the study.

Despite the practical considerations of email interviews, the researcher decided not to conduct face-to-face interviews as a precautionary measure taken against contracting COVID-19 and also due to the travel and quarantine costs associated with returning to South Africa.

1.6.6. Target population

A population in research refers to a group with specific characteristics that interest the researcher and are related to the research. The population can consist of a group of people, objects, organisations or material. A target population refers to a specific group under study (Jha, 2014:182, 183). The target population relevant to this study was the staff of Sun International and the learnership and bursary beneficiaries. This population was chosen for the study because the staff and beneficiaries were directly involved in the education initiatives of the corporation.

1.6.7. Sampling

Sampling comprises choosing a part of the target population for observation to deduce something about the entire population (Thompson, 2012:1). When the researcher is interested in only a small portion of the target population, he or she uses purposive sampling. It is the most appropriate sampling method when the research participants are selected based on their relevance to the research questions of the study (Bryman, 2012:418). Since not all of the staff members at Sun International are involved in the education initiatives the corporation engages in, only those who were directly involved at the time of the dissertation were selected to be part of the study.

Purposive sampling has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that it enables the researcher to choose participants because of their relevance to the study, thereby ensuring that the data collected is not irrelevant. The disadvantage is that it does not enable one to generalise a population (Bryman, 2012:418).

Purposive sampling was chosen for this study because it enabled the researcher to select participants who could provide detailed and relevant information about the phenomenon under investigation. This sampling technique was used, firstly, to select staff members from Sun International who dealt with the company's learnership and bursary initiatives. These staff members worked in the corporation's learning and development department, a sub-department of the human resources (HR) department. The staff members were identified by the head of the learning and development department and contacted by the researcher via email.

Secondly, individuals who had benefited from Sun International's education initiatives were selected to participate in the study. Sun International assisted with the selection of these participants because they had dealt with these individuals directly and knew their circumstances before they participated in the education initiatives. In other words, they knew that the beneficiaries came from underprivileged backgrounds. Moreover, Sun International already had their contact information and could introduce them to the researcher. The HR development manager provided the researcher with the email addresses of all the potential participants.

Emails were sent to a total of 27 potential participants inviting them to partake in the study. The potential participants comprised 10 Sun International staff members and 17 bursary

and learnership beneficiaries, who were contacted between 13 and 21 May 2021. The emails contained background information about the research, a letter of request to participate in the investigation (to give informed consent) and a copy of the survey questionnaires. It was explained that the participants could send their responses via email because this was the easiest form of communication during the COVID-19 pandemic and the researcher was based overseas at the time of the research project. All the potential participants were informed of a deadline to return the completed questionnaires by mid-June 2021. Only three responses had been received by 21 May 2021. A reminder email was sent to the remaining potential participants on 21 May. An additional completed questionnaire was received by May 27. A further four reminder emails were sent out from 27 May to 16 June. A further two completed questionnaires were received by the deadline. The researcher decided to extend the deadline to the end of June in an attempt to collect additional responses. The remaining potential recipients were informed of the extension in two additional reminder emails that were sent from mid-June to the 25th of the month. A further three completed surveys were received by the end of June. Of all the potential participants contacted, four staff members and five beneficiaries responded to the researcher's request to participate in the research. None of the remaining recipients responded to any of the emails.

1.6.8. Data analysis procedure

Data analysis is used to reveal the meanings that people attach to their actions and behaviour associated with a phenomenon. The researcher attempts to uncover these meanings by working with the data and research participants (Ravindran, 2019:40). When the researcher works with the data, he or she is doing so from an interpretive perspective (Merriam & Grenier, 2019:4).

In an interpretive study, the researcher collects data through interviews, observations, and/or documents. The data are then analysed (Merriam & Grenier, 2019:7) through thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis is a method used "for identifying themes in qualitative data" (Terry *et al.*, 2017:20). In thematic analysis, the data are coded. Coding is used to find evidence for theme development. Coding is a flexible process and requires detailed data engagement to develop depth. Themes are developed by engaging with the codes.

Coding and theme development are considered to be interpretative and subjective processes (Terry *et al.*, 2017:20).

Coding can be approached either inductively or deductively. An inductive orientation is a data-led analysis, whereby the data are used as the starting point to interpret the data and develop codes, themes (Terry *et al.*, 2017:22) and categories (Merriam & Grenier, 2019:6). A deductive orientation is a theory-led analysis, meaning that pre-existing theory is used to interpret the data (Braun & Clarke, 2021:6).

Once the coding, theme development and categories are complete, the themes are reviewed after thorough engagement with the data (Terry *et al.*, 2017:23). Finally, a descriptive account of the findings is presented and discussed (Merriam & Grenier, 2019:7).

In this study, thematic analysis was conducted inductively. The data retrieved from the email questionnaire surveys were analysed to develop themes, codes and categories. Firstly, the questionnaires were analysed for themes, which is known as thematic analysis. The data collected (from the surveys) were scrutinised for identifiable core themes (Bryman, 2012:13). The themes that emerged from the data corresponded with the research objectives (see section 1.3). Then two matrixes were created to show the recurring themes that emerged from the data. One matrix was used for Sun International's staff members and the other for the beneficiaries. The questionnaire questions were grouped under each relevant theme on both the staff members' matrix and the beneficiaries' matrix. For example, on the staff members' matrix, questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.2 and 9.1 (see Annexure C) were grouped under theme 1. Questions 8.1, 9.2, and 10 were grouped under theme 2. Questions 11 to 14 were grouped under theme 3, and question 15 was placed under theme 4. On the beneficiaries' matrix, questions 1 to 3 (see Annexure D) were grouped under theme 1. Question 4 was placed under theme 2. Questions 5 and 6 were grouped under theme 3, and question 7 was placed under theme 4.

Lastly, the participant responses for each question were recorded on the relevant matrix to assist the researcher in developing codes and ultimately categories for each theme. For example, the responses recorded for each staff member for question 8.1 under theme 2 resulted in the code "costs" being created. For question 9.2 under theme 2, the code

“stipend” emerged. These two codes assisted in the development of the “tangible support” category under theme 2 (see section 4.5.2.1) and the sub-category “financial support” (see subsection 4.5.2.1.1). The codes and resultant categories were included under theme 2 because they were identified as forms of support given to the beneficiaries by Sun International. Another example is that the beneficiaries’ responses noted for question 5 resulted in the creation of the codes “investment”, “personal development” and “professional development”. The codes that emerged from the responses for question 6 were “career growth” and “job retention”. The codes for both questions 5 and 6 led to the development of the “human capital investment” (see section 4.5.3.1) and “employment and employability” (see 4.5.3.2) categories for theme 3. They formed part of this theme because it was about the beneficiaries’ experiences and what they gained from their involvement in the education initiatives.

The advantages of using thematic analysis include discovering recurring topics, finding similarities and differences between the participants and identifying what is missing from the data. In this study, the researcher was able to discover repeated topics from the data and was able to find many similarities and some differences between the participants. The thematic analysis process assisted the researcher in making sense of the data. However, the disadvantage of thematic analysis is that it does not provide a specified series of steps to follow (Bryman, 2012:580, 581). This posed a challenge for the researcher because this was the first time that the researcher undertook thematic analysis. Of the literature that the researcher consulted, guidance on how to proceed with thematic analysis was not provided. Thus, the researcher had to forge ahead despite the difficulty of conducting thematic analysis for the first time and engaged in the process of trial and error.

1.7 Trustworthiness of the data

A study is described as trustworthy when it denotes the research participants’ true perspectives as precisely as possible. In other words, when the findings represent the views of the participants and not those of the researcher, the study can be deemed to be trustworthy (Lietz & Zayas, 2018:599). Moreover, a study is considered trustworthy when done in a thorough, methodical and ethical manner to ensure that the findings are reliable and can be employed in practice (Merriam & Grenier, 2019:23).

Trustworthiness consists of four interrelated concepts: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Bryman, 2012:390). Each of these concepts is discussed below.

1.7.1. Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which a study's results embody the true thoughts, behaviours or level of understanding of the research participants (Lietz & Zayas, 2018:599). In qualitative research, the researcher interprets the perception of reality through the participants' eyes (Merriam & Grenier, 2019:25).

One method to ensure credibility is triangulation, whereby the researcher collects data by combining interviews, observations and/or document analysis. For example, what a research participant has said can be compared to what has been observed during a site visit or read in documents relevant to the study (Merriam & Grenier, 2019:26). In this study, credibility was achieved by comparing what the participants stated to what was documented by Sun International.

1.7.2. Transferability

The extent to which a study's findings offer uses beyond the study and are seen as being meaningful is referred to as "transferability" (Lietz & Zayas, 2018:604). Transferability in qualitative research can be achieved by offering detailed, thick descriptions to provide enough information for readers to ascertain how closely their circumstances correspond with the research and whether the results can be transferred (Creswell, 2007:209; Merriam & Grenier, 2019:29). In this study, transferability was attained by providing rich accounts of the study's context to help readers identify similar situations in their own lives to those documented in the research.

1.7.3. Dependability

Dependability refers to how appropriate the data collection methods and the data itself were for a specific study (Miles & Jozefowicz-Simbeni, 2010:422). Dependability is ensured by an auditing process, whereby complete records of all the phases of the research process are retained and can be accessed at any time (Bryman, 2012:392). The researcher ensured dependability by keeping records of the research process, such as

retaining the survey responses and correspondence via email and the documents obtained from Sun International.

1.7.4. Confirmability

The capability of other people to verify or support the study's findings is referred to as "confirmability". Steps are taken to guarantee, as far as possible, that a study's results represent the views and experiences of the research participants instead of those of the researcher (Lietz & Zayas, 2018:606). Even though complete objectivity cannot be assured when conducting qualitative research, researchers should not allow their personal values to influence the study in any way (Bryman, 2012:392-393).

One way to achieve confirmability is to provide sufficient examples of findings by providing quotations derived from the data, and documenting how thematic conclusions arose from the raw data and how much evidence there was to support each conclusion (Lietz & Zayas, 2018:606). This researcher provided quotes from the research participants as evidence of the findings. Moreover, it documented how the thematic analysis resulted in the conclusions reached by the researcher.

1.7.5. Authenticity

In addition to the trustworthiness criteria mentioned above, authenticity is added to acknowledge other issues relating to the broader political impact of the research (Bryman, 2012:393). Bryman (2012:393) lists the authenticity criteria as follows:

- Fairness – does the research fairly represent the differing viewpoints of the research participants?
- Ontological authenticity – does the researcher help the participants to better understand their social environment?
- Educative authenticity – does the researcher help the participants to appreciate others' perspectives better?
- Catalytic authenticity – does the researcher act as an impetus to participants engaging in action to change their circumstances?
- Tactical authenticity – has the researcher empowered members to take necessary steps for engaging in action?

In short, authenticity ultimately focuses on differing voices being heard (Creswell, 2007:206). This researcher ensured authenticity by allowing each participant to voice his or her thoughts and experiences and recorded them accurately.

1.8 Ethical considerations

According to Walliman (2011:43), in a research context, ethical issues consist of two aspects: firstly, the individual moral values of the researcher and, secondly, the researcher's treatment of the research participants, which involves informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and consideration.

The individual moral values of the researcher include honesty, whereby correct descriptions are given of what has been done, how the research was conducted, what information was obtained, the techniques that were used, how the analysis was conducted and what results were obtained; and acknowledging sources to ensure that the researcher does not engage in plagiarism (Walliman, 2011:44-45).

The researcher's treatment of the participants should include honesty in terms of what the research is about to ensure that the participants provide informed consent (Walliman, 2011:47). In the emails sent out to the potential participants, background information about the study was provided. Furthermore, the researcher attached a letter of request to conduct the investigation (see Annexures A and B) to ensure informed consent. In the letter, it was stated that participating in the survey would allow the recipients to share their experiences and views on various aspects related to the phenomenon under study. The participants who responded to the email with their completed questionnaire surveys thus implicitly consented to their experiences being shared in the study. Moreover, they were informed that the success of the research depended entirely on their kind cooperation and that the information collected would be handled with the greatest confidentiality and their anonymity would be guaranteed. Thus, their names and email addresses do not appear in this dissertation. Rather, they were given labels. Additionally, the researcher secured their details and responses in a password-protected computer to ensure confidentiality.

Despite the nature of this study not being of a sensitive kind, the researcher did not put any of the participants in harm's way. They were treated with care and the utmost respect and their views were accurately recorded in the findings. Additionally, participation was

entirely voluntary; therefore, the participants were welcome to stop participating in the study at any time should they have felt uncomfortable.

Ethical clearance was granted for this study by the North-West University ethics committee before the research was conducted. Permission was also initially granted by the staff at Sun International in November 2017 and again in March 2021 when they were informed of the change in focus of the study. The focus of the study was initially on the effects of the corporation's education initiatives on poverty, however this topic was not practical. Therefore, the focus changed to the effect of the initiatives on the lives of the beneficiaries.

1.9 Significance of the study

The significance of this study is that it adds to the existing knowledge on the link between the lack of access to quality education and the quality of life of members in local communities. Moreover, after an assessment of previous studies in South Africa on the topic, it was discovered that few studies had been conducted on the effectiveness of CSR strategies, particularly on education initiatives' ability to improve the lives of beneficiaries. Furthermore, the few studies that have been done were focused on the mining industry. Because this study is an investigation of the effectiveness of CSR education initiatives to improve the lives of beneficiaries from their perspectives, it is the first of its kind.

1.10 Delimitations

The delimitations of the study included, firstly, assessing only one of many corporations that have educational initiatives because the time and resources available to the researcher could not accommodate a broader study. Secondly, the researcher did not investigate the impact of the education initiatives on the entire community, but only on a few beneficiaries, because the time and resources available were not sufficient for such a broad study.

1.11 Chapter layout

Chapter 2: Theoretical Orientation of Corporate Social Responsibility

Chapter 2 provides a theoretical orientation of CSR and its initiatives. The focus is on the meaning of CSR, its impact, and how corporations manage and implement CSR.

Moreover, the connection between stakeholder theory and CSR is indicated. Additionally, the types of CSR initiatives that corporations engage in are described.

Chapter 3: CSR Education Initiatives and Quality of Life

In Chapter 3, the literature regarding the importance of education for quality of life is reviewed. Poor quality of life and the factors that impact this construct are described. Such factors include unemployment, lack of access to quality education and poverty. Furthermore, the manner in which CSR education initiatives can positively affect people's quality of life are investigated. Finally, the effectiveness of education initiatives in improving the lives of beneficiaries and the challenges experienced by corporations in implementing these initiatives are dealt with.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings of the Case study of Sun International and an Evaluation of CSR Education Initiatives

In Chapter 4, the focus is on the case study of Sun International, specifically the education initiatives Sun International is involved in as part of its CSR programmes. Background information regarding Sun International and its education initiatives are provided. The data is then analysed and the findings are presented regarding the experiences of the beneficiaries, whether the beneficiaries benefitted from the learnerships and bursaries, whether the education initiatives assisted in improving the lives of the beneficiaries, and the challenges experienced by Sun International's staff members and the beneficiaries.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In this chapter, the conclusions drawn from the main findings of the study are provided. Moreover, the findings are related to the literature and discussed. The limitations of the study are also noted and recommendations are made for future research on education initiatives.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Business has a responsibility beyond its basic responsibility to its shareholders; a responsibility to a broader constituency that includes its key stakeholders: customers, employees, NGOs, government – the people of the communities in which it operates – Courtney Pratt, Former CEO of Toronto Hydro (n.d.)

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 comprised an introduction to the topic and a description of the locus and focus of the study, namely CSR, education and CSR education initiatives. Additionally, the importance of such education initiatives and how they could improve the lives of beneficiaries were indicated. Furthermore, the research objectives and research questions for this study were presented and the methodology was described.

This chapter provides a theoretical orientation to CSR and its initiatives. The focus is on the meaning of CSR, its impact, and how corporations manage and implement CSR. Moreover, the connection between stakeholder theory and CSR is indicated. Additionally, the types of CSR initiatives that corporations engage in are described.

The following section contains background information on CSR.

2.2 History and overview of CSR

The emphasis on CSR emerged in the mid-20th century (Banerjee, 2007:5; Carroll, 2008:19; 2018:747). After World War II, the beliefs surrounding the role of business in the world changed. No longer was it believed that businesses best served the public by not being regulated by the state (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:37). Corporations began to realise that they could not function in isolation from the community. Furthermore, they understood that a responsible corporation should maximise the shareholder's value by demonstrating responsibility to other stakeholders, such as employees, suppliers, customers, governments, the environment and society. Thus, CSR means that corporations should

be responsible for all stakeholders within the context in which they operate (Osemeke *et al.*, 2016:358).

Despite CSR's recent popularity and growth, there is centuries-old evidence of the business world's concern for society (Carroll, 2018:747). In the 1900s, business practices referred to as "socially responsible" took various forms: philanthropic charity donations, community service, improving employee welfare and supporting religious conduct (Banerjee, 2007:5). Today, the business world shares the responsibility of finding solutions to the world's mounting environmental and social issues to make it more sustainable and liveable (Delbard, 2020:xvi).

One social issue is that of poverty and businesses can cause it (Blowfield, 2012:417). For example, if a business relocates its factories because of deregulation, it can cause a loss of employment, cut wages and countenance worse working conditions than those in the previous host country (Blowfield, 2007b:38; 2012:417). Another example is corporations evading taxes, thus preventing governments from gaining vital resources that can be used for investment in the poor (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:83). Moreover, corporations can take advantage of poverty through a lack of health and safety laws (Blowfield, 2007b:38). Furthermore, many corporations have been blamed for engaging in irresponsible business practices that ignore the social and environmental costs of doing business because they are more concerned with productivity and shareholder value, and because regulations are not enforced. Corporations in many fields such as apparel, water, oil, information technology and pharmaceuticals have been at the forefront of not meeting the needs of the poor (Valente & Crane, 2010:54). They have been slated for mistreating communities close to their facilities, destabilising their income sources and disregarding their human, land and water rights (Blowfield, 2007b:38).

Thus, it is imperative to advocate for CSR. Large corporations have steadily discovered that incorporating a responsible approach to governance, environmental and social issues in their primary business activities is essential for sustainability, profitability and prosperity (The Bertelsmann Stiftung & The United Nations Global Compact, 2010:8).

2.2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility in South Africa

CSR in South Africa has been understood as strategic philanthropy, which is described as corporate social investment (CSI), which is a uniquely South African term (Hamann,

2009:438; Skinner & Mersham, 2008:240). CSI is also understood as corporate citizenship. Corporate citizenship refers to corporate citizens playing their part in significant rather than symbolic ways (Babarinde, 2009:364). Skinner and Mersham (2008:240) argue that the term arose because of South Africa's history.

Large corporations were linked to human rights abuses perpetrated under apartheid (Hamann, 2009:19). As Fig (2005:599-600) states, corporations had instituted the migrant labour system with single-sex hostels, workplace segregation, the racial division of labour and discriminatory wages based on race. Additionally, corporations sanctioned violation operations, paid taxes to and received funding from the apartheid government, and provided technologies, services and weapons that were used for oppression (Fig, 2005:600). The history of apartheid also resulted in evidence of voluntary initiatives to influence policy changes and social development (Hamann, 2009:19). Nevertheless, those working in the private sector responded more favourably to the concept of "investment" than to the concept of "responsibility" because "responsibility" linked corporations to the ills of apartheid (Skinner & Mersham, 2008:240).

South African corporations understand their CSI duty as economic empowerment, workplace and ownership diversity, and poverty alleviation, among others. Therefore, they conduct initiatives to support the improvement and safeguarding of an economic, political and social environment that is beneficial to continuous economic growth and development. "Investment" assumes that all stakeholders will receive certain benefits or gratification in the future and that social expenditure is included in the cost of doing business (Babarinde, 2009:364).

Considering that the apartheid era left South Africa with marked inequalities in terms of access to basic services, economic power, infrastructure and education, the government has since endeavoured to combat those social inequalities through various social initiatives. Although corporations are not legally obliged to engage in CSR projects, the country's King II and King III Corporate Governance codes and the related policy documents address the necessity for corporations to recognise all stakeholders and to pay attention to economic, environmental and social concerns. While the King codes are not compulsory, corporations are expected to justify why they have not adopted CSR initiatives if they have not done so, thereby forcing them to a certain extent to engage in CSR activities (Osemeke *et al.*, 2016:364).

Currently, the South African private sector spends more on CSI than richer countries (Mueller-Hirth, 2016:51). According to Trialogue (2010:28), corporations spent R5.4 billion on CSI in the 2009/10 financial year. This spending almost doubled to R10.7 billion in the 2019/20 financial year (Triologue, 2020:28).

Since 2002, the South African government has established and imposed a series of regulations on South Africa's large corporations to assist with local communities' socio-economic development (SED). Moreover, many corporations contribute to significant social programmes, in some instances as a prerequisite for their licence to operate (Triologue, 2010:52). This obligatory contribution is due to the government's adoption of a set of affirmative-action Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies that were implemented by the post-apartheid government, aimed at providing historically disadvantaged groups with financial prospects (Mueller-Hirth, 2016:51). In 2004, The Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment Act came into effect, making provision for the BEE Codes of Good Practice, which were gazetted in February 2007. CSI was included in the SED section of the BEE scorecard as an added social investment that has to be part of every business agenda, which is the key regulatory framework for industry sectors that are not regulated by a binding charter (Triologue, 2010:53). Today, South African corporations collect points for CSR activities and their performance is rated on several BEE scorecards. South Africa's history of colonialism and apartheid, and its current developmental issues, have significantly shaped the relationship between business and society (Mueller-Hirth, 2016:51, 52).

