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Corporate Social Responsibility 2.0: Towards a socio-transformative paradigm for business

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Abstract. *The South African business fraternity is expected to contribute to and foster the government's social transformation agenda. This contribution should be directed by businesses' corporate social responsibility (CSR) intentions and organizational arrangements. However, companies' efforts in this regard are being increasingly criticized due to the absence of a socio-transformative agenda. In other words, CSR praxis is perceived to be inadequately positioned in businesses to act as a core strategic function aimed at benefiting society. The purpose of this article is to outline the perceived failures of conventional CSR praxis and to propose a framework for businesses to adopt a socio-transformative CSR paradigm. A generic qualitative research design, utilizing document analysis and a literature survey, was followed in this study. The findings indicate that businesses do indeed need to adopt a socio-transformative business model to comply with national and international driving forces for change. Recommendations are proposed to guide businesses towards such a transformative management approach utilizing the principles of McKinsey 7-S model for business readiness and Kotter's 8-step change management model. The study encourages corporations and firms to adopt a socio-transformative paradigm by utilizing established business readiness and change management models.*

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, social transformation, socio-transformative paradigm, international reporting, managing change, board of directors, McKinsey 7-S model, Kotter's 8-step change management model

JEL Codes: A13, B20, M14

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1. Introduction

There is widespread recognition of the significant role the private sector plays in broad-based growth and development in the national economies of countries. The business world is regarded as a valuable sector in terms of its contribution to the general realisation of material and social welfare. Moreover, prosperity serves as a major contributor to national income and job creation. However, the value of this contribution is steadily declining. Since the notion of corporate social responsibility (CSR) was mooted in

1953, an increasing number of scholars and practitioners have been criticising conventional CSR practices, mainly due to their lack of a socio-transformative focus (Du Plessis and Grobler 2014; Visser 2014). According to Van den Ende (2004), the conventional CSR practice of partly outsourcing a business's CSR activities to corporate funds or foundations seriously hampers its transformative potential. Contemporary discourse on CSR praxis suggests that it needs to be repositioned as a core strategic component of businesses; that is, ought to form part of the board of directors' strategic, policy and oversight responsibility and accountability. In addition, the South African business fraternity is encouraged to contribute to and foster government's social transformation agenda.

The purpose of this article is to outline the perceived failures of conventional CSR praxis and to analyse the forces pressing businesses to adopt a more socio-transformative CSR paradigm. Recommendations are proposed to guide businesses in South Africa towards such a transformative management approach utilising the principles of McKinsey's 7-S model for business readiness and Kotter's 8-step change management model.

2. CSR: The conventional business paradigm

CSR is a multidimensional concept inclusive of several aspects of society, economics and the environment. The concept can be traced to Bowen, who wrote in 1953 that CSR can be regarded as "the obligation of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society" (Carroll 1991, p.270). More contemporary notions of CSR include Hopkins (2007, p.15) notion of creating "higher and higher standards of living while preserving the profitability of the corporation for people both within and outside the corporation". Crane et al (2008, p.4) note that CSR concerns internal and external obligations. They are internal for the businesses that formulate and apply CSR policies, and external in the sense of contributing positively to sustainable development and the wellbeing of society.

The evolution of the contours of the traditional paradigm of CSR can be traced to early industrialisation (1750-1914), during which period it was influenced by several events and philosophical assumptions (Carroll 2008; Lee 2008). During the early industrial period, social responsibility was initially framed, rather vaguely, in terms of what is socially and morally acceptable, followed by the onset of a sociological discourse in the early 1900s. During the 1930s, the term "business social responsibility" became a widely accepted term among businesses and theorists to describe the relations between industries and stakeholders. By 1940, businesses started to accept their social responsibilities to a degree. The perspective of CSR as a concept was worked out between the 1940s and early 1950s, as characterised by broad academic writings and the rhetoric of business leaders. There was also a shift from business responsibility to a more theoretical social responsibility approach (Bowman and Haire 1975), which has been sustained into the 21st century. It has been articulated as a perspective that assists in making sense of society, organising new knowledge and reflecting the principles and values upon which such knowledge is constructed (Suddaby 2014).

According to Carroll (2008), the early 1950s to the late 1960s was characterised by civil society increasingly lobbying businesses to take more responsibility and become more involved in social affairs.

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Pressure was placed on corporate managers to "act voluntarily and philanthropically as public trustees and social stewards" (Frederick 2016, p.2). According to Frederick (2016), from 1960 to 1970, CSR awareness expanded and businesses were urged to embrace legally required shared responses to social demands.