2.3 Corporate Social Responsibility

This section comprises an explanation of the meaning of CSR and how it is managed and implemented.

2.3.1 The meaning of Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR originated in the role played by business leaders in managing their companies and giving back to their local communities. This focus on business leaders as individuals shifted to corporations in the 1950s and questions about what corporations should be responsible for began to be asked in the 1980s (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:6).

More recently, the term has been used to highlight the role of business as a global citizen and its purpose in terms of honouring individual citizen's rights (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:7). According to Idowu *et al.* (2015:137), CSR conveys the assumption that businesses are financially sustainable, legally and ethically managed, and are "good corporate citizens", which means that they defend, assist and support citizen's rights whenever governments are unable or are unwilling to do so (Rasche *et al.*, 2017:15). Hopkins (2007:15-16) defines CSR as treating organisation stakeholders ethically and responsibly while creating higher standards of living for them without compromising the profitability of the organisation. Matten and Moon (2008:405) define CSR as expressing and communicating organisational policies and procedures that confer on businesses responsibility for part of the broader societal good. The specific demonstration and action taken depend on the organisation.

Despite there being many definitions of CSR, they all share one commonality – the belief that corporations have a responsibility towards the public good (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:7). This responsibility causes corporations to align their values and actions with stakeholders' expectancies and needs. The practice of CSR illustrates how committed a corporation is to being accountable to its stakeholders and requires it to manage the environmental, economic and social effects of its actions to increase the benefits and decrease the drawbacks of such activities (Fontaine, 2013:111).

2.3.1.1 The purpose of CSR

The purpose of advocating for CSR is to encourage corporations to accept responsibility for their actions and positively impact the environment, customers, employees, communities and all other stakeholders through their activities (Fontaine, 2013:111; Uddin *et al.*, 2008:199). Additionally, corporations that focus on CSR take the initiative to support the public interest through the encouragement of community development (Ismail, 2009:204). They willingly remove practices that damage the public sphere, despite the legality of such practices (Fontaine, 2013:111). This does not mean that corporations are no longer interested in making a profit, but rather that they are concerned with more than making a profit (Ismail, 2009:207). By deliberately including public interest in their decision-making, corporations honour the triple bottom line: people, planet and profit (Fontaine, 2013:111; Revathy, 2012:16).

Since the introduction of CSR, most forward-thinking corporate leaders have realised that including social responsibility in their business strategies can result in new solutions and prospects that support business outcomes while contributing to the public in the areas in which they operate (Fontaine, 2013:111; Sturchio & Galambos, 2014:87; Zu, 2019:2).

2.3.1.2 CSR in developing economies

Corporations operate all over the globe in developed and developing countries alike. Developing countries are those that are less industrialised and have lower per capita incomes (Visser, 2009:474). However, with globalisation and technology, industrialisation is thriving in many of these countries (Revathy, 2012:19). On the one hand, it provides many business opportunities and profitable growth markets for corporations (Visser, 2009:474), primarily when many of these developing economies produce goods and services that are exported globally (Blowfield, 2005:517; Eweje, 2014:6). It is not only corporations that can benefit from this exchange.

Developing economies can benefit from big investment opportunities from corporations such as multinational enterprises (Eweje, 2014:6). Therefore corporations are important to the growth and development of developing countries (Blowfield, 2005:516; Blowfield & Murray, 2014:76; Eweje, 2014:4). Moreover, because a high percentage of the population in many developing economies lack basic education, decent healthcare, infrastructure, products and services that assist with not only economic but also human development and, hence, a good quality of life for many people, corporations are needed to help curb this underdevelopment (Eweje, 2014:7; Valente & Crane, 2010:52). This need is in addition to the traditional business responsibility of job creation (Eweje, 2014:7).

Liberal economists assert that corporations also provide goods and services, and assist with funding important public institutions (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:76; Visser, 2009:493), which all contribute to the alleviation of poverty (Eweje, 2014:4). Corporations can consequently act as development agents in emerging economies (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:76).

Acting as a development agent means that the private sector is mindful of development and it therefore focuses on social outcomes as much as financial performance (Blowfield, 2012:416, 420; Blowfield & Dolan, 2010:144). Looking at job creation, the corporation is accountable for more than creating jobs; it is responsible for how many jobs it creates,

where these jobs are located and their quality. Regarding goods and services, the development agent makes obtainable products that are designed to meet the needs of the poor segments of society within the developing economy. Overall, the corporation is focused on meeting the needs of stakeholders instead of focusing only on the bottom line (Blowfield, 2012:416; Blowfield & Murray, 2014:77).

Poverty prevents individuals in these developing economies from having disposable incomes, thereby limiting the market for goods and services, which is damaging to the business world (Blowfield, 2010:133). Moreover, poverty prevents children from completing primary school and thus receiving an education, making it difficult for corporations to find potential employees who have the necessary skills to fill positions within those companies (Blowfield, 2007b:38; 2010:133; Blowfield & Murray, 2014:85). Furthermore, high rates of fatal diseases such as HIV/AIDS in some areas, particularly in Africa and parts of Asia, deprive the affected countries of the skilled workers they need to be competitive (Blowfield, 2007b:38).

However, corporations can become a solution to poverty (Blowfield, 2012:417). One solution is to target the poor. Four billion people are living in absolute poverty globally, and they form the base of the economic pyramid (BOP) because they have low incomes as individuals or as households. However, they have substantial purchasing power as a group: together they form a \$5 trillion global consumer market, which provides substantial opportunities for business. By providing new products and services designed to meet BOP needs, corporations can expand their business into the BOP market (Hammond *et al.*, 2007:148, 156).

On the other hand, the poor would be better served if they had access to markets as producers or better jobs instead of being viewed as consumers (Blowfield, 2010:87). Thus, corporations can increase their incomes while empowering the poor by helping them to join the formal economy, thereby helping eradicate poverty (Blowfield, 2012:419). Another solution is for corporations to provide microfinance (Valente & Crane, 2010:55) to empower poor people by providing them with loans with low interest rates and without traditional sureties, thus enabling them to be less reliant on conventional financiers and supplying them with investments, funds and insurance. Corporations can also become involved in initiatives to tackle corruption, increase the productivity of the poor, improve

health and safety guidelines, invest in education and improve living conditions (Blowfield, 2012:420, 421).

2.3.1.3 The impact of CSR

Impact signifies the measure of whether the corporations' CSR actions are perceived as having an important effect on society and if the corporation is recognised as contributing enough to society proportionate to its size and revenue (Alhouti *et al.*, 2016:1243). This impact essentially refers to the outcomes of the CSR actions. It serves as a vindication of strategies and facilitates understanding of corporations' positions on certain paths (Blowfield, 2007a:683). Impact is interlinked with ethical or philanthropic principles and is meant to positively affect society (Rupp & Mallory, 2015:214).

Blowfield and Murray (2014:287) provide a framework consisting of five dimensions in which CSR practice is proclaimed to have an impact:

1. The environmental, social and governance “big picture” indicates big environmental and social issues such as climate change, economic development, poverty reduction and human rights.
2. “Instrumental benefits” refer to the link between environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) and financial performance, incorporating the effect of devising a business case for CSR.
3. Business attitudes, awareness, and practices cover CSR’s effect on how corporations consider the non-financial portions of business processes and how they function.
4. “Non-business stakeholders” indicate the effect of CSR on other stakeholders, including the critics who support greater ESG responsibility.
5. The impact of CSR on itself refers to how its development has influenced the way people think about and conduct CSR today.

The challenge of determining impact is that the information provided by corporations is specific and does not seem to disclose enough concerning the actual outcomes of CSR in connection with how it affects its intended beneficiaries, such as marginalised people and the poor, society and the natural environment. Instead, this information is provided in case studies, which state the impact of corporations in specific locations and trades, in

corporations' CSR reports and the ratings of corporations. Moreover, the focus tends to be on environmental problems rather than social issues. Economic impact is barely addressed (Blowfield, 2007a:685-686), which is problematic because corporations are then unable to determine their contributions to long-term sustainable growth and development in the areas where they operate. Thus, they cannot focus on improving the local business environment by increasing local incomes and employment, nor can they foster competitive business practices such as lowering their costs and improving the quality of goods and services sourced locally (Abdulai, 2015:438).

Alternatively, when CSR initiatives focus on sustainable development, the impact can be determined by looking at the impacts of social investment and corporate philanthropy on poverty reduction, the effects of stakeholder partnerships engagement on capacity development, and the betterment of the socio-economic circumstances of rural communities. This emphasis places benefactors at the crux of the analysis because CSR impacts can be determined on the basis of benefactors' experiences (Idemudia, 2011:9).

2.3.1.4 Criticisms of CSR

Four main criticisms of CSR exist: that CSR is anti-business, is pro-business, the scope of CSR is too narrow and CSR fails to achieve its goals (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:313-314).

The criticism that CSR is anti-business refers to CSR leading corporations away from making money for the shareholders (András & Rajcsányi-Molnár, 2015:5; Ihlen *et al.*, 2014:8). Free enterprise liberalists believe that corporations are responsible for making a profit and following bureaucratic rules. In their view, corporations become weak when they focus on CSR because economic activity decreases and the government loses tax income; therefore the welfare state is weakened (Ihlen *et al.*, 2014:8-9). Furthermore, CSR is costly. These expenses regularly involve valuable business resources such as cash, products and amenities, as well as an increase in human resource and administrative costs due to the time and effort required by employees to implement the CSR programmes (Lu *et al.*, 2018:846; Wang *et al.*, 2008:146).

Moreover, corporations engaging in an action that is deemed socially beneficial, such as CSR, but which also results in additional monetary incentives for the corporation, can cause bystanders to view this action as greed instead of being socially responsible.

Therefore society will not reward corporations for this social action (Kitzmueller & Shimshack, 2012:60).

The argument that CSR is pro-business refers to CSR being good for business in terms of helping maximise profits while not contributing to social wellbeing (Hoque *et al.*, 2018:1130). The late Milton Friedman was an advocate of the classical economic argument that corporations have only one responsibility, which is to maximise the profits of the corporations' owners or shareholders (Crane *et al.*, 2008:5; Sturchio & Galambos, 2014:80; Uddin *et al.*, 2008:199). Profits are achieved through increased productivity and cutting costs, and they are a sign of economic growth. However, while economic growth can lead to job creation, the stimulation of local economies and the raising of living standards, it also leads to social issues such as human rights abuses, environmental catastrophes and poverty (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:4). According to Friedman, the free market system should resolve such social issues; they are not a corporate concern. Additionally, if the free market is unable to solve these problems, government and legislation are tasked to do so (Carroll & Shabana, 2010:88). However, corporations play a big role in legislation, especially where the standard of governance is low in some countries or ineffective international governance systems exist. Furthermore, corporations have had a hand in aggravating social issues with their demand for natural resources, cheap labour and new markets (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:4, 5). Moreover, social evils can result, whereby profit maximisation trumps ethics (Beschorner, 2013:110; Fleming & Jones, 2013:83). For example, there are instances where employees have been killed on the job because of their corporations' negligent health and safety policies, whilst these same corporations have been recognised for their CSR practices.

Additionally, CSR has helped large multinational corporations that have been responsible for adverse social effects and major environmental disasters (Fleming & Jones, 2013:83) in developing countries to repair the damage to their public image (Hoque *et al.*, 2018:1132) and to become more powerful through restructurings, mergers or persistent public relations campaigns (Banerjee, 2008:62). Along with corporations attempting to improve their public images, many have tried to artificially establish a "green" and responsible image through CSR, which is termed "greenwashing" (Kallio, 2007:170). Such corporations might simply label themselves and their products as "green" instead of

investing in new technologies that will reduce their impact on the environment, thereby enabling them to develop and sustain social legitimacy (Kallio, 2007:170).

The claim that the scope of CSR is too narrow refers to CSR not addressing what are deemed critical corporate behaviour areas, and that they cannot address these more significant issues in any case (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:322). One of these areas of corporate behaviour is corruption. Many corporations have been caught up in corporate scandals in which corrupt payments have been made to domestic and foreign public officials, which has harmed fair trade, growth and competition (Adeyeye, 2011:113).

Another area of concern is the environmental and working conditions at suppliers' factories, particularly in developing countries. Suppliers are inclined to focus on meeting delivery deadlines and quality requirements rather than ensuring good working conditions (Soundararajan & Brown, 2016:96) because, while it is easy to plan CSR regulations regarding working conditions, it is more difficult to monitor and ensure suppliers comply with these regulations (Lim & Phillips, 2008:143). Furthermore, governance procedures falling under CSR policies are not being used to enforce social and environmental compliance (Soundararajan & Brown, 2016:84).

Remuneration is an additional issue that corporations are failing to take in hand. While corporations' CSR policies ban child labour and slavery, they fail to address the right to fair wages (Sagebien & Whellams, 2010:491). Moreover, there are corporations in certain industries, such as the electronics industry, which have continued to pay their workers extremely low wages (Pearson, 2007:734). Because workers' wages are a cost of the corporation, they continue to be as low as possible to increase profits and to allow the corporation to remain competitive rather than enforcing the human right to fair wages. Therefore, many corporations have argued that CSR should remain nonbinding and voluntary, and have strongly opposed any endeavour to create a global legal framework aimed at implementing human rights standards in their domain (Rabet, 2009:469).

Finally, many CSR initiatives are focused on dealing only with the priorities of developed countries, such as corporate governance, reducing the emission of greenhouse gasses and employee engagement, instead of focusing on issues of human rights abuses, poverty reduction and investing in community development projects quickly and on a national scale (Sagebien & Whellams, 2010:492).

Some critics argue that CSR fails to achieve its goals because many corporations only focus on the philanthropy aspect of CSR, donating a portion of their profits to aid organisations while neglecting to make CSR a part of their business processes, thereby failing to tackle the harmful side effects of business practices (Wettstein, 2009:131). What is more, only a small number of corporations contribute a substantial or reasonable amount of their profits, namely approximately 2% to 5%, to CSR. Most corporations contribute a negligible amount of their profits (0.68% to 1.74%) to CSR sporadically (Hoque *et al.*, 2018:1135). Moreover, as long as corporations donate to good causes, such as a local school, or support the arts or cultural events, they are seen as socially responsible, even if the donation has resulted from suppressing workers' rights, causing damage to the environment or engaging in other practices that are ethically questionable (Wettstein, 2009:131).

Furthermore, it has been discovered that corporations are interested in implementing specific CSR activities that assist with image building (Siegel & Vitaliano, 2007:774) and the improvement of their financial performance rather than activities that benefit social welfare (Kitzmueller & Shimshack, 2012:52, 64) and ensure business sustainability (Hoque *et al.*, 2018:1136).

Additionally, some critics argue that CSR is not achieving its goals because its practitioners focus on the environmental and social facets of the triple bottom line but overlook the economic facet (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:327). They argue that corporations should pay more attention to the wider economic agenda because economic responsibility does not only mean being accountable financially and documenting employment data and obligations in their latest CSR reports, but also means being accountable, providing products and services that are more affordable and being economically diverse and fair. Economic equity relates to how wealth is created and distributed. Fair trade, fair wages, fair pricing and fair tax are advocated as means to achieve such equity (Elkington & Lee, 2006:no pagination).

Blowfield and Murray (2014:328) state CSR goals will only be achieved once corporations are obligated to report on their environmental and social impacts; once the communities that are affected by corporations' actions are consulted and the right of redress is guaranteed; once negative impacts are considered in the decision-making process; and once directors are held liable for violations of environmental and social laws.

2.3.2 Managing and implementing CSR

2.3.2.1 CSR management

In 1979, Carroll offered a framework for understanding the many ways of managing corporations' relationship with society. This framework comprises four types of responsibility: economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities (Carroll, 2008:33; Schrek, 2009:13).

Economic responsibility refers to the underlying responsibility of corporations to create goods and services that society wants and which are sold for profit (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:18). Nonetheless, corporations should consider how profits are made and not only on profitability itself (Asongu, 2007:3).

Legal responsibility signifies corporations' duty to comply with their economic objectives within the boundaries of the law (Carroll & Shabana, 2010:91; Matten & Moon, 2008:407). Local, national and international law determines the rules that stipulate what corporations can and cannot do regarding product safety, human rights, corruption, employment and environmental protection (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:19).

Ethical responsibility represents what corporations can do over and above what is required by regulations and economic concerns (Carroll & Shabana, 2010:90). It characterises how the corporation's choices and actions are informed by what its stakeholders deem moral and fair (Hatten, 2019:52).

Discretionary responsibilities are those that corporations can assume even if there are no clear expectations from society, such as the notion of "giving back" to society through philanthropy (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:23). Corporations do so by participating in programmes that raise living standards, improve the quality of life and support generosity in their communities (Hatten, 2019:53).

For corporations to manage their relationships with society; they should look at how they manage CSR internally. Furthermore, they need to ensure that they manage the challenge of sustainability, recognise opportunities and risks, and create, execute, monitor and enhance corporate sustainability strategies to be more sustainable for society and themselves, and to be successful economically (Baumgartner, 2014:258).

Blowfield and Murray (2014:138-139) outline an early CSR management guide that identifies four main areas for structuring CSR:

1. Understanding the drivers of CSR within the corporation
2. Recording what is occurring within and outside the corporation
3. Analysing systems, culture and impending changes
4. Planning a detailed CSR management structure

Each corporation chooses a structure that works for them. One corporation chooses the full board of directors to make major decisions instead of a specific committee (Yakovleva, 2016:18), another chooses existing executives as part of the executive committee (Isaksson *et al.*, 2014:69) and another chooses other parts of the corporation to handle any CSR issues (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:139). Whichever structure is chosen, corporations should create management methods that launch CSR as an essential driver of business performance, thus entirely supporting the corporation's strategic operations (Horrigan, 2010:270). CSR should generate value inside the corporation and the corporation should generate value for the wider society (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:142; Horrigan, 2010:281).

Whichever structure corporations choose, they should coordinate CSR with their overall objectives (Vallaster *et al.*, 2012:54). For CSR to succeed, corporations should execute organisational changes, evaluate internal departmental structures, assess their stakeholder relationships and introduce incentives to ensure support for CSR. If managers ignore CSR, it can result in high financial costs in the future because stakeholders will criticise the corporation for disregarding various alleged social obligations (Isaksson *et al.*, 2014:66).

2.3.2.2 Stakeholder management and engagement

Owing to globalisation and technology, the relationships between business management and stakeholders have become increasingly diverse and multifaceted, and corporations should be concerned with more than just profits and growth to satisfy their stakeholders (Tokoro, 2007:151). To ensure that corporations remain relevant and survive in the marketplace, they should take note of stakeholders' wants and ideas, and make every effort to incorporate these into their business management (Spitzeck & Hansen,

2010:379; Tokoro, 2007:151). Corporations do this by implementing the stakeholder model.

In terms of this model, the company enriches as many stakeholders as possible and ensures that the relationships between the numerous stakeholders and interests are aligned (Verdeyen *et al.*, 2004:326). Stakeholders who view a corporation positively due to its high engagement in CSR have a higher intention of buying products from it, more potential employees seek employment with it and more investors tend to invest in it (Alniacik *et al.*, 2011:241-242).

What is crucial in the management and engagement of stakeholders are the following important features of execution: valuation of the corporation's values and standards, recognition of stakeholder groups and their main concerns, in-house and outside communication and the observation of CSR activities (Dobele *et al.*, 2014:147; Manetti, 2011:111). Additionally, Dobele *et al.* (2014:156) state that corporations take the interrelationships of all stakeholders into account and acknowledge that these relationships evolve based on outside and in-house decisions and actions. Furthermore, the corporation should manage the stakeholders' wants, rights, and responsibilities to ensure there is little conflict (Jones *et al.*, 2009:306). This can be done by involving stakeholders in executive processes and in the corporation's management, disclosing information, discussing and making a joint responsibility model (Manetti, 2011:111).

2.4 Stakeholder theory's connection to CSR

The focus of stakeholder theory is on how value is created for corporations and stakeholders alike. It is a theory about what it means to have good management in a corporation (Agle *et al.*, 2008:166). Stakeholder theory is considered *the* CSR theory because it provides a prescriptive framework to make businesses responsible to society (Melé, 2008:63). Stakeholder theory is that individuals and groups of people have an interest in corporations. If a corporation is to achieve its objectives, it needs to be accountable to all its stakeholders, not only shareholders. For a corporation to function effectively, it requires the approval of these stakeholders and its core values should align with those of the society in which it operates (Blowfield & Murray, 2014:47). Furthermore, corporations need to be cognisant of the repercussions of their activities and their effect on stakeholders (Falck & Heblich, 2007:249).

A business can be seen as a set of relationships among stakeholders that have an interest in the undertakings that constitute the corporation. Moreover, business is about how these stakeholders interact and create value; thus, understanding business means knowing how the relationships between corporations and stakeholders work (Freeman *et al.*, 2010:24).

Good management means taking responsibility for dealing with and forming relationships with stakeholders (Freeman *et al.*, 2010:24). It is part of the leaderships' role to understand how distinct stakeholder relationships work and how they change over time (Parmar *et al.*, 2010). Corporations and managers are, thereby, responsible for the effects of their actions on those people that they can impact or be impacted by. They are not only responsible for making a profit (Agle *et al.*, 2008:164). As Agle *et al.* (2008:165) state, the corporation's purpose is to use its resources to participate in activities intended to increase its profits, while also creating value for stakeholders. Stakeholder theory, therefore, challenges the purpose of business from one of a strictly profit-making purpose to that of a value-creating purpose while making a profit.

CSR also challenges the objectives of corporations. The corporations' goal transforms from a shareholder view, in which profits are maximised, to that of a stakeholder view, whereby larger social interests are incorporated into the corporations' purpose (Freeman *et al.*, 2010:242). Social and environmental issues raised by the primary and secondary stakeholders are then addressed, and some business models are even changed to fulfil stakeholders' expectations (Shams *et al.*, 2020:3). Taking it one step further, CSR merges the two views by entrenching the shareholder view in the stakeholder view of the corporation (Freeman *et al.*, 2010:242). Stakeholders become involved in corporations' decision-making processes by sharing information and ideas and sharing responsibility for the actions taken. It is essential for the corporation's performance and its long-term survival (Shams *et al.*, 2020:4). It is, therefore, important for corporations to engage in strategic CSR practices, which include stakeholders being considered in the decision-making process and corporations taking a long-term view of profit maximisation (Falck & Hebllich, 2007:253).

2.5 CSR focus areas

CSR is about forming and strengthening the relationships between corporations and their stakeholders around the globe (Bartley & Kincaid, 2015:400). Furthermore, it addresses issues such as health and safety, human rights, poverty, social inequality, participation in society, the environment and education (Osemeke *et al.*, 2016:358; The Bertelsmann Stiftung & The United Nations Global Compact, 2010:18). Corporations combat society's most critical sustainability issues because they understand that a variety of stakeholders benefit from a better world. In 2013, corporations ranked education, poverty eradication, climate change, and growth and employment as the most pressing issues. Moreover, they indicated that they believed they had the most positive impact on growth and employment, education, and climate change among those challenges (United Nations Global Compact, 2013:7, 20). Since then, corporations have come to believe that employment and economic growth, health and wellbeing, gender equality and quality education are the most urgent issues. Additionally, corporations believe that decent work and economic growth, innovation and infrastructure, and gender equality are the areas in which they can have the most significant impact (United Nations Global Compact, 2017:9, 33).

While the abovementioned issues indicate the general trends in global CSR policy development today, corporations deal with context-related issues (The Bertelsmann Stiftung & The United Nations Global Compact, 2010:18). In developed countries, they have been made aware of the ecological and environmental damage that their activities has caused, which has resulted in added pressure on corporations to act responsibly (Osemeke *et al.*, 2016:358). For example, in Australia, corporations compensate for environmental impacts in the construction, mining, manufacturing and transport industries (Ross, 2016:264). Corporations in Europe execute waste reduction, renewable energy production, water and energy conservation, environmental preservation and sustainable transport initiatives (Camilleri, 2016:39). Developed countries also engage in CSR outside the environmental sphere. For instance, Australian CSR initiatives take the form of social philanthropy (Ross, 2016:264). In addition, corporations in Europe have been tackling corruption and bribery as part of their CSR (Camilleri, 2016:39).

CSR initiatives are focused on various areas in developing countries. For example, in Bangladesh, they include charity work, transformation projects and providing scholarships (Osemeke *et al.*, 2016:363). CSR initiatives in Ghana tend to be focused on

sports development, health, environment, education and social entrepreneurship (Oppong, 2016:419). In Nigeria, CSR initiatives have been voluntary and philanthropic, taking the form of donations, charity work, sponsorship in sports and community development. Some CSR initiatives in Nigeria involve improving roads, supplying borehole water, empowering the youth and providing schools and healthcare centres for local communities (Osemeké *et al.*, 2016:357-358).

It is not only corporations that engage in CSR. Governments worldwide have recognised the importance of CSR and formulate public policies to promote it. They also tend to launch local initiatives targeting specific issues. For example, Brazil, Malawi and Nigeria are targeting corruption; China is addressing the poor factory working conditions of suppliers based in China and serving German retailers; Columbia focuses on creating a local market for sustainable and environmentally-friendly goods; Costa Rica concentrates on sustainable tourism; India, Sweden and the United Kingdom are promoting the protection of human rights in terms of business activities; Mozambique is improving the quality of primary and secondary education; and the United States is targeting standard workplace health and safety practices (The Bertelsmann Stiftung & The United Nations Global Compact, 2010:22, 23-27).

According to Makka and Niewenhuizen (2018:829), corporations in South Africa encounter various CSR issues. Because they are aligned with sector-specific codes and charters, their CSI initiatives have become sector-specific. Furthermore, the definition of SED in the BEE Codes has affected how corporations select both priority areas and service providers in executing their CSI initiatives (Triologue, 2010:52, 53). Social investment in community development is the primary focus of CSR due to South Africa's violent and oppressive history. However, it is more than merely compliance that motivates corporations in South Africa; rather, they have affirmed their dedication to the development of an inclusive country (Mueller-Hirth, 2016:65).

In 2020, 81% of South African corporations ranked moral obligation as one of their main motives for supporting CSI, with 53% ranking it the most important reason. More than one-half of corporations have undertaken CSI because of licence-to-operate requirements other than Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE), but only 11% rated this their main reason for supporting CSI, and only 35% of corporations ranked reputational benefits as one of their main motives for supporting CSI (Triologue, 2020:40).

These corporations organise, execute and manage numerous sustainable development initiatives in healthcare, SED, capacity building, and education and training (Osemeke *et al.*, 2016:364). They do so because South Africa has immense challenges of inequality and poverty. Therefore, corporations have become involved in attempting to achieve developmental goals (Mueller-Hirth, 2016:52).

The most supported developmental sectors in 2020 were education, which totalled an average of 50% of CSI expenditure, social and community development at 15%, health at 9%, and food security and agriculture at 7% of total CSI spending. The total social investment of corporations that reported CSI spending for 2020 consisted of cash and non-cash expenditures. These expenditures included donations of goods and services, employee-volunteering time and spending by corporate BBBEE trusts (Triologue, 2020:26, 36).

2.6 Conclusion

The chapter comprised a description of the theoretical orientation of CSR and its focus areas. It was argued that CSR is a reminder to corporations that they have a responsibility to all stakeholders and not only shareholders. Such stakeholders include employees, suppliers, customers, governments, the environment and society at large. Furthermore, it was noted that the private sector shares in the responsibility of finding solutions to global environmental and social issues to ensure that people live in a better world. Regarding social issues, it was indicated that corporations believe that employment and economic growth, health and wellbeing, gender equality and quality education are the most urgent issues in the world today. Additionally, corporations now believe that decent work and economic growth, innovation and infrastructure, and gender equality are the areas in which they can have the greatest impact.

While the abovementioned issues indicate the general trends in global CSR policy development today, corporations deal with context-related issues. For example, in developed countries, corporations are focused on ecological and environmental issues, while in developing countries they are more focused on social and development issues. Additionally, large corporations have discovered that incorporating a responsible approach to governance, environmental and social issues into their main business activities is essential for sustainability, profitability and prosperity. Moreover, CSR

principles enable corporations to re-evaluate their activities from multiple perspectives, resulting in discussions on how sustainable business practices can be achieved in developing and developed nations.

It was found that, if CSR is to be effective, it should become the main business agenda, being integrated into all practices, policies and processes. To achieve sustainability and longevity, CSR needs to be embedded in all corporate activities: in production, operations, communications and relations with staff, suppliers, clients, authorities and competitors. Furthermore, it was contended that CSR ought to be embedded, not only in a corporation's strategies and execution, but also in the minds and culture of every staff member, partner and the entire supply chain.

Finally, it was affirmed that CSR in South Africa was understood as CSI, a uniquely South African term born of the country's oppressive past. CSI is understood as strategic philanthropy and corporate citizenship. South African corporations understand that their CSI duty involves supporting the improvement and safeguarding of an economic, political and social environment that is beneficial to continuous economic growth and development. Currently, the South African private sector spends more on CSI than richer countries. It spent a total of R10.7 billion in the 2019/20 financial year. Furthermore, it was asserted that South African corporations have implemented more advanced socially-responsible policies than those in many wealthier economies to assist with local communities' SED. Moreover, many corporations are legally obliged to contribute to significant social programmes as a prerequisite for their licence-to-operate. However, it is more than merely compliance that motivates corporations in South Africa because they have affirmed their dedication to the development of an inclusive country by focusing on healthcare, SED, capacity building, and education and training. The most supported developmental sectors are education, social and community development, health, food security and agriculture.

As this chapter and Chapter 3 demonstrate, few studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of CSR education initiatives in terms of their ability to improve the lives of beneficiaries.

The next chapter outlines the broad context of the study's research problem. The importance of education for quality of life, the factors that impact it, the CSR education

initiatives that corporations engage in, the effectiveness of education initiatives in positively impacting beneficiaries' quality of life and the challenges associated with implementing these initiatives are noted.

CHAPTER 3

CSR EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND QUALITY OF LIFE

A quality education has the power to transform societies in a single generation, provide children with the protection they need from the hazards of poverty, labour exploitation and disease, and give them the knowledge, skills and confidence to reach their full potential – Audrey Hepburn (1992)

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a theoretical orientation of CSR and its initiatives. The focus was on the meaning of CSR, its impact, and how corporations manage and implement CSR. Moreover, the connection between stakeholder theory and CSR was indicated. Additionally, the types of CSR initiatives that corporations engage in were described. In this chapter, the broad context of the study's research problem is outlined.

Each individual has the right to a quality life, and education helps one to achieve that. Education creates a solid foundation for the growth of skills and talents. It also furthers democratic transformation because students learn to fight against discrimination and prejudice. Moreover, it encourages the acknowledgement of responsibility, aids in poverty eradication and ultimately improves the quality of people's lives (Serfontein, 2015:2264, 2283). As an individual's education level increases, their life satisfaction increases and the benefits of education reach all domains of their life, such as the economic, personal, health, job and family domains (Rojas, 2007:273).

Thus, the importance of education for quality of life and the factors that impact it, such as inequality, unemployment, lack of access to quality education and poverty, are examined. The CSR education initiatives that corporations engage in are also investigated. Moreover, the effectiveness of education initiatives in positively impacting beneficiaries' quality of life and the challenges associated with implementing these initiatives are noted.

3.2 Importance of education for quality of life

3.2.1. Quality of life

Quality of life constitutes the goal of humankind's continuing effort for progress. In the past, people have focused mainly on issues such as health (to extend one's life), on wealth (to combat poverty) and, in recent times, on democracy (to protect human rights) (Glatzer, 2015:2). Today, the expression "quality of life" has a broad range of meanings, including wellbeing, health, happiness, wealth, freedom and a sense of purpose – virtually everything that could be deemed of value and included in "the good life" (Valenkamp & van der Walt, 2009:83). Quality of life consists of the resources an individual can control, what they can achieve with those resources, what goals and needs they can meet, and what meaning can be assigned to these goals and the processes they engage in (McGregor, 2007:317). It relates to the parts of life that exceed mere existence, survival and life expectancy. These are the aspects of life that make life pleasant, happy and rewarding, such as meaningful work, the development of skills and talents, and a decent level of comfort (Frisch, 2012:240, 241). It also relates to perceptions and the trends presented over time (Eloff, 2019:449).

Quality of life, or wellbeing, as it is also referred to in the literature (Glatzer, 2015:1), has been divided into objective wellbeing and subjective wellbeing. "Objective wellbeing" refers to material wellbeing (Frisch, 2012:240; Gordon, 2017:87; Valenkamp & van der Walt, 2009:83), which includes the steadiness and amount of income received, housing conditions, the state of the natural and social environment, security and safety, the chance to attain civil and social needs and rights, and access to education (Alatartseva & Barysheva, 2015:38). People are inclined to associate financial prosperity with wellbeing and happiness (Valenkamp & van der Walt, 2009:83). On the other hand, subjective well-being refers to an individual's cognitive judgment of their life in general as satisfying. In other words, subjective wellbeing can be viewed as life satisfaction (Larsen & Eid, 2008:4) and it is different for each person (Valenkamp & van der Walt, 2009:83). Cultural and everyday experiences guide subjective wellbeing (Mampane *et al.*, 2019:376).

It is crucial for the individual to have quality of life, but also for society. According to Alatartseva and Barysheva (2015:36), human wellbeing is the foundation of a functional

society and its growth and welfare. A functioning or “good” society is one that provides a social environment that enables each person to live what they believe to be a “good life”, without any interference from other people (Dumas, 2020:2). There is no universal agreement on what signifies a good life. However, a good society should include and support a variety of concepts of a good life. Simultaneously, a good society should restrict behaviour to some degree to prevent individuals from meddling with the lifestyles and paths that other people choose (Dumas, 2020:2). A good society also supports the basic needs of survival, increases the potential for people to exert control over their own life choices, protects its members’ self-worth and nurtures their abilities. Furthermore, a good society should uphold human rights because they encourage respect, discourage oppression, promote stability and foster peaceful exchanges. Finally, it provides the resources necessary to live a dignified life, such as health, property ownership and an adequate education (Schulz & Raman, 2020:6, 33, 34).

On the other hand, a dysfunctional society cannot provide the conditions needed to create and develop people’s wellbeing (Alatartseva & Barysheva, 2015:36). A dysfunctional society is one in which there is vast inequality, where the material differences between people within that society are too large. The best way of improving a dysfunctional society, and therefore the quality of life for everyone, is by reducing inequality (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2011:x, 25, 29). A good quality education can reduce inequality because it can act as an equaliser and leveller in society, helping to close the gap between the rich and poor and between men and women (Oxfam, 2019:12).

Thus, quality education positively impacts quality of life. Education provides individuals with knowledge and experience, which, in turn, empowers them (Biesta, 2015:78). Empowerment refers to the “capabilities of individuals to live the sort of lives they value” (Glosenber *et al.*, 2019:56). In other words, people are empowered when they can choose the kind of life they want to lead. However, they are only genuinely empowered if they have access to quality education because the quality of human assets is related to the quality of education received (Taskinsoy, 2012:163). Moreover, education is deemed the primary instrument of social mobility in modern democracies – people with higher education earn more and have a higher social status (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2011:161). Therefore, people must have equal opportunities to access quality education to ensure

social mobility (World Economic Forum, 2020b:6). Thus, quality education can transform lives by improving their quality of life (UNESCO, 2020:6).

However, it has been argued in the literature that educational systems such as schools reproduce class structure and inequality, thereby preventing social mobility. Conversely, they can be key demonstrations of democratic ideals and sites where individuals fight for a more equal society. Globally, this suggests that educational systems can embody developing countries' ambitions of challenging unequal power relations. In other words, education can be a vehicle for change, defining national cultures and building fairly independent economic development (Carnoy, 2021:29). Hence, access to quality education is essential because it has the potential to change people's lives and improve their quality of life.

The next section comprises a description of the factors that affect people's quality of life.

3.3 Factors that impact quality of life

Multiple factors negatively affect people's quality of life, such as inequality, unemployment, lack of access to quality education and poverty. People's lives can improve when inequality is decreased by people having access to jobs and quality education. When these factors are combined, they can reduce poverty levels, thereby improving the living standards of local communities (South Africa, 2011:3-5).

In the following subsection, the following factors are explored in more detail: inequality, unemployment, lack of access to quality education and poverty.

3.3.1. Inequality

The members of a relatively equal society experience a satisfactory quality of life compared to those in an unequal society (Phillips, 2006:68). Countries with more significant income differences have much lower social mobility (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2011:159), which negatively impacts their quality of life. Social mobility refers to how a person's income or social class distinction changes over time on the income and social class spectrum (Major & Machin, 2020:4). Social mobility reflects equality of opportunity, which is the premise that any person can improve their social or economic position for their family and themselves through hard work and merit. Poor people in unequal

societies struggle to move up in society. Social mobility is also more difficult in societies with a rigid social structure (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2011:157, 163). By achieving social mobility goals, societies are meeting collective responsibilities, are providing decent jobs, are offering fair access to opportunities for everyone, are empowering local communities and are providing decent lives for all (Major & Machin, 2020:2).

South Africa has been repeatedly found to be among the most unequal nations across the globe, as a result of its colonisation and apartheid history (Stats SA, 2019:2). Because of this history, South Africa's population was divided into four racial categories, namely African, White, Indian and Coloured. Seekings and Natrass (2005:ix) describe each category:

“African” refers to people classified by the apartheid state as “Native,” “Bantu,” or “Black.” “White” refers to people classified as European and later as White by the apartheid state. “Indian” refers to people who were brought to or came to South Africa from the Indian subcontinent and were sometimes classified as “Asiatic” by the apartheid state. “Coloured,” referring mainly to people in the Western Cape, designates those who did not fit the other categories: some were descendants of the indigenous Khoi and San who inhabited the Western Cape before the arrival of either White or African people; others are the descendents of “Malay” slaves, brought from Indonesia and elsewhere by Dutch colonists; others are descendents of relationships between White and African people. We use “Black” to refer to African, Coloured, and Indian people collectively.

Under apartheid, overt racial discrimination affected wages and salaries directly and deliberately. For example, Black and White people with identical qualifications received differing incomes for doing the same work. Government policies influenced inequality by restricting the opportunities available to Black people, such as depriving or denying them access to property because of their race, limiting business opportunities and spending less on education for Black people, resulting in them entering the job market with considerable disadvantages. Even if Black people had the necessary skills and experience, the “colour bar” prohibited them from getting higher-paying jobs. Therefore, apartheid policies dictated an individual's income and welfare based on his or her race (Seekings & Natrass, 2005:2, 3).

Even though apartheid was abolished in South Africa in 1994, the effects of its policies can still be felt. The labour market is a prime example. In 2017, Black people experienced the highest unemployment rates relative to their population size, which were approximately four to five times higher than those of White people. Moreover, Black people earned significantly lower wages than White people. The monthly average real earnings was three times higher for White people than Black people (Stats SA, 2019:71, 146).

Moreover, South Africa is still a deeply fragmented society with huge developmental backlogs, poverty and social division (Møller, 1997:7). Unequal development across the country is demonstrated in regional inequalities in terms of access to basic services (such as water, electricity, sanitation and refuse removal), healthcare and education (Sekhampu, 2013:146; Stats SA, 2019:71). However, there has been a considerable increase in access to basic services for Black people (especially access to electricity and piped water) led by well-financed public works projects (Gordon, 2017:87). Nevertheless, Black-headed households have the lowest percentage of access to electricity compared to other population groups (Stats SA, 2019:148).

The standards of living for most South Africans have significantly improved since 1994, but the country is still faced with many challenges (Gordon, 2017:89). The South African government has attempted to reduce inequality since the end of apartheid by introducing policies and legislation to redress the injustices and inequalities of the past. Such policies and legislation include the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994 and the new National Development Plan: 2030 (NDP) of 2011 (Mushongera *et al.*, 2017:279). The RDPs objective was to redress Black South Africans' lack of access to adequate housing (Brown & Neku, 2005:304). The NDPs objective was to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, from 0.7 to 0.6 by 2030 (South Africa, 2011:2, 3; Stats SA, 2017:16). The Gini coefficient is an index used to measure economic and social inequality in population groups or societies. It ranges from 0 to 1, whereby perfect inequality corresponds to 0 and perfect equality is indicated by 1. Thus, a low value demonstrates more equal wealth distribution, whereas a high value denotes high unequal wealth distribution (Rajaretnam, 2016:266, 267).

Nine major challenges that needed to be addressed were identified in the NDP, namely unemployment, low-quality education, poor infrastructure, existing spatial patterns,

resource-intensive economy, failing public health system, poor service delivery, corruption, and a divided society. Of these nine challenges, unemployment and low-quality education were highlighted as critical issues, for two reasons. Firstly, they hindered economic growth and, secondly, by improving the quality of education for the poor, their job prospects would dramatically improve, thereby decreasing unemployment rates. Furthermore, failure to address these issues would cause economic decline, a reduced quality of life and social instability because of persistent poverty, social tension and increased competition for resources (South Africa, 2011:3-4).

Even though the South African government has attempted to address inequality since 1994, progress has been limited (Stats SA, 2019:2). The latter is evident for most young people in South Africa, who have a low quality of life due to the country's historical racial divisions (Makiwane & Kwizera, 2009:223).

3.3.2. Unemployment

Employment and unemployment both affect people's quality of life. Both impact the economic, social, physical and psychological realms of individual's lives. While employment provides benefits to people, unemployment harms them. Economically, employment enables individuals to receive a stable income, which helps reduce poverty (Karnani, 2011:224) and enables them to buy more than they need for survival (Peeters *et al.*, 2014:10). Furthermore, employment enables previously unemployed people to receive the benefits that accompany an increased income, such as improved nutrition, access to healthcare, the ability to accumulate assets and access to education (Karnani, 2011:224). Socially, it provides benefits such as a structured routine, regular activity, opportunities for social contact, social identity or status and sharing of a common purpose. Physically and psychologically, employed people are significantly happier than those who are unemployed (Peeters *et al.*, 2014:10).