Although the CSR concept was relatively delineated and the principles of CSR were largely accepted, some business leaders were sceptical of the responsibility businesses had shown towards society to a certain extent (Heald 1957). Authors such as Levitt (1958) warned of the concept's inroads into business practices, arguing that the welfare of society was government's responsibility and not that of business. As the CSR concept and theory evolved, academia could not agree on the association between business, citizenry and business responsibilities (Blowfield and Murray 2014). This difficulty was exacerbated by the absence of appropriate performance criteria or standards for CSR applications in business (Aupperle et al 1985). The non-existence of measuring instruments made it difficult to assess successes or conduct social audits.

By the 1980s, partly due to global ecological concerns, society was increasingly demanding a greater sense of responsibility from businesses. According to Utting (2008, p.960), this development was a consequence of the international community's failure to draw up internationally accepted code of business conduct. Such a code was required to address so-called "grey areas" in international law and it was believed it would have prevented several global disasters leading up to the 1990s.

The period between 1980 and 1990 was marked by the call "on businesses to develop ethical corporate cultures to support a wide range of stakeholders and communities through social contracts" (Frederick 2016, p.2). According to Carroll (2008, p.35), this period became known as the "go beyond" CSR period. Prevailing notions of CSR were strongly influenced by the now renowned article titled "The pyramid of corporate social responsibility: toward the moral management of organisational stakeholders", penned by Carroll in 1991. In this article, Carroll (1991) argued that CSR had to be framed holistically for it to become institutionalised in business spheres. To achieve this, Carroll (1991) suggested several stakeholder groupings and four responsibilities, namely economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. Swartz and Carroll (2003) argued further that these responsibilities could serve as an improved benchmark and potentially assist government, citizenry and civil society to assess businesses CSR practices more soundly than previously.

The Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and the publication of the Changing Course: A global business perspective on development and the environment (Schmidheiny 1992) more than 50 multinational companies agreeing to play a vital role in the future health of the planet, intertwining ecological protection and economic growth. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) supported this notion and noted that the abundant examples of successful business initiatives could be attributed to the efficiency of the "broader systems of private and public governance" (OECD 2001, p.10). Ecological concerns became entrenched in corporate systems applied through codes and standards, social reporting and rising partnerships between businesses and civil society (Moon 2005). However, despite the global evolution of CSR, the operationalisation of the concept in its conventional form has been marked by several failures and limitations, to the detriment of society.

In 2000, the UN has introduced the universally accepted Governance Framework, referred to as the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) (Hopkins 2007; UNGC 2010). The UNGC is premised on the idea of

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good cooperative governance characterised by engagement between civil society organisations and governments to strengthen and support corporate moral accountability (Albareda 2010; Zadek 2007). Civil society and governments also expect corporate governance to conform to international best business practice, characterised by accountability and adherence to policies, regulations and standards (Blowfield and Murray 2014).

2.1. Perceived failures of the conventional CSR paradigm

A literature review revealed the apparent failures pertaining to the conventional CSR paradigm. A synopsis of these failures is briefly provided below.

Ecological failures

David et al (2018) and Levy and Lichtenstein (2012) note that poor CSR practices and spectacular business failures (e.g. Chisso Corporation, Exxon Valdez, Meda Chemical Plant, Three Mile Island, etc.) have raised serious doubts about the private sector's willingness and ability to address environmental concerns. Blowfield and Murray (2014), Schellnhuber et al (2006) and the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (cited in Visser 2014) maintain that unbridled industrial growth has led to high concentrations of greenhouse gases. Air, water, noise and soil pollution by business operations regularly receive attention in the media. Failure to adapt to a greener economy and to adopt cleaner, renewable energy often hampers the CSR agenda (Edenhofer et al 2011). If companies had a socio-transformative CSR agenda, these problems should at least be alleviated.

Social failures

According to Barne and Wadhwa (2018) and Visser (2014), statistics indicate a slow rise in poverty levels in Africa, exacerbated by several prevalent socio-economic challenges. Early gains in poverty reduction are deteriorating due to increasing unemployment (Lupton and Willis 2021; The World Bank 2020). Populations in developing countries still lack access to basic sanitation and clean water, and the number of slums or informal settlements is still of immense concern, as are the high number of children dying of curable diseases and malnutrition (Erasmus et al 2016). Failure to invest in such needs potentially reduces the social acceptability, sincerity, and authenticity of businesses and ultimately their long-term financial prospects.

Business failures

Business failures to uphold CSR practice often led to malpractice, dishonesty and corruption. In this regard, Martin and Osberg (2007) and Mosselini (2013) content that misappropriation and deprivation of CSR resources seriously hamper responsible business operations. Several businesses have been misleading stakeholders and shareholders alike, whether intentionally or otherwise (Henderson 2018; Kawadza 2018). The BenchMarks Foundation warns that when a business commits numerous transgressions, it incites antagonism and anger in society against it, which could at some point reach a breaking point (BMF 2013). South Africa is regarded as the most corrupt country in southern Africa and transgressions are systemic (Gumede 2017). The institutionalisation or intensification of dishonesty and corruption in businesses could limit the full potential impact of CSR on citizenry. Deliberations at the Commission of Inquiry into State Capture (2019) further elucidated cases of poor corporate governance with evidence of collusion, dishonesty and corruption between government actors and the business sector. This weakens the potential

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going concern of businesses and, to an extent, contributes to uncertainty, poverty, inequality and crime (Branco and Delgado 2012).