"Unemployment" refers to the situation in which individuals cannot trade their labour and skills for payment, even though they wish to work. Economically, unemployment causes financial instability (Aamaas *et al.*, 2012:9), prevents social mobility and plays a part in crime (Burns *et al.*, 2016:241). In the social domain, unemployment can cause people to withdraw from or be excluded from social activities and relationships (Sonnenberg, 2014:18). Furthermore, because it affects an individuals' financial status, it can negatively

affect their self-worth and pride (Burns *et al.*, 2016:241). Other physical and psychological effects include individuals experiencing distress, a loss of vocational identity and stress-related illnesses (Aamaas *et al.*, 2012).

Additionally, unemployment can cause people to feel suicidal, anxious and/or depressed. Furthermore, unemployed people can experience higher levels of long-term illness and risky behaviours such as drinking and smoking (Peeters *et al.*, 2014:10). Thus, unemployment can reduce a person's quality of life (Van der Zijden, 2012:89).

According to Klasen and Woolard (2008:39), unemployment impacts households supporting those who are unemployed because it draws many of these households into poverty. Moreover, even if households have only one employed person, many of the employed persons have low-paying jobs, which reduces the possibility of escaping poverty (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2016:395-396). Alternatively, higher-paying employment, which results from higher education (European Commission, 2012:43), might enable households to escape poverty and thereby experience an improved quality of life.

According to Statistics South Africa, the South African unemployed are individuals aged 15 to 64 who are actively looking for and are available for employment (Stats SA, 2018:17). They also include those who are not actively looking for jobs but have a position or are starting a business on a fixed date in the future. At first glance, South Africa's employment and unemployment statistics paint a bleak picture. During the second quarter of 2020, the unemployment rate was 23.3%, and 2,5 million individuals were discouraged job-seekers. Furthermore, the number of people employed decreased by 2,2 million individuals in 2020 (Stats SA, 2020c:1, 2). The unemployment rate rose to 34.4% during the second quarter of 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, marking an overall increase of 11.1% in a year. Moreover, the number of discouraged job-seekers increased to 3,3 million individuals, an overall increase of 800,000 individuals. However, there is some hope when one considers the number of employed people. The employment rate increased by 793,000 from the second quarter of 2020 to the second quarter of 2021 (Stats SA, 2021a:2).

3.3.3. Education

3.3.3.1. The purpose of education

What exactly is education? According to Jackson (2011:95), education is the transference of knowledge from one to another to improve one's character and wellbeing, and the broader social environment. In addition, the purpose of education is to develop a child's mental and physical abilities, and their personality and talents to their full potential (UNICEF, 2020:5).

Education is divided into primary, secondary and tertiary education, whereby each level builds upon the previous one. Primary education provides basic education in literacy and mathematics and a rudimentary understanding of subjects such as art, music, the sciences, history and geography. Secondary education develops the basic programmes of the primary level further. However, the teaching is more subject-focused and the teachers are more specialised in their subjects. Finally, tertiary education builds on secondary education by focusing on specialised fields of education and providing learning at an advanced level of complexity and in-depth study (UNESCO, 2020:416).

Tertiary education is essential for improving people's quality of life. When household heads have a higher level of education, they have a greater chance of having access to stable job-market income, which is crucial for households to achieve economic stability. Additionally, the average risk of poverty is reduced by 30% when the head of a household has attained some tertiary education, compared to households in which the head has no education (The World Bank, 2018:xxii).

3.3.3.2. Access to education globally

Regrettably, many people across the globe do not have access to education. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) Global Monitoring Report 2020, 59 million children of primary school age and 199 million adolescents of secondary school age do not attend school worldwide (UNESCO, 2020:212). That totals 258 million young people (17% of the global total) who are not receiving an education (UNESCO, 2020:6; UNICEF, 2020:18). Moreover, more than 97 million of these children and adolescents are located in sub-Saharan Africa, surpassing the number of children out-of-school in Central and Southern Asia for the first time

(UNESCO, 2020:6, 212). It is estimated that sub-Saharan Africa will account for 25% of the world's school-age children by 2030 (UNESCO, 2020:214), which is concerning, considering the current trajectory of out-of-school students in the region. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened matters, causing more than 1 billion children, which is more than 80% of all students around the world, to be out of school (UNICEF, 2020:8).

3.3.3.3. The importance of quality education

Lacking access to education is only part of the problem. Access to quality education is even more essential to improving quality of life. Quality education is described as “the acquisition of the knowledge, skills and values that society deems valuable” (Spaull, 2015:34). In other words, quality education is education that can provide individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to society. Quality education is necessary for employment growth and productivity. It can thus effect a large decrease in poverty and inequality (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2016:395) and thereby improve people's wellbeing.

However, not everyone has access to quality education. There is a learning crisis, even for those who are in school, because millions of children are not learning “hard skills” such as literacy and mathematics (UNICEF, 2020:10,50, 195). Nor are they learning “soft skills” such as teamwork, communication and resilience. This crisis is linked to “learning poverty”, which refers to the portion of children who cannot read a simple story by the age of 10 (UNICEF, 2020:8,10). More than half of all children in low- and middle-income countries are classified as having learning poverty (UNICEF, 2020:44). Learning poverty demonstrates poor-quality education, preventing students from progressing academically (UNESCO, 2014a:i). Moreover, poor-quality education wastes resources and hinders children's opportunities (UNICEF, 2020:44). It also prevents them from participating in modern society later in life.

“Hard skills”, such as the ability to read and perform simple calculations, are essential to contributing to the modern world because the types of opportunities unlocked for people globally in employment, political life and community involvement are far-reaching when they have these basic skills. Therefore, when education is of a poor quality, it results in millions of children who fail to read and understand a basic text or perform a rudimentary calculation, even though they have been at school for years (Sperling & Winthrop,

2016:198). According to the Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/8, 387 million (56%) primary school children globally did not attain the minimum reading proficiency level in 2017. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 87% of children did not achieve the reading proficiency level. Furthermore, over 100 million young people could not read (UNESCO, 2017:xvi, 118). In terms of the current trajectory, 420 million children will not attain basic childhood skills and 825 million adolescents will not achieve basic secondary-level skills by 2030 (UNICEF, 2020:10).

In terms of “soft skills”, employers require skills such as communication, problem-solving, self-motivation, determination, confidence, the ability to adapt to fluctuating demands, being innovative and working in teams. Employers of the modern world demand that employees have these soft skills in addition to the foundational or technical skills needed to perform jobs in light of the ever-changing nature of the service, knowledge and green economies (Sperling & Winthrop, 2016:201).

3.3.3.4. Access to quality education in South Africa

In the past, many students in South Africa could not access basic education because of the cost of school fees (Arendse, 2011:97; McLaren, 2017:66, 67). However, with the introduction of “no-fee” schools in 2007 (Sayed & Motala, 2012:674), the majority of children in South Africa have access to basic education, that is, from Grade R to Grade 12 today. There were approximately 14,6 million students attending school in 2019 (Stats SA, 2020a:17). According to Spaul (2019:3), 75% of public schools are “no-fee” schools. The latest statistics show that 66.2% of students were attending no-fee schools in 2019 (Stats SA, 2020a:17). Regrettably, many of these schools have poor infrastructure: 74% lack libraries, 80% do not have science laboratories and 63% lack computer centres (Mail & Guardian, 2020). Furthermore, according to Legotlo (2014:7), many public schools do not spend adequate time on the curriculum material; have a shortage of teaching materials and a lack of relevant textbooks; have poorly resourced libraries, if any; and have insufficient classroom space. Additionally, there are too many students per class, there is a lack of teachers, the teaching is of poor quality, the facilities are deemed poor and there is high teacher absenteeism (Stats SA, 2020a:17). Therefore, these schools cannot provide the same quality of education as schools with adequate resources. Moreover, the parents of students who attend no-fee schools still incur educational expenses such as stationery, books, school uniforms and transportation. Due to these

additional costs, many students drop out of school because the latter are barriers to learning (McLaren, 2017:66, 67).

As such, the educational quality in South Africa is poor, falling even behind countries deemed poorer than South Africa (Van der Berg, 2008:145). According to the World Economic Forum, South Africa ranks 134th among 138 nations in terms of education quality (World Economic Forum, 2016:325). The country has also experienced a downward trend in the adequacy of all graduates' skill sets (World Economic Forum, 2020a:21).

The above situation is due to a lack of the educational resources, which hinders learning (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; SAHRC & UNICEF, 2014:27). Moreover, when there are varying schooling input levels, which produces inconsistent learning outcomes (SAHRC & UNICEF, 2014:27). Furthermore, the quality of education in historical Black schools, which comprise 80% of schools, has not improved post-apartheid, regardless of the resources transferred to these schools (Van der Berg, 2008:145). These schools employ poorly qualified and inexperienced teachers because they cannot offer the higher salaries offered to the well-qualified and experienced teachers employed at private schools (Balfour, 2015:10, 11).

According to Motala (2013:199), only a small minority of schools in predominantly Black areas perform well, with the majority delivering poor-quality education. Yamauchi (2011:146) argues that, due to the apartheid legacy, good-quality education is concentrated in previously White, Coloured and Indian schools in areas where most of the population is non-African. Thus, citizens need to reside in those areas to access good educational opportunities. However, due to financial constraints, many Black people cannot relocate to these areas. Those who opt to commute to these schools incur additional costs, such as transportation and time costs (Yamauchi, 2011:147). Spaul (2015:34) states that schools that served mainly White students during apartheid but are now racially mixed continue to function well. In contrast, most schools that served Black students remain dysfunctional, leaving students with low numeracy and literacy skills. The schools are dysfunctional because they waste crucial learning time and do not complete the curriculum, the students are not challenged academically, their educational outcomes are poor, and their teachers have a weak subject and content knowledge (Spaul,

2015:37). Most of these teachers were trained in a teacher-training college system that is infamous for poor quality (Cosser, 2010:123).

Motala (2013:199) adds that White schools perform better, with students' scores improving with consecutive years of schooling. In comparison, learners' scores start lower at schools that have mostly Black learners and they show minimal improvement from Grades 3 to 5. Furthermore, because learning is a process that builds on itself as children progress through school (especially in subjects such as mathematics and science), children who cannot grasp basic concepts in their first few years of schooling are at a continuous disadvantage (Spaull, 2015:35). Therefore, these schools have failed to change the futures of poor children and have decreased the life chances of middle-class Black children who attend them (Lemon & Battersby, 2009:10).

As can be seen with children who are from the poorest 60% of schools in South Africa, by Grade 3 they are three years behind in terms of learning compared to their peers from wealthier backgrounds, and this gap continues to grow as they advance through school (Spaull, 2015:36). Moreover, only half of the Grade 3 learners are literate (Triologue, 2013:167). When they reach Grade 4, 78% of the students cannot read for meaning in any language (Triologue, 2020:201). When these children reach Grade 5, 57% of the learners have basic reading skills at Grade 4 international levels (Triologue, 2013:167). By Grade 9, these same children are behind by five years compared to their wealthier peers (Spaull, 2015:36). Also, only 2% of Grade 9 learners achieve above 50% in mathematics. More than 50% of the students in Grades 10 to 12 have repeated a grade (Triologue, 2013:167). Furthermore, only 37% of students who started Grade 1 complete Grade 12 (Triologue, 2020:201). Moreover, the dropout rate dramatically increases by the time students reach Grade 12. In 2010, 1,039,762 students were in grade 10, but only 551,837 (53%) students wrote matric exams in 2012 (Triologue, 2013:167). In 2019, there were 1,122,114 students enrolled in Grade 1 in 2008. However, only 504,303 (45%) wrote the matric exams in November 2019 (Triologue, 2020:101).

Due to South Africa's history, these children are Black and Coloured children who have poorly-educated parents with few resources. They therefore enter the schooling system with a potential academic disadvantage compared to their White peers (SAHRC & UNICEF, 2014:18). As a result, these children can be said to be starting behind and remaining behind (Spaull, 2015:36).

Furthermore, many Black students reside in areas far from good quality schools, which are situated in expensive areas, making them geographically and financially inaccessible due to distance and cost (SAHRC & UNICEF, 2014:28). Thus, parents who come from poorer backgrounds and who cannot afford the luxury of choosing which school to send their child to due to their financial situation (SAHRC & UNICEF, 2014:18) are forced to send their children to poor-quality schools. Many of these children reside in rural areas, where the South African schooling system fails to provide the necessary skills, knowledge and values to these students, preventing them from fully participating in society and becoming socially mobile (Spaull, 2015:36).

If students from poor backgrounds have poor educational outcomes, it reinforces the social inequality in South Africa because these students inherit their parents' social position, regardless of their ability or motivation to move up in society (Spaull, 2015:37). Moreover, poor education levels and high dropout rates prevent the youth from accessing higher education and training. This situation is demonstrated when looking at the statistics of youth attending higher education institutions: only 5.4% of youth aged from 18 to 29 were attending higher education institutions (Stats SA, 2020a:19), with 31.9% young people aged 15 to 24 not involved in education, employment or training in the third quarter of 2020 (Stats SA, 2020b:14).

Additionally, there is a link between low levels of education and unemployment. For example, of the 6,5 million unemployed citizens recorded in the third quarter of 2020, 53.2% had an education level lower than grade 12, 36.4% had matriculated, and only 2.1% had graduated from tertiary institutions (Stats SA, 2020b:13).

Low levels of education also impact on an individual's earning potential. In the past, primary education was believed to produce the highest education returns. However, it has been shown that secondary and tertiary education yield the highest returns, particularly in terms of increased individual earnings (Sperling & Winthrop, 2016:24). Secondary education yields lower returns than tertiary education. Moreover, an additional year of tertiary education produces twice as much return on education than an additional year of secondary schooling and four times greater than an additional year of primary education (Salisbury, 2016:48). Furthermore, during periods of crisis, higher levels of education improve an individual's chances of receiving full payment. For example, during the lockdown in South Africa in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some people received

a reduced salary. However, highly educated people had greater chances of receiving a full salary than those with lower education levels. Most employed graduates (89.8%) received full salaries, whereas 79.3% of less-educated people (possessing less than Grade 12) did not (Stats SA, 2020b:11).

Yet, access to tertiary education is an obstacle for many people. While tertiary education is free of charge in some countries, they have failed to recognise the additional costs students face (UNESCO, 2017:293). Therefore, tertiary education remains unaffordable for many because, even if their fees are paid for them, they cannot afford the extra costs associated with higher education. These costs include textbooks, transportation, school supplies (Sperling & Winthrop, 2016:105,107), application fees, accommodation and other living expenses (Branson *et al.*, 2015:45). Furthermore, postgraduate students have the additional cost of having to have written work professionally proofread and edited to ensure it is up to academic standards (Seabi *et al.*, 2014:75). In South Africa, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) provides poor students with loans on favourable conditions following a financial means and academic potential assessment. However, the demand for financial aid greatly exceeds the financing available (Branson *et al.*, 2015:45).

The government cannot assist every poor household to escape the clutches of poverty due to a lack of resources. Additionally, access to quality education needs to be extended to impoverished families so that they can reap the benefits of education and live better lives. Thus, corporations also need to become involved in the fight against poverty, morally speaking, because corporations can positively impact the lives of the poor through financial donations, employment opportunities and education initiatives (Babarinde, 2009:364). CSR can therefore play an essential role in local communities' lives.

3.3.4. Poverty

Poverty has traditionally been considered a condition in which one's income cannot cover one's needs (Grynspan & Lopez-Calva, 2011:718). Such requirements include: food, clothing, shelter and health (Radda, 2008:179). Beteille (2003:4455) argues that this traditional definition of poverty does not adequately define the condition, since the meaning of the word changes with time and place. Moreover, poverty is more than a lack of money because money is just one facet of it. Poverty is about deprivation in relation to multiple aspects of wellbeing (Frame *et al.*, 2016:2). It is about individuals experiencing

“low levels of education, poor nutrition and health, a lack of employment, inadequate living standards and high exposure to violence, as well as low wages and income” (Frame *et al.*, 2016:2).

Poverty and wellbeing are closely intertwined concepts. Poverty prevents individuals in developing economies from having disposable incomes, thereby limiting the market for goods and services, which is damaging to the business world (Blowfield, 2010:133). Moreover, it prevents children from completing primary school and thus receiving an education, making it difficult for corporations to find potential employees who have the necessary skills to fill available positions (Blowfield, 2007b:38; 2010:133; Blowfield & Murray, 2014:85). Therefore, poverty negatively impacts people's quality of life.

The World Bank deems individuals living on less than US\$3.20 a day in lower-middle-income countries and those living on less than US\$5.50 a day in middle-income countries as living in poverty. It uses this guideline when estimating the global scale and distribution of absolute poverty (The World Bank, 2020:29).

According to Haughton and Khandker (2009:145), the leading causes of poverty are a lack of access to basic necessities such as water, sanitation, education, health and social facilities; household factors such as gender, age, assets owned and income from employment; remote rural locations with limited access to markets; and an absence of infrastructure and basic services.

In South Africa, poverty also resulted from the institutionalised discrimination that occurred during the apartheid era, which was characterised by political, social and economic exclusion and other inequalities (Meek & Rew, 2006:283). According to Aliber (2003:474-475), in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the colonial and union government policies were aimed at creating the conditions necessary to establish a cheap labour pool. Under apartheid legislation, this policy culminated in a state-driven process of underdevelopment and deprivation, including most South Africans being prohibited from owning assets such as land and livestock, coupled with the denial of opportunities to develop these assets through the limitation of access to markets, infrastructure and education. Even when Black learners had access to education, it was of a low quality because of the dysfunctional schools that were made available to Black children (Spaull, 2015:34).

Poverty is currently a big problem in South Africa, with more than half the population being considered poor in 2015 (Stats SA, 2017:14). According to Statistics South Africa, being poor means receiving an income of no more than R1,335 per person per month (in 2021 prices) (Stats SA, 2021b:3). Some of the poorest communities in South Africa can be found in the rural areas and informal settlements, where the poverty and illiteracy levels are severe (McKay, 2019 25).

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic hit South Africa's shores, the country was facing high deprivation levels and an ever-growing population, which has placed pressure on the government to deliver basic services to its people, especially the poor (Mushongera *et al.*, 2017:283). Additionally, many of the poor cannot pay for these basic services, which has resulted in a national policy, "the social wage" (Stats SA, 2017:8), being established to serve as a safety net for families who cannot pay for these services. It was introduced after the post-apartheid government realised that particular households that were in dire poverty due to a lack of income required such a safety net. Funds need to be raised by local municipalities to support the poor to avoid extreme deprivation. However, some municipalities, which do not have a wide tax base from which to raise funds, specifically those in remote areas, cannot raise sufficient funds to support these poor households. Therefore, access to free basic services varies from municipality to municipality. This policy, along with social grants, are inadequate to lift poor households out of poverty (Mushongera *et al.*, 2017:294) and, therefore, improve their quality of life.

Because of poverty's effect on quality of life, governments and international organisations have attempted to eradicate local and global poverty. Corporations have also joined the fight against poverty as part of their CSR strategies (Rojas, 2015:320).

3.4 CSR education initiatives

Corporations worldwide contribute to education (Bocean *et al.*, 2020:14). Many recognise the importance of education and education initiatives because they provide a skilled workforce for corporations, which is essential for economic growth (Dialogue, 2013:169). One such institution is the Varkey Foundation. In partnership with UNESCO and Dubai Cares, the Varkey Foundation launched a global education campaign in 2014 called the Business Backs Education Campaign, which works with corporations to support

education. Its focus areas include access to quality education, the development of education professionals, global citizenship and 21st-century skills (Dattani *et al.*, 2015:3).

According to the latest Business Backs Education Report, which was released in 2015, one of the campaign aims is to show corporations the advantages of aligning their CSR budget spend on education with government spending targets of 20%. The report indicated that US\$20 billion had been spent annually (between 2011 and 2013) on CSR by the 2013 Fortune Global 500 corporations and that, of these 500 corporations, only 218 had reported education-related expenditure, which amounted to US\$2,6 billion (13%) of the total CSR budget of these corporations. If the Fortune Global 500 increased their education spend to 20%, the total CSR education budget would amount to US\$4 billion, which would enable an additional 3 million children globally to attend primary school annually (Dattani *et al.*, 2015:3, 6).

However, education spend is not focused on priority areas such as Africa, which has the greatest need, but is being allocated to “non-priority” areas in Europe and North America. The report states that the 2013 Fortune Global 500 spent only 40% of their CSR education budget on countries and groups that truly need it, with 16% of this outlay going to primary education and 14% to secondary education. What is more, these corporations prefer to contribute to the Asia Pacific region rather than Africa or Latin America. For example, corporations in China direct all or most of their education spending to people in their own country or to neighbouring countries (Dattani *et al.*, 2015:6, 24, 31).

Funding from corporations is essential in Africa, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, since governments spend only 5% of their Gross National Product (GNP) on education and 18.7% of total expenditure on education. While some countries, for example, Swaziland and Ghana, spend a great deal on education, other countries, such as the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, spend less than 3% of their GNP on education (UNESCO, 2014b:2).

Corporations in developed countries prioritise education less because they experience fewer socio-economic issues. Furthermore, developed economies have large tax bases, which results in corporations assuming that governments are responsible for providing social welfare. By contrast, education is a major driver of CSR in developing countries (Bhatia & Makkar, 2020:20). Many corporations partially take over governmental

functions when host countries' governments fail to protect, facilitate and enable citizens' rights (Matten, 2006:34). They invest in education and human asset development by renovating existing schools, constructing school buildings, providing scholarships and providing library books (Oppong, 2016:423).

3.4.1. CSR education initiatives in South Africa

Education, training and skills development is also a critical CSR issue in South Africa. According to Makka and Niewenhuizen (2018:836), corporations operating in the country understand that education is essential for economic and social development. They help local communities by pursuing CSR initiatives that provide access to education (Matten, 2006:34). To date, the focus of CSI has been mainly on health and education projects, either across the country or in local communities surrounding corporations' businesses (Hamann, 2009:438). Education initiatives are viewed as beneficial, not only to the corporation (including its employees), but also to the members of local communities. The corporation's employees receive the necessary training to help with career advancement and the local community members have the opportunity to develop the skills required in the modern business world (Pohl, 2006:56).

In 2010, corporations spent only 32.4% of their CSR budgets on education. In 2020, the allocation had grown to 50% (Dialogue, 2020:26). This increase of 17.6% indicates that the corporate world has become more conscious of the importance of education. Additionally, in 2010, 93% of corporations supported education projects (Dialogue, 2010:38), whereas, in 2020, 95% of corporations did so (Dialogue, 2020:49).

Of the total budget spent on education initiatives in 2010, corporations spent 28% of their CSI education allocations on general education (grades 1 to 12), 24% on tertiary education and 25% on bursaries and scholarships (Dialogue, 2010:38). In 2020, they spent 24% on general education, 33% on tertiary education and 26% on bursaries and scholarships (Dialogue, 2020:101-102). The increase of spending on tertiary education, bursaries and scholarships demonstrates that corporations understand that higher education yields the highest returns, and that providing bursaries and scholarships to deserving students can ultimately help them achieve a better quality of life.

3.5 Examples of CSR education Initiatives that have improved quality of life

There are many examples of corporations becoming involved in philanthropic CSR initiatives to help alleviate public problems such as poverty and illiteracy, and to improve society's welfare and peoples' quality of life. Corporations that practice altruistic CSR surpass their ethical obligations to accept responsibility for social welfare shortcomings that they are not liable for. Their social interventions include donations and educational and learning programmes (Jamali, 2007:6,7,14), among others.

The following are a few examples, with a focus on the following educational initiatives: youth education and occupational training, scholarship programmes, bursary programmes and assisting schools by refurbishing school buildings, and providing teachers and donations.

3.5.1. Youth education and occupational training

One CSR education initiative that can help improve people's quality of life is providing educational aid in the form of youth education and occupational training. For example, in China, there are corporations that have provided youth education and occupational training. Raising their education level has helped residents in impoverished communities to achieve better living standards (Amadi & Abdullah, 2012:61).

The Nike Village Development Project was established by a corporate network called the Thai Business Initiative in Regional Development, which consists of 100 corporations. A Thai nongovernmental organisation (NGO) called the Population and Development Agency (PDA) manages it. Those involved in the project were representatives of Nike, the government, PDA, and community members in three areas of North-eastern Thailand. The project was a CSR educational initiative focused on community development and, consequently, poverty alleviation, through training in areas such as leadership, providing occupational skills, delivering entrepreneurial workshops and granting scholarships. The project helped create a sustainable economy and a stable rural workforce by continuing the factories' operation in those three areas, thus obviating the need for community members to migrate to urban districts, resulting in an increased standard of living (Pimpa *et al.*, 2012:7-8).

In India, Arvind Limited created The Strategic Help Alliance for Relief to Distressed Areas (SHARDA) Trust in 1995 to run several programmes to help the urban poor, especially children who attended public schools. The education quality in public schools was poor, resulting in students achieving low scores and even dropping out of school. Therefore, quality education was needed for disadvantaged primary-level students to improve their chances of finishing their education and thereby enabling them to become self-sufficient (Lal & Dutta, 2012:85-87). One programme created by the Trust was “Gyanda – Fountain of knowledge”, which was an education programme aimed at bettering the education quality of the public primary schools. The students spent about six to eight years in the programme to ensure that they completed their education so that they would be the last generation living in poverty in the area (Lal & Dutta, 2012:85-87).

HSBC Bank has a regional office in India, which supports underprivileged children’s education and provides life-skills training for poor youth via its educational initiatives. Furthermore, the bank assists with capacity building for women who live in marginalised communities in rural areas through entrepreneurship and financial literacy programmes (Mehta & Majumdar, 2012:91).

Several corporations partner with schools to establish training programmes for insufficiently skilled or untrained community members to ensure that they gain employment in the corporation after completing the programme (Woolley, 2014:60). Other corporations take it further by building and managing academies. One such example is the Cisco Networking Academy in the United States. At first, Cisco donated networking equipment to the schools in its area, but discovered that they did not know how to operate the donated hardware. Therefore, some Cisco engineers chose to assist the teachers by training them to take care of the equipment and, before long, students were attending these classes too. Cisco then concluded that others needed this type of training. Therefore, the corporation expanded the programme, offered it to other schools and later started to centre their academies in economically disadvantaged communities. The UN then became interested in these academies, and Cisco started to open academies in developing countries. Within five years, the corporation had created about 10,000 academies, which produced more than 115,000 graduates (Cochran, 2007:450).

In Africa, Barclays Bank has an initiative called Ready to Work, which helps prepare youths in high school or attending a tertiary institution for work. The initiative offers these

students education and skills training programmes, and the Barclays staff members are involved in the programme as mentors (DeBerry-Spence *et al.*, 2019:399).

3.5.2. Scholarship programmes

Corporations represented five of the top 50 scholarship providers to sub-Saharan African students in 2020. Of the corporate providers, ABSA Bank and The MasterCard Foundation funded 95% of all corporate scholarships. The MasterCard Foundation's programme was estimated to be four times larger than the second-largest philanthropic scholarship fund (UNESCO, 2020:297).

In Kenya, Base Titanium provides a scholarship programme as part of its CSR initiatives. To provide students access to secondary and tertiary education, the corporation partners with various institutions and awards these students scholarships to attend these institutions (Mutsotso, 2021:466).

In Bangladesh, a bank named Dutch-Bangla Bank focuses its CSR initiatives on education because it is aware of the importance of education to a country's development. The bank manages the most significant scholarship programme for tertiary education tuition and other expenses for deserving students (Rana *et al.*, 2012:243-244).

In India, the DLF Foundation awards scholarships to exemplary students from disadvantaged segments of society who want to achieve a tertiary education through the "DLF – Choudhary Raghuvendra Singh Scholarship for Excellence in Education" (Chopra & Marriya, 2013:19). This programme provides scholarships for studies in engineering, medicine, management and fine arts, and for doing well in sports. The scholarships are awarded for the entire duration of the academic course. Applicants need to be admitted to any respectable tertiary institution within India to be considered for the scholarship (Chopra & Marriya, 2013:19).

3.5.3. Bursary programmes

The AfroCentric Group, a healthcare company in Southern Africa, provides bursaries to medical students. Their bursary recipients are chosen on the basis of academic merit and the need for financial assistance. In 2020, they invested R709,663 in bursaries for four Black female students (AfroCentric Group, 2020:48).

Growthpoint Properties Limited, an investment and asset management corporation located in South Africa, has a bursary initiative called Growthpoint GEMS, which provides financial aid to children of Growthpoint's lower-income employees. GEMS also includes a youth development programme that consists of academic and psychosocial support, emotional wellness services, leadership training and personal development. In 2020, Growthpoint allocated just under R5 million to GEMS for 74 students from primary school to tertiary level (Growthpoint Properties Limited, 2020:51, 93, 128).

3.5.4. School assistance

Many corporations are involved in assisting schools as part of their CSR education initiatives. These initiatives take the form of refurbishing schools and providing teachers to schools that require them. Some examples of these initiatives are noted in the next two sections.

3.5.4.1. Refurbishing schools

There are corporations which engage in school refurbishment projects as part of their CSR. They focus on renovating schools in the areas where they operate because they want to improve the educational standards in those communities. By investing and promoting education, these corporations ensure that the local children receive basic skills and knowledge, which can improve their quality of life. Moreover, it also ensures that the corporations have a skilled workforce in the future (Muruviwa *et al.*, 2018:4-5).

Below are some examples of corporations which refurbish schools. All of the examples are from corporations operating in developing countries. Firstly, SPDC in Nigeria has helped refurbish schools in the Niger Delta area by building additional classrooms (Eweje, 2007:225). In Zimbabwe, a mining corporation named Zimplats invested \$5 million in building, renovating and modernising the primary and secondary schools around the area of Mhondoro-Ngezi to improve the educational standards there. In India, Coca-Cola has an education initiative in partnership with NDTV that advocates education in rural areas. It is called the Coca-Cola Support My School programme (Madhavan, 2012:96). Because many students lack access to essential facilities in their schools, the Support My School programme is providing 100 schools across India with new libraries and will provide teacher training, as well as other additions to the schools. This project will impact the lives of at least 50,000 students.

3.5.4.2. Provision of teachers

SPDC and other corporations in Nigeria have also provided teachers for schools in the Niger Delta area, whom it pays directly. SPDC and other oil corporations have stated that many teachers refuse to teach in some undeveloped areas with ineffective governments because of how remote they are. Therefore, they have agreed to pay such teachers “special rates” to motivate them to work in these areas (Eweje, 2007:225).

3.5.4.3. Donations

Donations can take either monetary or nonmonetary forms. Minmetals, a Chinese corporation involved in the Sepon mining project in Lao, opted for a monetary donation. The corporation donated \$500 million to the government to invest in medical care and education. Additionally, they partnered with the government and leaders of the community to create a Community Trust Fund, which is used to build capacity in education and other areas (Pimpa *et al.*, 2012:9). Byblos Bank in Lebanon gave nonmonetary donations to public schools in Lebanon as part of their CSR education initiatives (Jamali, 2007:15).

In India, Rural Electrification Ltd donated money to pay for electricity, furniture, computers and the construction of buildings for schools in rural or remote areas, and they donated backpacks, stationery supplies and books to the children attending these schools who came from underprivileged backgrounds (Chopra & Marriya, 2013:20).

3.6 Additional forms of CSR support

Despite education being an important strategy for alleviating poverty and thereby improving people’s lives, it is not enough (Tarabini, 2010:210). Assistance from various societal stakeholders is necessary to offer a holistic approach to poverty alleviation and increased wellbeing, which involves financial resources and skills training.

Providing financial resources is a form of tangible support. Tangible support refers to offering aid to improve an individual’s life circumstances (Sanderson & Cassilo, 2019:18). This aid can take the form of goods, services and/or money (Wohn *et al.*, 2018:2). In terms of financial resources, corporations can provide financial support, particularly for the professional development of employees. Such tangible support is becoming more sought after because of the costs associated with higher education. The level of support

a corporation provides depends on its available financial resources. Some corporations can cover some costs associated with professional development, while larger corporations can cover the full cost of their beneficiaries' studies. Additionally, some corporations pay the tuition fees upfront and cover the cost of textbooks or other essential resources (Fazey, 2020:257).

Skills training is a type of intangible support that corporations can provide to beneficiaries. Intangible support refers to support that cannot be seen or physically felt, such as non-monetary support (Nichita, 2019:227). Intangible support can take the form of developmental support, learning (skills training) and career growth (Nankervis *et al.*, 2020:356). It can also appear as social support, for example having flexible working hours and wellness programmes (Nankervis *et al.*, 2020:356). Moreover, it can consist of emotional support, such as receiving encouragement or care (Wohn *et al.*, 2018:475). Furthermore, it can be presented as informational support, for example, advice (Strawser *et al.*, 2021:81), or esteem support, which is boosting an individual's self-esteem, or providing motivational support, such as inspiring behavioural change (National Research Council *et al.*, 2011:69).

Corporate initiatives that improve people's lives can be divided into personal and social empowerment (Kao *et al.*, 2016:143). With respect to personal empowerment, corporations can provide the poor with job-related education and training to develop their work-related skills, which is human capital development (Bratton & Gold, 2017:233). Human capital refers to the collective personal, educational and professional experiences of an employee that might increase their value to an employer (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2016:77). Employees are viewed as assets that require investment. Therefore, human capital investment involves the training, learning, skills and abilities of employees to increase the value, competitiveness and performance of a corporation (Kucharčíková & Mičiak, 2018:5-6). Human capital investment is considered beneficial to both the employee and employer. The employees who are invested in value respond positively to the aid they have received from their employers because it gives them more control over their careers (Rodrigues *et al.*, 2019:1152). The employers, in turn, gain the loyalty and commitment of their staff, which helps them to retain staff (Rodrigues *et al.*, 2019:1152). The global economy is becoming more knowledge-based; therefore, retaining high-quality employees is a competitive advantage for corporations. Certain elements have to

be in place to retain staff. These include job characteristics such as skill diversity, job autonomy and job difficulty, manager support, career opportunities, work-life balance, fair remuneration, and training and development opportunities (De Sousa Sabbagha *et al.*, 2018:137).

On the other hand, social empowerment is where corporations increase the employment or entrepreneurial opportunities of the poor by creating innovative business models or using their supply chain to improve their social capital (Kao *et al.*, 2016:143). Moreover, corporations can present poor people with social network resources to aid them in their entrepreneurial pursuits after they have undergone skills training with these corporations. They can also offer them ongoing guidance, collaboration and assistance (Wilson & Wilson, 2017:14). By increasing human capital and social capital, the poor can, therefore, stimulate the accumulation of financial capital, which not only enables them to escape a life of poverty, but also enables them to avoid falling back into poverty and a poor quality of life (Kao *et al.*, 2016:143).

3.7 Effectiveness of CSR education initiatives in improving beneficiaries' lives

While there is sufficient literature documenting the importance of education, specifically quality education, for improving people's lives, and the important role that corporations can play in providing education initiatives to help improve quality of life, there is little literature evaluating the effectiveness of CSR education initiatives in terms of improving quality of life.

As Blowfield (2007a:683) argues, such assessment is vital in a developing country, because claims about CSR's role in economic and social development have been made, but these claims are largely unsupported by concrete evidence. CSR's impact in certain areas, such as sustainability, profitability, poverty, human rights, corruption, public governance and human trafficking, has been demonstrated, but little evidence has been presented regarding CSR's effects on those it is meant to benefit (Blowfield, 2007a:683).

Moreover, more is known about environmental than economic or social impact. For example, even though many corporations mention the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in relation to factors such as education and poverty, the effects of business on MDG targets are unknown (Blowfield, 2007a:683, 689).

3.8 Challenges experienced when implementing CSR education initiatives

Many corporations have stated that they have experienced some challenges with their education initiatives. For example, SHARDA Trust has noted three challenges. The first has been attracting the best teachers to teach poverty-stricken primary school students. Even though the trust recruits committed and qualified individuals, they cannot interact with the students well. The second big challenge has been to create appropriate teaching materials that the students can understand and connect with. The third big challenge has been to maintain a close relationship with the students' parents and regularly inform them of their children's attendance in class (Lal & Dutta, 2012:88-89).

According to Chawak and Dutta (2014:36), one common challenge associated with education initiatives is that local communities are disinterested in participating in and supporting corporations' CSR activities. This is mainly due to there being little to no knowledge about CSR in the local communities because of the lack of communication between corporations and the local communities. Thus, these communities have little confidence in these initiatives (Berad, 2011:104; Kumar, 2014:100; Rana, 2015:244). Additionally, the corporations do not communicate what CSR is and what CSR education initiatives can do for local communities. The media does not highlight CSR or provide examples of successful CSR initiatives (Berad, 2011:105; Kumar, 2014:100).

Another problem is that of selecting suitable partners for the corporations' initiatives. Efficient NGOs in secluded and rural areas that can recognise and evaluate what the local community needs, and can partner with the corporations to ensure the successful implementation of the CSR activities, are virtually non-existent (Berad, 2011:104; Chawak & Dutta, 2014:36; Kumar, 2014:100; Rana, 2015:244). This challenge can jeopardise CSR education initiatives and, consequently, restricts the extent of such programmes (Kumar, 2014:100).

A lack of transparency by the corporations and their implementing agencies is another challenge. They fail to disclose information about their education initiatives, have auditing problems, and do not inform local communities of their impact assessments and use of funds (Berad, 2011:104). A lack of transparency negatively influences the development of trust between local communities and corporations, which is crucial for any local CSR initiative (Rana, 2015:245).

Other common problems experienced with education initiatives include the high costs of implementing them, time constraints, legal restrictions and the shortage of technical proficiency (Berad, 2011:105; Fisher *et al.*, 2009:76; Radzi *et al.*, 2018:77). In terms of high costs, CSR education initiatives are long-term and extensive. In addition, they provide scholarships to students to study overseas, which is expensive. Short-term and once-off projects, such as disaster aid and donations to the underprivileged or the disabled are also costly. Moreover, corporations have to distribute their limited resources while contending with additional projects that would procure more fruitful returns on investment (Radzi *et al.*, 2018:82). Time constraints aggravate limited resources because the CSR staff have other responsibilities. Therefore, their involvement in educational activities is frequently viewed as an addition to their everyday responsibilities. Furthermore, it is not only staff that struggle with time constraints. External stakeholders also grapple with finding the time to be involved in these initiatives (Fisher *et al.*, 2009:76).

In terms of legal constraints and a lack of technical skills, a lack of specific legislation and corporate skills adds to the challenges of executing CSR initiatives because they need to be legally compliant and benefit the recipient group. Therefore, CSR entails a great deal of planning and is under constant scrutiny owing to the continuously evolving corporate environment (Radzi *et al.*, 2018:83).

3.9 Criteria for an effective CSR education initiative

It is vital to evaluate the effectiveness of CSR initiatives. Doing so sheds light on whether they in fact assist their intended beneficiaries. According to Glosenberg *et al.* (2019:55), an effective CSR initiative rests upon both tangible and intangible outcomes. Tangible outcomes refer to the physical goals of the programme, whereas intangible outcomes denote beneficiary empowerment, goal alignment and harmonisation between corporations and beneficiaries, and developing a close working relationship between them (Glosenberg *et al.*, 2019:52, 55, 65).

Firstly, empowerment can mean living the kind of life an individual desires, but also possessing resources such as finances and human capital (e.g., skills and education) and forms of power (e.g., the authority to make decisions). Secondly, goal alignment and harmonisation implies that the goals and needs of both the corporation and the beneficiaries are aligned with each other. In other words, the corporation bases the goals

of the CSR initiatives on the beneficiaries' existing priorities and needs. Finally, developing close-working relationships between corporations and beneficiaries refers to the beneficiaries being involved in the CSR initiatives and being accountable to each other (Glosenberg *et al.*, 2019:56, 59, 64, 65).

According to Chhaparia and Jha (2021:162), an effective CSR education programme fulfils the following criteria:

- Ease of accessibility, which refers to how accessible the initiative is.
- Relevance of the programme, which indicates how relevant the initiative is for employability in the industry and for utility in the workplace.
- Equity, which denotes the availability of the programme to everyone.
- Quality of the training, which suggests how valuable the initiative is for meaningful employment.
- Financially sound, which means it is financially beneficial to the corporation and its beneficiaries.

3.10 Framework used to evaluate Sun International's CSR education initiatives

Based on the above literature and for the aims of this study, a framework has been created to evaluate the effectiveness of Sun International's CSR education initiatives in improving the lives of its beneficiaries.

The framework consists of nine criteria, namely physical goal attainment, empowerment, harmonisation, close-working relationships, ease of accessibility, practicality, equity, quality and financially beneficial. The criteria along with a description of each item are indicated in Table 3-1 on the following page.

Table 3-1: Criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of Sun International's CSR education initiatives

Criteria	Description
Physical goal attainment	The physical goals of the programmes were met.
Empowerment	The beneficiaries were empowered.
Harmonisation and goal alignment	The goals of the corporation and its beneficiaries were aligned and there was harmonisation between them.
Close-working relationship	A close working relationship developed between the corporation and its beneficiaries.
Ease of accessibility	The initiatives were easy to access.
Practicality	The programmes were practical and relevant to the beneficiaries' industry.
Equity	The projects were equitable.
Quality	The initiatives were of a high quality.
Financially beneficial	The programmes were financially beneficial to both the corporation and its beneficiaries.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter comprised a description of the broader context of this study's research problem. It was argued that education was essential for improving people's quality of life and that corporations' CSR education initiatives can benefit the corporations themselves, their employees and the local community. Additionally, CSR educational initiatives could provide access to education and create opportunities for those previously marginalised to realise their full potential and live quality lives.

Next, the factors that impact quality of life, such as inequality, unemployment, lack of access to quality education and poverty were noted. It was argued that people's lives improve when inequality is decreased and access to jobs and quality education increases.

When these factors are combined, they can result in reduced poverty levels, thereby improving the living standards of local communities.

Various CSR education initiatives that corporations engage in were then described. Such initiatives include youth education and occupational training, scholarship and bursary programmes and school assistance initiatives. The school assistance programmes consisted of refurbishing schools, providing teachers for schools in need and making donations to schools that needed monetary or nonmonetary assistance.

Thereafter, additional forms of support offered by CSR initiatives were described. Corporations can help empower individuals and improve their quality of life by providing education, specifically job-related education and skills training. Furthermore, corporations can play an important role in incorporating their social network resources with the supply chain to help disadvantaged people gain access to otherwise inaccessible resources.

The effectiveness of education initiatives in positively impacting beneficiaries' quality of life was then reviewed. It was found that little information is available about CSR's effects, even though claims have been made about its advantages and disadvantages. Additionally, claims have been made about CSR's role in economic and social development in developing economies, yet these claims are mainly unsupported. CSR's impact in certain areas, such as sustainability, profitability, poverty, human rights, corruption, public governance and human trafficking is known, but little is known about CSR's effects on individual beneficiaries. Furthermore, CSR's benefits for big business are known, but not the details of how CSR initiatives have impacted the major societal issues they are meant to help resolve.

Then, the challenges associated with implementing CSR education initiatives were noted. Many corporations face the problem that local communities are disinterested in participating in and supporting their CSR activities, mainly because there is little to no knowledge about CSR in the local communities, which is, in turn, due to the lack of communication between corporations and local communities. Thus, these communities have little confidence in the initiatives. Other problems included acquiring the right teachers and teaching material, selecting suitable partners, building local capacity, a lack of transparency, high costs, time and legal constraints, and a shortage of technical proficiency.

Finally, criteria for an effective CSR education initiative was provided. Additionally, a framework to assess the effectiveness of Sun International's CSR education initiatives was created, based on the criteria mentioned in the literature.

The following chapter's focus is on the case study of Sun International, specifically its CSR education initiatives. Background information is provided on Sun International and its education initiatives. The data obtained from the email questionnaire surveys is then analysed and the findings are presented regarding the experiences of the beneficiaries, whether the beneficiaries benefitted from the learnerships and bursaries, whether the education initiatives assisted in improving the lives of the beneficiaries, and the challenges experienced by Sun International's staff members and its beneficiaries.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF THE CASE STUDY OF SUN INTERNATIONAL AND AN EVALUATION OF CSR EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Sun International understands the necessity of empowering and uplifting communities in the areas where we operate. We aim to create economic value and maximise the positive social impact on the communities that surround our operations through creating shared value. Our SED strategy ensures that we support and contribute to communities through our SED and CSI initiatives – Sun International (2020)

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3, the literature regarding the importance of education for quality of life was reviewed. Poor quality of life and the factors that impact this construct were described. Such factors included unemployment, lack of access to quality education and poverty. Furthermore, the manner in which CSR education initiatives can positively affect people's quality of life were investigated. Finally, the effectiveness of education initiatives in improving the lives of beneficiaries and the challenges experienced by corporations in implementing these initiatives were dealt with.

The empirical findings of the case study of Sun International are presented in this chapter. In particular, the focus is on the company's CSR education initiatives. First, the biographical profile of the participants is provided, followed by background information regarding Sun International's initiatives, particularly its education programmes. The data from the interviews is then analysed and the findings of the study are presented in relation to the research questions, namely, what the experiences of the beneficiaries were, whether they benefitted from the learnerships and bursaries, whether education initiatives assisted in improving the lives of their local community members and what challenges Sun International's staff members and beneficiaries experienced.

4.2 Biographical profile of the participants

A total of nine research participants took part in this study. Four of them were Sun International staff members who were dealing with Sun International's CSR learnership

and bursary programmes. The remaining five participants were community members who had participated in the learnership or the bursary programmes.

The Sun International staff members were all female. Most of the employees involved in the corporation’s education initiatives were female. Furthermore, of the male staff members who were contacted, none responded to the emails sent to them despite numerous follow-up emails being sent. The beneficiaries, who came from underprivileged backgrounds, comprised three females and two males. All the participants were English-speaking and resided in communities close to Sun International’s operations.

To distinguish between the research participants and ensure their confidentiality and anonymity, all the research participants were given labels, as indicated in Table 4-1 below.

Table 4-1: Participant labelling

Participant	Gender	Category	Participant Code
Staff member 1	Female	Staff member	FSM 1
Staff member 2	Female	Staff member	FSM 2
Staff member 3	Female	Staff member	FSM 3
Staff member 4	Female	Staff member	FSM 4
Beneficiary 1	Female	Learnership recipient	FB 1
Beneficiary 2	Male	Bursary recipient	MB 1
Beneficiary 3	Female	Bursary recipient	FB 2
Beneficiary 4	Male	Bursary recipient	MB 2
Beneficiary 5	Female	Learnership recipient	FB 3

4.3 Sun International’s socio-economic development initiatives

Sun International is one of Africa's most prominent hospitality, gaming and entertainment corporations. It owns five-star hotels, casinos and resorts across South Africa, for example the Wild Coast Sun hotel in the Eastern Cape Province, Carnival City Casino

and Entertainment World in the Gauteng Province, the GrandWest Casino and Entertainment World in the Western Cape Province, and Sun City Resort in the North West Province. The corporation purports to focus on being a responsible corporation through its donations and dedication to society, the environment and the economy. In addition, it states that it is dedicated to developing its employees, and promoting equal opportunities and economic empowerment (Sun International, 2021e).

Sun International asserts that its sustainability strategy enables it to maintain its licence to operate, ensures its long-term success and enables it to continue meeting its vision of employing people. The company states that its strategy delivers excellent shareholder returns, creates value for the communities in which it operates and ensures that it simultaneously reduces its environmental footprint (Sun International, 2021d).

Sun International established a sustainability department in 2017 to support, manage and advance its sustainability strategy, which consists of three pillars, namely environmental, health and safety, and socio-economic dimensions. Sun International argues that its sustainability policy demonstrates its commitment to increasing its human, social, environmental, intellectual and financial capital through the continued improvement of its sustainability performance (Sun International, 2021d).

It aligns its sustainability strategy with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which it believes provide a guide that corporations can use to address some of the world's challenges (Sun International, 2021d).

According to Sun International (2021c), SED helps to create shared values and to adhere to the corporation's licence conditions, as well as corporate governance and B-BBEE practices. As a component of Sun International's social licence to operate, the corporation affirms that it seeks to share value, empower and uplift local communities to build greater community solidarity. The company does so because it believes it is essential to its future sustainability. Furthermore, the corporation claims that its vision is to deliver sustainable social development initiatives to the local communities to improve the community members' lives. Sun International's SED initiatives are in the areas of education, arts and culture, and sports (Sun International, 2021c). In the following section, the focus is specifically on Sun International's education initiatives.

4.3.1 Education initiatives

Sun International has been involved in upgrading schools in the communities in which it operates since 2014. In particular, it has provided hospitality classrooms with new appliances. Additionally, Sun International has created an initiative in partnership with the Department of Basic Education to ensure that every hospitality studies student in grades 10 to 12 can access an online hospitality curriculum. The initiative, known as the Digital Hospitality Curriculum Programme, is also available to every hospitality studies teacher. The students and teachers can access the material online in the Sun International-sponsored hospitality classrooms and on mobile devices (Sun International, 2021b). Furthermore, the corporation offers career development opportunities (such as learnerships) in South Africa and awards bursaries to promising candidates who are interested in a long and fulfilling career in the hospitality, gaming and entertainment industry (Sun International, 2021a).

Two Sun International staff members (FSM1 and FSM2) provided background information on why the corporation initially decided to incorporate learnerships and bursaries in its CSR programme. FSM1 stated that Sun International is

a proudly South African company and follows all regulations required of a registered company. One of the requirements of the Skills Development Act [of 1998] is to provide training for all staff... Sun International has done this since the Act was passed... Also as part of SI's (Sun International's) Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) policy, one of the pillars is dedicated to skills development. As such, we have to spend a certain amount of money on learnerships and bursaries to get a certain amount of points allocated by the B-EE Commission. So there is both a legal and moral obligation to spend money on training and a business imperative. To have an educated workforce, more people must have been in training and the skills gap narrowed.

Thus, Sun International engages in education initiatives such as learnerships and bursaries because it is both a legal requirement and a moral obligation. Furthermore, it provides the corporation with the opportunity to employ skilled workers and to upskill its existing workforce.

Moreover, “*Sun International wants to give back to the community [by] assisting students to start up after they’ve completed their qualification on a learnership programme [and] bursaries offered to students from disadvantaged communities have always been part [of] giving back to the community*” (FSM 2).

Therefore, according to FSM 2, the staff at Sun International want to be involved in community development, and by providing learnerships and bursaries, they aim to uplift local community members.

Since the focus of this study is on the learnerships and bursaries awarded by Sun International, both initiatives are dealt with in more detail in the findings section under Theme 1: Processes used in identifying beneficiaries.

Additionally, because the primary objective of this study is to evaluate the learnership and bursary CSR education initiatives of Sun International in South Africa in terms of their role in improving the lives of its beneficiaries, the framework created in section 3.10 assists with this evaluation.

The first criteria, physical goal attainment, is used to ascertain whether the objectives of the learnership and bursary initiatives were met. In other words, do the beneficiaries gain skills and knowledge after completing their learnerships or studies? Empowerment is the second criteria utilised to determine whether the beneficiaries are empowered by Sun International’s education initiatives. Do they gain the necessary tools and resources needed to improve their lives? The third criteria, harmonisation and goal alignment, is employed to establish whether the goals and needs of both the corporation and the beneficiaries are aligned with each other. Stated differently, does the corporation base the goals of its CSR initiatives on the beneficiaries’ existing priorities and needs? The fourth criteria, close-working relationship, is used to discover whether a close-working relationship developed between the corporation and its beneficiaries. Ease of accessibility is the fifth criteria utilised to learn if the learnership and bursary initiatives were easy to access. The sixth criteria, practicality, is employed to ascertain whether the programmes were practical and relevant to the beneficiaries’ industry. The seventh criteria, equity, is employed to determine whether the initiatives were equitable. In other words, does the corporation select external beneficiaries who come from disadvantaged backgrounds? Quality is the eighth criteria used to determine whether the initiatives were

of a high quality. The final criteria, financially beneficial, is utilised to establish whether the programmes were financially beneficial to both the corporation and its beneficiaries.

4.4 Data analysis

Four themes were identified during the data analysis, with two main categories per theme. These themes and categories are discussed in the subsection below.

4.4.1 Themes and categories

The first theme was the processes used to determine the learnership and bursary beneficiaries. Two categories under theme 1 emerged from the data, namely specific entry requirements and selection processes. The second theme related to the support that Sun International gave to the beneficiaries. Two categories were found for the second theme, namely tangible support and intangible support. Three sub-categories were identified under tangible support, and two sub-categories under intangible support. The third theme was the experiences of the beneficiaries. The two categories that emerged from the data were human capital investment, and employment and employability. The fourth and final theme was the challenges associated with CSR education initiatives. This theme's two categories were staff member challenges and beneficiary challenges. Table 4-2 shows the themes and categories that were identified.

White *et al.* (2014:381) assert that verbatim quotations are used as illustrative material in qualitative analysis. Verbatim and direct quotations taken from interviews are used to show some data from which the findings emerged (Guest & MacQueen, 2008:217). In other words, they support the findings of a study (Merriam & Grenier, 2019:6). Verbatim quotations also help to convey the feelings and meanings of the research participants and are directly connected with the themes. Therefore, they are essential for defining themes and reflecting the raw data behind the researcher's interpretation of the data (Guest & MacQueen, 2008:217). The findings are therefore illustrated with direct quotations.

Table 4-2: Identified themes and categories

THEME 1	PROCESSES USED IN IDENTIFYING BENEFICIARIES
	Category 1.1: Entry requirements
	Category 1.2: Selection processes
THEME 2	BENEFICIARY SUPPORT
	Category 2.1: Tangible support
	Sub-category 2.1.1: Financial support
	Sub-category 2.1.2: Study leave
	Sub-category 2.1.3: Access to resources
	Category 2.2: Intangible support
	Sub-category 2.2.1: Mentorship
	Sub-category 2.2.2: Emotional support
THEME 3	BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCES
	Category 3.1: Human capital investment
	Category 3.2: Employment and employability
THEME 4	CSR EDUCATION INITIATIVE CHALLENGES
	Category 4.1: Staff member challenges
	Category 4.2: Beneficiary challenges

4.5 Findings

This section contains the findings that emerged from the data. Each theme and its subsequent categories and/or sub-categories are described in detail.

4.5.1 Theme 1: Processes used to identify beneficiaries

The first research objective of this study was to determine the mechanisms and processes used by Sun International to identify beneficiaries for both its learnership and bursary initiatives. Therefore, this theme concerns Sun International's processes to determine

who is eligible for its learnership and bursary initiatives. Two categories emerged during data analysis, namely entry requirements and selection processes.

4.5.1.1 Entry requirements

Sun International provides learnerships because they are “*seen as a way of empowering current staff (employed learnerships) as well as getting new staff into the business (unemployed learnerships)*” (FSM 1). Regarding bursaries, those awarded to “*employed staff are a way for staff to learn after hours and not have to worry about study costs. Unemployed bursaries assist those in need of financial assistance and are funded by SI to assist where possible*” (FSM 1).

Any individual wanting to apply for either a learnership or bursary needs to be mindful of the entry requirements. Most of the participants indicated that information on the learnerships and bursaries was available and accessible on various platforms, such as the *Siya Sebenza Work 4 A Living* website. This website was created by a non-profit organisation, which has skills training centres in South Africa for the unemployed. Another platform is Sun International's *Sun Talk*, an app designed for and used by staff members to keep them informed about the corporation. Other platforms include posters, email communication and SMSs that are sent to staff members who do not generally work with computers.

Additionally, the learnerships and bursaries are divided into categories, namely internal and external categories, with each category having its own particular requirements. The internal categories are explicitly used for Sun International staff members and the external categories are used for external individuals. The participants often referred to the internal learnerships as “employed learnerships” and the unemployed learnerships as “unemployed learnerships”.

When asked who was eligible for the internal learnerships, one participant responded that they were open to “*all staff [and] the requirement is Grade 12*” (FSM 1). Another participant added that “*employees who have been nominated for further development*” (FSM 4) are also eligible for internal learnerships.

It was made clear that any staff member considered for the internal learnership had to have matric. This is in line with the legal requirements as stipulated in Chapter 1,

subsection 1.1.2. Additionally, the staff member had to be nominated for the learnership by a superior.

While no reference was made to age limits for the internal learnerships, it was included as a requirement for the external learnerships. One participant stated that *“anyone who applies must have Grade 12 and be between 18 and 35 years old and a South African citizen”* (FSM 1).

The age restrictions were similar to those outlined in the literature in section 1.1.2 of Chapter 1. They were slightly different in terms of the minimum age. In the literature, the minimum age was 16, whereas Sun International required a minimum age of 18. The citizenship requirements were consistent with the legal requirements set out in the literature, as discussed in Chapter 1, section 1.1.2.

Two participants added that external learnerships were for *“unemployed learners”* (FSM 2; FSM 4). Learners who were already employed at Sun International were categorised as *“employed learners”*. Therefore, should an individual be interested in applying for a learnership at the corporation, they would need to be cognisant of the two learnership categories.

Another participant indicated that the learner should have: *“no criminal record”* (FSM 3). Thus, Sun International has a policy which prevents any individual with a criminal record from being considered for its learnership initiative.

An additional requirement of both the internal and external learnerships was that learners had to be committed to the programme for 12 months. One participant stated, *“All learnerships are one year of intense training, giving you the tools to move on once the learnership is completed”* (FSM 2). When asked why the learnership was 12 months in length, another participant responded by saying that *“legally, all learnerships in SA are 12 months”* (FSM 1). The literature noted in section 1.1.2 in Chapter 1 corroborates that a learnership must be a minimum duration of 12 months.

Regarding internal bursaries, the staff members at Sun International specified that all Sun International staff were eligible, provided that they *“have been with the company for a year and have a three or higher internal performance rating”* (FSM 1). Moreover, the staff

member should have *“discussed [the bursary] with the line manager and have it noted in their IDP (individual development plan)”* (FSM 4).

The internal bursary beneficiaries corroborated this information. As one beneficiary affirmed, *“As a Sun International employee, I had to have a performance rating of three (“successful performer”) in order to qualify for a bursary. It had to be a discussion with my manager during my performance review meetings and it had to be recorded on my IDP”* (FB 2).

Therefore, internal bursaries are awarded to staff members who have been with the corporation for some time and are viewed as productive employees. Employees seeking to apply for a bursary should also discuss it with their supervisors and have them sign off on their applications.

Beneficiary FB2 then added that

The field of study I chose had to be related to my current job... I had to write a motivation letter to accompany my bursary application, which was to be signed off by my manager, the HR manager, as well as the GM (General Manager) of Sun Grand West before it was submitted to our head office in Joburg for approval.

Thus, additional superiors need to sign off on the applications before Sun International’s head office staff approves them. The internal bursaries awarded to beneficiaries provide benefits to both the individual and the corporation. The beneficiary gains knowledge and skills that can further develop their career and the company gains a better-skilled worker, which improves productivity and its bottom line.

Another beneficiary stated, *“I had to already be enrolled in the course. I had to motivate as to how the skills learnt in the course would benefit the company. There had to be historical funding by myself into the course”* (MB 1).

Consequently, bursary applicants should already be enrolled in their courses of choice, provide evidence of historical funding and motivate how their course will benefit Sun International.

Regarding the external bursaries, only certain units within Sun International administer them. One participant provided the example of Sun City, which Sun International owns. She stated that it *“would sponsor a school near Rustenburg and the top learners [would] receive bursaries to study for one or two years at a nearby tertiary institution”* (FSM 1).

Thus, external bursaries would be awarded only to students attending schools located in areas surrounding specific Sun International properties.

For both internal and external bursaries, bursary holders are awarded the bursary for one year. They can apply for the bursary for each year of study, provided that they *“[have] pass[ed] the subjects that the bursary covered”* (FSM 4) and can *“show proof that they have passed every module in order to request the following year’s payments”* (FSM 1).

The bursary beneficiaries confirmed the above. One participant said,

The bursary application runs on a yearly basis or academic study year [from] January to December. My bursary application covers the 2021 academic year and should I successfully pass all seven modules registered for at Unisa for 2021, I will be granted an opportunity to apply for a bursary for the following year again (2022) (FB 2).

Therefore, a bursary recipient must reapply for a bursary for each academic year of study until they have completed their courses. Furthermore, to receive additional bursaries, bursary holders must have passed all their course modules for the academic year their bursary covers and they must provide evidence thereof to Sun International.

4.5.1.2 Selection processes

Sun International has distinct selection processes for choosing internal and external beneficiaries.

For internal learnerships, learners are chosen from eligible Sun International staff members through *“interviews [conducted] by HR personnel”* (FSM 1) such as *“the line managers”* (FSM 4). External learners, on the other hand, are selected *“through a recruitment process”* (FSM 4).

Therefore, line managers choose the internal learners after conducting interviews with them, whereas Sun International's HR department chooses external learners via a recruitment process.

Sun International's bursary committee selects the internal bursary holders. One staff member explained that "*a bursary application [is sent] to the bursary committee, who (sic) decides [on a beneficiary] based on the person's motivation and their manager's motivation*" (FSM 1).

Thus, once an applicant has applied for the internal bursary and has had their application signed off by the relevant parties, the bursary committee reviews the application. It is then decided whether the applicant will become a beneficiary.

In making their decision, the bursary committee ensures the applicant meets "*the criteria...and [is] fit for the course of study*" (FSM 4).

Consequently, if the internal bursary applicant does not meet the criteria and is unfit for the study course, the applicant's application will be rejected by the committee.

In contrast, external bursary holders are selected by the HR staff at a specific Sun International unit. Participant FSM 1 stated that an "*interview by HR staff at the Unit*" (FSM 1) was conducted to select an external bursary beneficiary.

Therefore, the internal and external bursary application selection processes are handled differently. Whereas internal bursary applicants are chosen by the bursary committee, external bursary applicants are selected by the HR staff at a particular Sun International unit.

When questioned about the demographics of the learnership and bursary beneficiaries, only external beneficiaries come from disadvantaged backgrounds. As one participant stated, "*all [Sun International] employees are allowed to participate, immaterial of their background.*" However, external learners were "*recruited from underprivileged backgrounds*" (FSM 4). Sun International regarded applicants from communities that were previously excluded from socio-economic developments as disadvantaged or underprivileged.

Thus, while internal applicants' circumstances were irrelevant, external applicants were only considered if they came from a disadvantaged background.

Furthermore, the demographics of the beneficiaries were selected based on the Sun International's employment equity (EE) statistics and according to the region's demographics. A participant explained that

[the] demographics are per the region, [for example] in [the] WC (Western Cape) it is mainly:

- 1. CM (Coloured Male)*
- 2. CF (Coloured Female)*
- 3. AM (African Male)*
- 4. AF (African Female)*
- 5. IM (Indian Male)*
- 6. IF (Indian Female)*

Depending on the EE stats, the company will determine the priority, but in the WC it focuses on CM and CF, then AM and AF (FSM 4).

Accordingly, applicants were chosen based on the corporations' EE statistics and the region's demographics.

4.5.2 Theme 2: Beneficiary support

The second research objective of this study was to examine the support Sun International provides to the beneficiaries of its CSR education initiatives. Hence, this theme concerns the support Sun International provides to its learnership and bursary beneficiaries. Two categories emerged during data analysis: tangible support (financial support, study leave and access to resources) and intangible (mentorship and emotional support) support.

4.5.2.1 Tangible support

Sun International provides tangible support to its beneficiaries in the form of financial support, study leave and access to resources. However, study leave is only provided to internal bursary holders.

4.5.2.1.1 Financial support

In terms of the financial support provided by Sun International, internal learnership beneficiaries receive their usual salary. However, external learners receive a stipend. The stipend can be used to cover the indirect costs associated with the learnership, such as transportation. Without the stipend, most of the external learners would be unable to get to Sun International's premises. One participant specified that *"all learnership learners are paid a stipend if they are unemployed, so that they can get to [Sun International], and if they are employed learners [they receive] their normal salary"* (FSM 1).

It was also indicated that *"there are no costs incurred"* (FSM 2) by the learners when completing the learnership unless they want *"catering"* (FSM 1) or *"should they want to purchase branded clothing from [Sun International's] property"* (FSM 3).

Thus, Sun International makes every effort to remove as many financial obstacles as possible for its learners, thereby creating an environment conducive to training.

Concerning bursary beneficiaries, they receive financial support from Sun International in the form of the bursary. The bursary covers *"the full cost of the studies for the year of the study"* (FSM 2). The full cost includes *"the course costs and the book costs"* (FSM 1). In addition, the bursary can also be used to cover the cost of books and any other expenses that the beneficiary incurs. The bursary *"can cover more, [such as] laptop, accommodation, travel, food, etc."* (FSM 4).

Hence, the bursary can be used to cover any financial cost associated with the beneficiaries' studies.

4.5.2.1.2 Study leave

When asked, *"What support was given to you by Sun International for the duration of the programme?"*, one beneficiary mentioned that he was granted study leave by Sun International. Study leave is provided to employees to enable them to attend their lectures and/or exams during working hours. Study leave can also be used for exam preparation or to complete assignments or research (Fazey, 2020:257).

The participant explained that he received *"time off to attend classes and write exams"* (MB 1). Furthermore, the Sun International staff specified that the internal bursary

recipients were granted *“two days study leave per exam”* (FSM 1). Therefore, the study leave provided to bursary beneficiaries assists them in passing their course modules because it grants them ample time to prepare for their exams.

4.5.2.1.3 Access to resources

Most corporations make provisions pertaining to the use of company resources. These resources are made available to employees to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Furthermore, some corporations provide their employees with access to their resources for private use. These resources include the use of IT equipment, such as computers, to access email and the internet, and the use of telephones to make personal phone calls (Fazey, 2020:145).

Sun International provides its learnership and bursary beneficiaries with access to its resources, including access to IT equipment, the internet and telephones, to enable them to effectively complete their studies.

For example, one participant stated that she received *“support with the required tools, skills and resources to help achieve and finish the learnership”* (FB 1). Another participant remarked that the resources he had access to included *“laptops for exams, internet all the time and access to phones”* (MB 2).

4.5.2.2 Intangible support

Sun International also provides intangible support to its beneficiaries in the form of mentorships and emotional support, which is discussed in the next subsections.

4.5.2.2.1 Mentorship

All the learners at Sun International have access to a mentor to support them during their learnerships. A learnership mentor is a guide who can assist the learners in their career development and growth. A senior manager usually assumes the role of a mentor (Grewe *et al.*, 2012:11133).

One participant said, *“Each learner is offered a mentor ... while on the programme”* (FSM 2). Another participant clarified that *“all learners on learnerships have to have mentors allocated to them”* (FSM 1).

Thus, all the learners received support in the form of mentorship. It was indicated that the mentorship was beneficial to the learnership beneficiaries.

One participant, who was an external learnership beneficiary, underwent a professional cooking learnership. She confirmed that *“we had mentors that assisted us”* (FB 3). She also stated that the mentorship was beneficial to her by saying *“the head chef was really helpful”* (FB 3). However, she indicated that she rarely spent time with her mentor.

4.5.2.2.2 Emotional support

There is an emotional component to learning. An individual's feelings can either assist or hinder learning, and educational experiences can have emotional outcomes. Therefore, emotional support can play an important part in learning (Thompson, 2006:30).

Emotional support can be given through encouragement and praise. It improves morale and productivity, and can enhance the relationship between superiors and subordinates (DuBrin, 2009:152). Additionally, emotional support can aid in dispelling self-doubt and in moving forward with learning (Thompson, 2006:30).

One participant described how Sun International played a crucial role in her decision to apply for a bursary: *“The support of our HR manager ... and the learning and development manager ... they have both been instrumental in the process of me applying for a bursary through Sun International. They have encouraged me to pick up on my studies and were in support of my application”* (FB 2). After she received encouragement from her superiors to continue with her education, the participant decided to go ahead with the bursary application. Thus, the managers from the learning and development department who deal specifically with the learnership and bursary initiatives strive to provide emotional support to individuals in pursuit of higher education through encouragement.

4.5.3 Theme 3: Beneficiary experiences

The third research objective of this study was to determine the experiences of the beneficiaries of Sun International's CSR education initiatives. Thus, this theme concerns the experiences of Sun International's learnership and bursary beneficiaries. Two categories for this theme emerged during data analysis, namely human capital investment and employment and employability.

4.5.3.1 Human capital investment

When asked about the feedback Sun International received from beneficiaries regarding their experiences of the learnership and/or bursary programmes, all of the staff participants stated that they had received mostly positive feedback. They believed that they received positive feedback from the beneficiaries because Sun International invested in human capital. For example, one participant asserted that “we (*Sun International*) invest in all individuals attending [*the*] learnerships” (FSM 3), while another participant stated that “bursaries encourage people with dreams and aspirations to grow even more and develop further” (FSM 1). These two responses are examples of human capital investment.

Other beneficiaries stated that the corporation’s investment in their human capital resulted in positive experiences. For example, one external learnership beneficiary remarked that the learnership helped her become “empower[ed] and grow experience within the organisation” (FB 1).

Consequently, the beneficiary believed that the learnership aided in both professional and personal development.

Another participant, an internal bursary beneficiary, explained that his experience was positive because “one doesn't always have finances available to pay for education. Education is expensive. I'm able to practice what I've learnt at university in the workplace and in my personal life” (MB 1).

Therefore, without the bursary, the beneficiary would not have been able to pay for tertiary education because of the high costs associated with higher education.

Another external learnership beneficiary, who is now a chef working for Sun International, commented that “it was a positive experience [because] I learnt how to make all types of dishes” (FB 3).

As such, the beneficiary attained additional skills and knowledge pertaining to her profession through the learnership.

Finally, one more internal bursary beneficiary stated,

My experience of the bursary programme was positive overall. Sun International has a huge training spend and invests in its people by offering bursaries to help employees financially and ultimately to better the lives of employees ... Sun International is invested in giving back to the community and has granted employed and unemployed learnerships for a period of one year at a time, as well as taking on interns and giving them the necessary opportunities, that is, skills and practical knowledge to be able to further equip them for the working world/environment. I just started the bursary programme and am, in fact, six months into it already. I believe that my field of study (applied psychology for professional contexts, the major subjects being industrial and organisational psychology) is already proving to be beneficial to my life, as well as the lives of my working community. These studies are equipping me to manage personalities from a work context perspective, to better understand psychological processes in a work context and understand behaviours in [the] work context. It has broadened my knowledge as I am better equipped as an HR practitioner to understand the needs of our employees and assist them in the best possible way (FB 2).

Thus, Sun International invests in its human capital by providing financial support to its bursary beneficiaries, which enables them to develop themselves and their careers further through higher education, and by providing skills and training to its learners.

The corporation has managed to retain its staff, some for almost a decade and others for more than a decade. For example, one participant has been a Sun International employee for more than nine years. She has been a loyal employee because she believes that “*Sun International is an amazing company to work for*” (FB 2). Another participant declared that she had “*been with the organisation for the past 12 years*” (FSM 2).

Therefore, the corporation is able to retain staff because it invests in its human capital. This investment has created loyal employees who have had positive experiences with the company.

4.5.3.2 Employment and employability

Through its learnership and bursary initiatives, Sun International provides opportunities to its beneficiaries for employment and empowers them by assisting them to become more employable.

In terms of employment, Sun International does employ some of the learnership beneficiaries, “*depending on availability within the organisation*” (FSM 2). One external learnership beneficiary asserted that she received employment after completing her learnership: “*I...managed to get a permanent contract*” (FB 1).

As a result, it is possible for the learners to find employment at the corporation after completion of their learnership.

Furthermore, learners can receive employment after completing the learnership in the department in which they applied for the learnership. As one participant clarified, “*if they have been on a food and beverage learnership, then it would be employment in the kitchen. If it is a housekeeping or reception learnership, [then] it would be in those departments*” (FSM 1).

Thus, a learner can only receive employment in the department where they underwent their learnership.

One external learner claimed that after completing her learnership in the kitchen, she was “*now a qualified chef that (sic) can do both hot and cold sections*” (FB 3) and received permanent employment at Sun International. Therefore, learners have the opportunity of employment once they have completed their learnership.

Moreover, learners have the ability to empower themselves because they “*are usually employed in the business so they then start earning and can support themselves in their first job*” (FSM 1).

Thus, if the learner is able to receive permanent employment at the corporation, they can begin earning an income, which assists them in becoming independent and self-reliant.

Moreover, beneficiaries can retain their employment at Sun International because they have upgraded their skills. One internal bursary beneficiary specified that “*the programme*

has put me in a better chance (sic) than I was before ... because we are living in a new normal with jobs being lost every day, [so] I stand a better chance than most [of retaining my job]" (MB 2).

Even if beneficiaries, particularly external beneficiaries, do not receive employment with Sun International, their learnerships or bursaries have put them in a better position to obtain employment elsewhere. One participant claimed that learners *"receive theory and practical work exposure. After completion [of the learnership], they will receive a certificate that can be used should they apply internally or externally"* (FSM 3). Another participant stated that learners *"do get employment from others [because] they are equipped with the tools to give them the ability to be employable"* (FSM 2). Additionally, *"learnerships give candidates a step up into the workforce"* (FSM 1). Concerning bursaries, *"bursars will be able to apply for jobs within or out of the industry with a degree or diploma behind their name, so for them it is more for personal development and traction to improve their careers"* (FSM 1).

Thus, having completed their courses or learnerships, beneficiaries are better positioned to obtain employment or retain employment because they have the necessary job skills. If beneficiaries cannot receive employment at Sun International due to a lack of job vacancies, their learnerships or bursaries make them more employable. Learners can find employment elsewhere using the certificates they received at the end of their learnership. Bursary recipients can find employment with the diploma or degree obtained after completing their tertiary education.

4.5.4 Theme 4: CSR education initiative challenges

This study's fourth and final research objective was to identify the challenges experienced with CSR education initiatives, specifically the learnership and bursary initiatives. Two categories emerged from the data analysis, namely staff member challenges and beneficiary challenges.

4.5.4.1 Staff member challenges

Most staff member participants stated that they did not experience any challenges when asked the question: *"Has Sun International experienced any challenges with these educational initiatives?"* However, one employee remarked that some female learners fall

pregnant during their learnership. She mentioned that *“should a learner fall pregnant during a learnership, every effort is made for her to continue studying the following time the learnership is run”* (FSM 1).

Therefore, should a learner fall pregnant, the Sun International staff must make additional efforts to support the learner. Learner pregnancy could be challenging for Sun International employees to navigate.

An additional staff member highlighted two challenges, one for each of the learnerships and bursaries. First, regarding the learnerships, she said that *“the dedicated learner, whether employed or unemployed, requires commitment and dedication and some don't have the staying power. We can only trust that the participants will remain in the full programme and complete [it]. So we motivate [them to continue]”* (FSM 4).

Thus, when learnership and bursary beneficiaries are not committed to completing their learnerships or studies, it can pose a financial and logistical challenge for Sun International.

Concerning the bursaries, it was mentioned that

Some bursary recipients don't take up the bursary, some start and don't finish the course, [and] learners drop off and the tuition still needs to be paid. It affects the BBBEE-SD (Broad-Based Economic Empowerment-Supplier Development) scorecard. [Moreover], the bursary policy and the bursary process for BBBEE is not aligned and could create issues in an audit. [However], the bursary policy has been highlighted (sic) to central office for amendment (FSM 4).

Hence, it can even lead to financial loss when bursary recipients drop out of their courses and Sun International is still responsible for the cost of the tuition fee.

4.5.4.2 Beneficiary challenges

Only two of the five learnership and bursary beneficiary participants did not experience any challenges. One internal bursary beneficiary stated that she did *“not [experience any challenges] with the initiative through Sun International but with the university”* (FB 2) that she was attending.

Of the remaining three beneficiaries, one external learnership beneficiary claimed that “a year was too long for the work given, which could've been covered in six months” (FB 1). However, shortening the length of the learnership would not be possible, considering that a learnership is legally mandated to be 12 months.

Another beneficiary, an internal bursary recipient, found it challenging to work full time while studying part-time. He remarked that “*doing, for example, H/K (the housekeeping course) while working full time at [the] front office*” (MB 2) was a challenge.

It is well documented in the literature that it is a challenge for employees who study part-time to divide their time between their studies and work (Santoso *et al.*, 2020:299). Consequently, the literature provides support for the beneficiary’s experience.

The beneficiary then added that his studies were also delayed. “*I had to wait for another year as we were more in my department (sic) wanting the same bursary*” (MB 2).

A delay in one’s studies can hinder the potential for career growth and the accompanying possibility of an increase in salary after completion of the course.

The other external learnership beneficiary explained that even though she was allocated a mentor, “[*they*] hardly worked together” (FB 3). This is problematic because mentors and mentees need to spend adequate time together. A lack of time spent with a mentor can result in fewer personal benefits and make it difficult to develop a friendship and build rapport between the mentee and mentor (Kram & Ragins, 2007:676).

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the main themes, categories and sub-categories that emerged from the interview data were discussed. Theme 1 concerned the processes that Sun International uses to identify the learnership and bursary beneficiaries. Two categories emerged from the data for this theme, namely, entry requirements and selection criteria. Sun International has specific entry requirements for both the learnerships and bursaries. Additionally, the learnerships and bursaries are divided into internal and external categories. Once the staff at Sun International have assessed each beneficiary candidate according to the entry criteria, they select individuals who will be the learnership and bursary beneficiaries.

Theme 2 consisted of the support the beneficiaries received from Sun International. The support they received was divided into tangible and intangible support. The beneficiaries' tangible support consisted of financial support, study leave, mentorship, and access to resources. The intangible support consisted of emotional support.

Theme 3 was the beneficiaries' experiences. All the beneficiaries expressed positive experiences because Sun International invested in them through the learnerships and bursaries and provided them with opportunities for employment by either offering them permanent employment or making them more employable.

Finally, Theme 4 was the CSR education initiative challenges. The Sun International staff members and beneficiaries both experienced challenges, albeit differing ones. Some staff members had to manage learner pregnancy and a lack of commitment from beneficiaries. One of the learnership beneficiaries indicated a low study workload as a challenge. Another beneficiary stated that balancing work and studies and experiencing a delay in starting his studies were challenging. Finally, an additional beneficiary claimed a lack of time spent with mentors was a challenge.

The next chapter will conclude the study and the limitations will be noted. The recommendations for future research will also be provided.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

I admire companies that give back to communities. It is an absolute essential for organisations to watch, mitigate and improve their impact on the environment, people, communities, their health and overall well-being – Shiv Nadar, founder and chairman Emeritus of HCL Technologies Limited and the Shiv Nadar Foundation (2011)

5.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate the learnership and bursary CSR education initiatives of Sun International in South Africa in terms of their role in improving the lives of their beneficiaries. To do so, four sub-questions were asked and the answers to these questions enabled the researcher to answer the primary question, *“Do Sun International’s CSR learnership and bursary initiatives improve the lives of their beneficiaries?”*

In this chapter, the researcher will answer the sub-questions first, followed by the primary question. The primary research question will be discussed in light of the literature. Finally, the limitations of the study are noted and recommendations are made for future research on education initiatives.

5.2 Conclusions

In this section, the main conclusions are drawn from the findings in relation to the objectives of the study.

5.2.1. The theoretical orientation of CSR

The first objective of the study was to answer the following question: *“What is the theoretical orientation of CSR?”* After conducting a literature review on CSR, it was discovered that CSR is a reminder to corporations that they have a responsibility to all stakeholders and not only shareholders. Furthermore, the private sector shares in the responsibility of finding solutions to global environmental and social issues to ensure that

people live in a better world. However, corporations deal with context-related issues. For example, in developed countries, corporations are focused on ecological and environmental issues, while in developing countries they are more focused on social and development issues. Additionally, large corporations have discovered that incorporating a responsible approach to governance, environmental and social issues into their main business activities is essential for sustainability, profitability and prosperity. Moreover, CSR principles enable corporations to re-evaluate their activities from multiple perspectives, resulting in discussions on how sustainable business practices can be achieved in developing and developed nations.

For CSR to be effective, it should become the main business agenda, being integrated into all practices, policies and processes. To achieve sustainability and longevity, CSR needs to be embedded in all corporate activities. Moreover, CSR ought to be embedded in the minds and culture of every staff member, partner and the entire supply chain.

Finally, CSR in South Africa is understood as CSI, a uniquely South African term born of the country's oppressive past. CSI is understood as strategic philanthropy and corporate citizenship. South African corporations understand that their CSI duty involves supporting the improvement and safeguarding of an economic, political and social environment that is beneficial to continuous economic growth and development. Currently, the South African private sector spends more on CSI than richer countries. Furthermore, South African corporations have implemented more advanced socially-responsible policies than those in many wealthier economies to assist with local communities' SED. Moreover, many corporations are legally obliged to contribute to significant social programmes as a prerequisite for their licence-to-operate. However, it is more than merely compliance that motivates corporations in South Africa because they have affirmed their dedication to the development of an inclusive country by focusing on healthcare, SED, capacity building, and education and training. The most supported developmental sectors are education, social and community development, health, food security and agriculture.

5.2.2. CSR education initiatives and quality of life

The second objective of the study was to answer the following question: "*What CSR education initiatives do corporations engage in and are they effective in improving beneficiaries' quality of life?*" To answer this question, a literature review was conducted

on education, quality of life and CSR education initiatives. It was discovered that education is essential for improving people's quality of life. However, people's lives improve when inequality is decreased and access to jobs and quality education increases. When these factors are combined, they can result in reduced poverty levels, thereby improving the living standards of local communities. Moreover, corporations' CSR education initiatives can benefit local communities, their employees and the corporations themselves. Additionally, CSR educational initiatives can provide access to education and create opportunities for those previously marginalised to realise their full potential and live quality lives.

Various CSR education initiatives that corporations engage in include youth education and occupational training, scholarship and bursary programmes and school assistance initiatives. The school assistance programmes consist of refurbishing schools, providing teachers for schools in need and making donations to schools that need monetary or nonmonetary assistance.

Corporations can, thus, help empower individuals and improve their quality of life by providing education, specifically job-related education and skills training. Furthermore, corporations can play an important role in incorporating their social network resources with the supply chain to help disadvantaged people gain access to otherwise inaccessible resources.

The effectiveness of education initiatives in positively impacting beneficiaries' quality of life is not reported on. Little information is available about CSR's effects, even though claims have been made about its advantages and disadvantages. Additionally, claims have been made about CSR's role in economic and social development in developing economies, yet these claims are mainly unsupported. CSR's impact in certain areas, such as sustainability, profitability, poverty, human rights, corruption, public governance and human trafficking is known, but little is known about CSR's effects on individual beneficiaries. Furthermore, CSR's benefits for big business are known, but not the details of how CSR initiatives have impacted the major societal issues they are meant to help resolve.

Many corporations face challenges associated with implementing CSR education initiatives, such as the problem that local communities are disinterested in participating in

and supporting their CSR activities, mainly because there is little to no knowledge about CSR in the local communities, which is, in turn, due to the lack of communication between corporations and local communities. Thus, these communities have little confidence in the initiatives. Other problems include acquiring the right teachers and teaching material, selecting suitable partners, building local capacity, a lack of transparency, high costs, time and legal constraints, and a shortage of technical proficiency.

From the literature, criteria for an effective CSR education initiative emerged. The criteria were used to create a framework to assess the effectiveness of Sun International's CSR education initiatives. This is discussed in more detail in section 5.3 below.

5.2.3. The mechanisms and processes used by Sun International to identify equitable beneficiaries

The third objective of the study was to answer the following question: "*What mechanisms and processes do Sun International utilise to identify equitable beneficiaries?*" Two main mechanisms and processes emerged from the data, namely entry requirements and selection processes.

5.2.3.1. Entry requirements

Firstly, Sun International uses various platforms to make potential beneficiaries aware of its CSR education initiatives. These include a website, an application for Sun International staff members, posters, email communication and text messages. Additionally, potential beneficiaries are divided into internal and external categories for both the learnership and bursary initiatives. Sun International employees are placed in the internal category and those who are unemployed are assigned to the external category.

Candidates in the internal learnership category need to have completed Grade 12 and have been nominated for further development by their superiors. For the external category, the applicants also need a Grade 12, but they have additional requirements of having to be between 18 and 35 years of age, have no criminal record and be South African citizens. Regardless of category, all learnerships are a duration of 12 months.

Regarding internal bursaries, all Sun International staff are eligible for a bursary provided they have been a staff member for no less than a year, have an internal performance

rating of three or more, have discussed the bursary application with their manager and have had it noted in their IDP. Furthermore, bursary applicants need to choose a course related to their current job at Sun International and write a motivation letter to accompany their applications. Moreover, bursary applicants need to have their application signed off by their superiors and present evidence of historical funding for the course. External bursaries are awarded to students attending schools in areas surrounding specific Sun International properties. Irrespective of the category, all bursary beneficiaries are awarded the bursary for one academic year and can apply for an additional bursary for the following academic year, provided they have passed all their modules for the respective year.

5.2.3.2. Selection processes

Sun International uses a specific selection process to choose internal and external learnerships and bursaries. Concerning internal learnerships, Sun International's line managers choose the learners after conducting interviews with them. In contrast, Sun International's HR department chooses external learners via a recruitment process. For internal bursaries, Sun International's bursary committee selects the internal bursary recipients. However, external bursary holders are selected by Sun International's HR staff at specific local units.

In terms of the demographics of the learnership and bursary beneficiaries, only external beneficiaries come from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are selected according to the region's demographics and on the basis of the EE statistics of Sun International.

5.2.4. The support Sun International provides to beneficiaries of its CSR education initiatives

The fourth objective of the study was to answer this question: "*What support does Sun International provide to beneficiaries of its CSR education initiatives?*". From the data, it appeared that Sun International provided as much assistance to its beneficiaries as possible. Tangible support (financial, study leave and access to resources) was provided, as well as intangible support (consisting of mentorship and emotional support).

5.2.4.1. Tangible support

Sun International provides financial support, study leave and access to resources as part of its tangible support to beneficiaries. External learnership beneficiaries receive financial support in the form of a stipend that can be used to pay for the indirect costs associated with the learnership, such as transportation. In addition, bursary beneficiaries can cover the costs associated with higher education, such as tuition fees, books, equipment, accommodation, travel and food with the bursary they receive from Sun International. Therefore, Sun International strives to remove as many financial obstacles as possible for its learners and bursary holders.

Internal bursary beneficiaries receive study leave to give them time for their studies. Each bursary holder receives two days of study leave per exam to help them prepare for their examinations.

Both the learnership and bursary beneficiaries receive access to company resources, such as IT equipment, the internet and telephones to aid them in their studies.

5.2.4.2. Intangible support

It was found that intangible support was given to the learnership and bursary beneficiaries in the form of mentorships and emotional support. Mentorship is arranged for all learnership beneficiaries. The mentors provide support and guidance to the learners. One beneficiary indicated that she regarded the mentorship as helpful and overall beneficial. However, she mentioned that she did not spend enough time with her mentor. Therefore, this type of support is dependent on the willingness of the individual mentors to give of their time.

Sun International's learning and development managers who deal specifically with the learnership and bursary initiatives provide emotional support through encouragement. The encouragement given to the beneficiaries assisted them on their learning journeys. The beneficiaries indicated that they were able to continue with their education because of their superiors' encouragement.

5.2.5. The experiences of beneficiaries of the Sun International CSR education initiatives

The fifth objective of the study was to answer the following question: “*What are the experiences of beneficiaries of the Sun International CSR education initiatives?*” It emerged that the beneficiaries had positive experiences with the learnership and bursary initiatives because they experienced investment in their human capital, employment opportunities and improved employability.

5.2.5.1. Human capital investment

Human capital has three components, specifically the collective personal, educational and professional experiences of employees. In terms of personal experiences, the beneficiaries expressed that Sun International’s investment in their human capital empowered them because they obtained the necessary skills to further their careers.

Regarding educational experiences, the bursary participants mentioned that Sun International’s financial support enabled them to pay for their higher education. Without Sun International’s financial aid, the participants might not have been able to pay for tertiary education.

Concerning professional experiences, the beneficiaries stated that they gained knowledge from participating in the education initiatives. The internal bursary beneficiaries believed that they were able to utilise this knowledge in their jobs. The learnership participants were grateful to Sun International for the work experience they gained through the learnerships.

Overall, through Sun International’s investment in human capital, the beneficiaries are given opportunities to improve their lives by being provided with financial assistance and/or equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience needed for the working world.

Moreover, the beneficiaries were not the only ones who benefitted from human capital investment. Sun International has gained and retained loyal and committed staff members.

5.2.5.2. Employment and employability

Sun International provides employment opportunities to its beneficiaries through its learnership and bursary initiatives. These opportunities include permanent employment with Sun International if there are available jobs within the corporation. Both the learnership beneficiaries received permanent employment at Sun International after they completed their learnerships.

Additionally, beneficiaries can retain their employment at Sun International because they are more highly skilled. For example, one bursary beneficiary stated that the programme had improved his chances of retaining his job during the coronavirus pandemic due to the additional skills he was learning. The other bursary beneficiaries claimed that the additional skill sets they were acquiring were helping them to perform better in their current roles. Thus, the help they received could assist them with job retention.

None of the bursary recipients had received any promotions or salary increases due to their studies. However, they were still in the process of completing their courses and, thus, could receive promotions or pay increases in the future.

Finally, the beneficiaries were empowered because of their improved employability. Even if the external beneficiaries were unable to gain permanent employment with Sun International after completing their courses, they felt their learnerships or bursaries would put them in a better position to obtain employment elsewhere.

5.2.6. The challenges experienced with CSR education initiatives

The sixth objective of the study was to answer the question, “*What challenges are experienced with CSR education initiatives?*” Both Sun International’s staff members and the beneficiaries experienced some challenges.

5.2.6.1. Staff member challenges

All but one Sun International employee stated that they did not experience any challenges with the CSR education initiatives. However, the staff member that did experience challenges mentioned that a lack of commitment from some beneficiaries was a challenge. It was indicated that this disinterest posed financial and logistical challenges for Sun International. Moreover, it led to financial loss for the corporation when bursary

holders dropped out of their courses because Sun International was still liable for the tuition fees.

Despite the other participants stating that they did not experience any challenges, one participant mentioned during her interview that some learners had fallen pregnant during their learnerships. This could be viewed as a challenge because the Sun International staff need to provide the learner with additional support and this situation could be challenging for the employees as well.

5.2.6.2. Beneficiary challenges

Three of the five beneficiaries experienced challenges. One learnership beneficiary stated that there was not enough work to cover during her learnership, which she felt should have been only for six months. An internal bursary beneficiary experienced the challenges of working full time while studying part-time and waiting until he could apply for a bursary due to other employees requesting the same bursary. Finally, another learner described the challenge of not being able to spend adequate time with her mentor.

5.2.7. Recommendations to Sun International regarding its CSR education initiatives

The seventh and final objective of the study was to answer the question, “*What recommendations can be given to Sun International regarding its CSR education initiatives?*” The first recommendation that can be given to the corporation is to have beneficiaries sign an agreement between them and Sun International, which states that should the beneficiary not complete the learnership or their studies (in the case of a bursary), the beneficiary would be liable for the costs incurred by the corporation. This may motivate the beneficiaries to complete their programme and prevent financial and logistical challenges for Sun International. The second recommendation would be to add supplementary learning material to the existing learnerships to ensure that there is sufficient work to cover during the learnership programmes. The third recommendation would be to increase the number of bursaries awarded per year, if possible. Many bursary applicants were unable to receive a bursary because other employees had requested the same bursary. Thus, if more bursaries can be awarded, more applicants can have the chance to further or complete their studies. The final recommendation is for learners to spend adequate time with their mentors to gain maximum benefits from their mentorships.

5.3 Answer to primary question and discussion

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate the learnership and bursary CSR education initiatives of Sun International in South Africa in terms of their role in improving the lives of its beneficiaries. The primary research question was *“Do Sun International’s CSR learnership and bursary initiatives improve the lives of its beneficiaries?”*.

The answers to the four sub-questions make it possible to answer this primary question. Furthermore, the framework created to assess Sun International’s CSR education programmes (see section 3.10 of Chapter 3) enables the researcher to determine whether the corporation’s initiatives improve the lives of its beneficiaries in general.

The first minor objective was to determine the mechanisms and processes used by Sun International to identify equitable beneficiaries. One mechanism used is to inform potential beneficiaries of their learnership and bursary initiatives. To do this, the corporation uses various platforms. The variety of platforms used help to make the initiatives easy to access. According to the framework provided, ease of accessibility is deemed an important feature of an effective CSR education initiative. Thus, Sun International’s CSR initiatives have fulfilled one of the criteria.

Secondly, in order for the candidates to be eligible for the programmes, they need to meet certain requirements, as mentioned in section 4.5.1.1 of Chapter 3. The age, education and nationality requirements for external learners, and the duration of the learnerships, irrespective of category, are in line with the literature, as stated in subsection 1.1.2 of Chapter 1. In terms of processes, Sun International uses a specific selection process to choose beneficiaries, as outlined in subsection 4.5.1.2. To ensure equity, the corporation chooses external beneficiaries who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are selected according to the region’s demographics and on the basis of the EE statistics of Sun International. Furthermore, the bursary and learnership initiatives are available to all the corporation’s staff members. Thus, Sun International’s programmes are equitable. As outlined in the framework, equity is another feature of an effective CSR education initiative.

The second minor objective was to examine the support Sun International provides to beneficiaries of its CSR education initiatives. The corporation provides tangible support (financial, study leave and access to resources) and intangible support (consisting of

mentorship and emotional support) to the beneficiaries. With reference to the framework provided, an effective CSR education initiative should be financially beneficial to both the corporation and beneficiaries. Since the beneficiaries receive financial support, and the corporation benefits financially from its investment in human capital, which results in employee retention, Sun International's CSR education initiatives could be deemed effective in this particular area. An effective CSR initiative should also lead to close-working relationships between the corporation and beneficiaries, as mentioned in the framework. Given that Sun International provides mentorship and emotional support to beneficiaries, and assists with any issues that arise, they are able to build close-working relationships with their beneficiaries. Moreover, there are additional benefits of mentorships that have been documented in the literature. For example, Turban and Lee (2007:37) have asserted that the benefits to mentees include the potential for development and growth, improved reputation and career success because of association with the mentor, and receiving sound advice and guidance from the mentor. However, one external learner stated that she could not spend adequate time with her mentor. Thus, she would not be able to benefit from all these advantages because of the lack of time spent with her mentor. Therefore, it would be beneficial to the beneficiaries if the mentors could invest more time with their mentees.

Determining the experiences of beneficiaries of the Sun International CSR education initiatives was the third minor objective. It emerged that the beneficiaries had positive experiences with the learnership and bursary initiatives because they experienced investment in their human capital, employment opportunities and improved employability. The participants indicated that the initiatives empowered them because they provided them with the skills, knowledge and resources needed to improve their lives. These tools obtained through the initiatives provided them with opportunities for permanent employment if they were external beneficiaries. For example, both external learners received permanent employment with Sun International. If they were unable to obtain employment at Sun International after undergoing training, the tools they obtained during training improved their employability. Furthermore, those beneficiaries who were already employed by Sun International attested to standing a better chance of retaining their positions at the corporation because of their improved skill set. Moreover, their additional skills and knowledge could also help improve their job performance. Thus, the physical goals of the programmes were met and the projects could be deemed of a high quality

because the beneficiaries were able to acquire and utilise the necessary tools and skills to further their careers. Additionally, the corporation could acquire new employees and retain existing staff who attained improved skill sets. Moreover, the goals of Sun International and the beneficiaries were aligned and there was harmonisation between them because the beneficiaries required additional skills and knowledge and the corporation was able to provide them with these requirements. Sun International also provided the beneficiaries with practical skills and knowledge that is specific to their industry.

Thus, considering that an effective CSR education initiative should empower beneficiaries, meet the physical goals of the programme, be of a high quality, have the goals between parties aligned and harmonised and be practical and relevant to the beneficiaries' industry as per the framework, Sun International's programmes could be considered effective.

The fourth and final minor objective was to identify the challenges experienced with CSR education initiatives. The staff member challenges included a lack of commitment from some beneficiaries. It was indicated that this disinterest posed financial and logistical challenges for Sun International, even financial loss. The beneficiary challenges consisted of not enough work to cover during the 12 month learnership, experiencing the challenges of working full time while studying part-time, waiting to apply for a bursary due to other employees requesting the same bursary and the challenge of not being able to spend adequate time with mentors (as mentioned above). With regard to having to wait another year to begin studies, which can be frustrating, the delay in an individual's studies can lead to additional challenges, such as a decreased likelihood of completing university studies, increased tuition fees and the cost of income that could have been earned. For example, Bozick and DeLuca (2005:543) assert that delaying enrolment is linked to a decreased likelihood of completing a degree. Moreover, Aina and Casalone (2020:2) argue that the delay in obtaining a university degree increases the tuition fees (because the cost of tuition increases every year) and the cost of earnings that could have been received if the studies were completed and the individual obtained a job sooner. Despite the challenges described by the participants, all the beneficiaries viewed the initiatives as beneficial to their wellbeing in general, particularly in their working environment.

Therefore, the data that emerged from the learnership and bursary beneficiaries' email questionnaire surveys suggest that Sun International's CSR education initiatives improve the lives of the beneficiaries in general. Moreover, CSR education initiatives can be effective in improving the lives of beneficiaries when they provide the tools needed for beneficiaries to become empowered. This empowerment can result from becoming financially independent, and independence is obtained through higher education and employment.

5.4 Limitations

The study's limitations included external validity (the generalisability of the research results) (Bryman, 2012:46-47). The findings of the study are not generalisable because the sample was small and specific to a particular case. As mentioned in subsection 1.6.2.1, generalisability was not the purpose of a case study design, but rather the ability to generalise theoretically. Therefore, some generalisable principles from the findings, such as what worked or did not work in the Sun International case that might or might not work elsewhere could be considered a limitation.

Finally, the researcher is aware that this research endeavour is only a first step and narrow in scope. It would not have been possible to contact every individual who had participated in Sun International's learnership and beneficiary programmes, which have been in operation since the Skills and Development Act was passed in 1994, due to cost and time constraints. Thus, the research sample provides only a glimpse into the potential of CSR education initiatives in improving beneficiaries' lives.

Additionally, the long-term benefits could not be evaluated due to time constraints. Therefore, the full benefits to the beneficiaries could not be adequately evaluated.

Despite the limitations of email questionnaire surveys, it was the easiest form of communication during the COVID-19 pandemic and it was a safeguard against the virus. Moreover, the researcher was based in South Korea at the time of the study. Therefore, it would have been costly for the researcher to travel to South Africa in terms of flight costs and having to quarantine.

5.5 Recommendations for future research

Considering that the focus of the study was only on Sun International's CSR education initiatives, future researchers could focus on:

- Obtaining a larger sample size to conduct similar research because this study consisted of a small sample and was only the first step and much narrower scope in study.
- The sample could be more gender-diverse since the majority of the participants were female.
- Conducting similar research using face-to-face interviews instead of email questionnaire surveys because the researcher would be better able to probe participants, record nonverbal data, and circumvent a low response rate associated with online research methods.
- Other corporations' CSR education initiatives to see how effective their initiatives are and then perhaps compare them to those of Sun International.
- A longitudinal study to determine the long-term effectiveness of Sun International's CSR education initiatives.

5.6 Final conclusion

In this chapter the findings of the case study of Sun International were presented and discussed. The purpose of this study was to see if the beneficiaries benefitted from participating in the education initiatives that Sun International in South Africa offers and whether these initiatives can improve their lives in general. The findings indicate that CSR education initiatives can and do improve the lives of beneficiaries. The significance of this study is that it added to the existing knowledge on the link between the lack of access to quality education and the quality of life of local community members, such as beneficiaries who are part of the local community. Due to the fact that few studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of CSR education initiatives to improve the lives of beneficiaries, particularly from their viewpoint, this study was the first of its kind.

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ANNEXURES A TO D

ANNEXURE A: LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT STUDY FOR SUN INTERNATIONAL STAFF

An Evaluation of Corporate Social Responsibility Education Initiatives: Case Study of Sun International

Dear Sir/Madam,

You have been selected to participate in an email questionnaire survey consisting of 15 questions. We request that you participate in a survey that will take place via email. The questions are designed to collect information on the learnership and bursary CSR education initiatives of Sun International in South Africa in terms of its role in improving the lives of their beneficiaries in general. Additionally, the challenges that Sun International experience in delivering this initiative will be investigated. This research is conducted by a masters student in the Corporate Social Responsibility Department of the North-West University, Potchefstroom campus.

The information collected will be useful for understanding the mechanisms and processes used by Sun International in identifying beneficiaries, the support Sun International provide to beneficiaries of its CSR education initiatives, the experiences of beneficiaries of the Sun International CSR education initiatives and the challenges experienced with CSR education initiatives. Participating in the survey will allow you to share your experiences and views on various aspects related to this issue. Thus, the success of this research entirely depends on your kind cooperation. The information collected will be handled with the greatest confidentiality and your anonymity will be guaranteed. Thus, your name and email address will not appear in the study. We are merely interested in your personal, honest opinion.

We thank you for your valuable contribution and time.

Should you have any queries concerning any aspect of the survey, you are welcome to contact the researcher's supervisor – Prof Sethulego Matebesi - at 051-401 2491.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anais Basson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anais Basson

ANNEXURE B: LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT THE STUDY FOR SUN INTERNATIONAL BENEFICIARIES

An Evaluation of Corporate Social Responsibility Education Initiatives: Case Study of Sun International

Dear Sir/Madam,

You have been selected to participate in an email questionnaire survey consisting of 8 questions. We request that you participate in a survey that will take place via email. The questions are designed to collect information on the learnership and bursary CSR education initiatives of Sun International in South Africa in terms of its role in improving the lives of their beneficiaries in general. Additionally, the challenges that Sun International experience in delivering this initiative will be investigated. This research is conducted by a masters student in the Corporate Social Responsibility Department of the North-West University, Potchefstroom campus.

The information collected will be useful for understanding the mechanisms and processes used by Sun International in identifying beneficiaries, the support Sun International provide to beneficiaries of its CSR education initiatives, the experiences of beneficiaries of the Sun International CSR education initiatives and the challenges experienced with CSR education initiatives. Participating in the survey will allow you to share your experiences and views on various aspects related to this issue. Thus, the success of this research entirely depends on your kind cooperation. The information collected will be handled with the greatest confidentiality and your anonymity will be guaranteed. Thus, your name and email address will not appear in the study. We are merely interested in your personal, honest opinion.

We thank you for your valuable contribution and time.

Should you have any queries concerning any aspect of the survey, you are welcome to contact the researcher's supervisor – Prof Sethulego Matebesi - at 051-401 2491.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anais Basson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anais Basson

ANNEXURE C: RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR SUN INTERNATIONAL STAFF

1. Sun International offers educational initiatives as part of its CSR programmes. Why did Sun International initially decide on including educational initiatives in its CSR programme, particularly the bursary and learnership programmes?
2. When did Sun International launch the bursary and learnership programmes?
3. How many people have successfully participated in these initiatives since their inception?
4. Who is eligible for the bursary and learnership initiatives?
5. What are the entry requirements for the bursary and learnership programmes?
6. How are the programme beneficiaries chosen?
7. What are the demographics of the learners who take part in these initiatives? Do they come from underprivileged backgrounds?
8. Regarding the bursary:
 - 8.1 What costs does the bursary cover for the bursary recipients?
 - 8.2 Do bursary recipients have to apply for the bursary for each academic year of study until completion of their study programme? If so, what are the requirements to reapply for the bursary?
9. Regarding the learnership:
 - 9.1 How long is the learnership programme?
 - 9.2 Do the beneficiaries incur any costs when participating in the learnership programme? If so, what are they?
10. What support does Sun International provide to the beneficiaries of its bursary and learnership programmes?
11. How do the bursaries and learnerships benefit the beneficiaries?

12. What feedback have you received from the learners that have undergone the bursary/learnership programme? Have they expressed positive and/or negative experiences from participating in the bursary and learnership programmes?
13. Once the beneficiaries have completed their studies or internship, does Sun International offer them employment?
 - 13.1 If yes, what kind of employment is offered?
14. In your opinion, which of the educational initiatives is the most effective and beneficial to the beneficiaries that participate in the bursary and learnership programmes?
15. Has Sun International experienced any challenges with these educational initiatives?
 - 15.1 If yes, what challenges have been experienced?
 - 15.2 How were these challenges addressed?

ANNEXURE D: RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR SUN INTERNATIONAL BENEFICIARIES

1. How did you find out about Sun International's bursary or learnership programme?
2. What were the selection criteria for the programme?
3. How long did you partake in the programme?
4. What support was given to you by Sun International for the duration of the programme?
5. What was your experience of the programme? Was it a positive experience? What did you learn from this experience?
6. Would you say that your life improved after and because of the programme?
 - 6.1 If yes, how did it improve?
 - 6.2 If no, why did it not improve?
7. Did you experience any challenges with the initiative?
 - 7.1 If yes, what challenges did you experience?
8. Do you have any recommendations on how the programme can be improved?