One of the most significant limitations of conventional CSR practices is the general lack of accountability. Solomon and Maroun (2012) conducted a survey regarding the social, ethical and environmental reporting system in South Africa. They found that, partly due to the lack of CSR accountability, instead of reporting social impact, some businesses have reduced CSR activity reporting to simply indicating intent or airing views on the practice. In response to empirical evidence suggesting that there has been a great deal of rhetoric and little action with respect to in CSR in practice, Visser (2014, p.27) asks, for instance, “Are companies more part of the CSR deficit problem or the solution?” In addition, there is a general lack of oversight and assurance of the proposed 1% net profit after tax (NPAT) spending on socio-economic development. The compliance target is a requirement set in the B-BBEE Generic Scorecard (BusinessTech 2017).

From the above, it can be reasoned that, despite the evolutionary journey of the CSR concept to make inroads into the business realm, it was and is still not without hurdles and shortcomings. In terms of the various interventions over time, the operationalisation CSR is plagued with failures, limitations and a lack of tangible social transformation. These concerns have contributed significantly to the school of thought that greater focus must be placed on social transformation if the required social change in the South African setting is to materialise.

3. Towards a social transformative paradigm for CSR: Key driving forces

Social transformation denotes action that aims to bring about tangible, systemic, revolutionary or evolutionary (gradual or incremental) change in society (Chouinard 2010; Elg and Hultman 2011). Social transformation in the South African business context is built on, as Human (2003, p.26) puts it, “the ghosts of the past often cast[ing] powerful shadows on the practices of the present” and the future. Since 1994, the government, led by the African National Congress (ANC), has made some advances in addressing the aftermath of apartheid and the historical triple socio-economic and developmental challenges of inequality, poverty and unemployment (ANC 2017). The political achievements advanced by the ANC (2017, p.2) in its pursuit of equal rights and social transformation are the stringent and continuous development of policy, legislation and regulatory frameworks to realise the objective of “a better life for all”. Social challenges are, however, complex, and too resource and capacity demanding to be addressed by government alone. New forms of network governance and the rapid rise of public-private partnerships open avenues for businesses to align their resources and competencies with those of government to address these social ills. In this regard, Human (2003) and Schambers (2018) maintain that society simply cannot rely on government alone and can neither depend on mere symbolic and superficial contributions from business. They argue that a socio-transformative agenda of business should make tangible differences in the living conditions of citizens.

International organisations, scholars and civil society organisations are increasingly insisting on a rapid move away from the conventional CSR paradigm towards a more social transformative CSR agenda for businesses. The arguments are based primarily on the perceived failures of the traditional paradigm (Blowfield and Murray 2014; Bowen 2013; Brown and Nicolaides 2015; Erasmus et al 2016; Maroun and Atkins 2015). This demand is impelled by several driving forces, which are briefly outlined below.

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Driving force 1: International reporting standards and guidelines

International bodies such as the International Standards Organisation (ISO), the International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC), the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), among others (GRI N.d.; IRC 2017; ISO 2010), focus primarily on designing criteria to make businesses and governments more efficient and accountable. This is done mainly by the disclosure of business information in their annual integrated reports. The GSSB, through the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) sustainability reporting standards, occupies itself primarily with articulating how business managers ought to approach and manage the public impact of their business operations on society. They operate according to clearly defined themes such as society, economy and ecology. This reporting regime endeavours to ensure that the sustainability report issued presents a reliable, credible and inclusive picture of material topics, their associated impacts and how they are managed (GRI, N.d.). The GSSB (2016) released a series of interrelated universal standards coded GRI101, GRI102 and GRI103. GRI101 deals with the foundational aspects, such as setting out the basic reporting principles, explaining the reporting processes when applying the GRI standards and making claims about using the GRI standards. GRI102 deals with the public disclosure of a business and its sustainability reporting practices such as the "organisation's profile, strategy, ethics and integrity, governance, stakeholder engagement practices and reporting process" (GSSB 2016:6).

As businesses endeavour to meet the needs of society, they commonly report annually on their (a) contribution to the country's economy (Botha and Cohen 2016); (b) contributions to management and control, skills development, enterprise and supplier development, and socio-economic development (Botha et al 2016; Slater 2016), and (c) efforts to minimise the potential negative impact their business operations might have on social, economic and ecological areas. The latter is commonly known as the sustainability report (Maroun and Atkins 2015). The sustainability report is a crucial component of comprehensive reporting to social stakeholders. The subheadings in this report should consist of elements that depict how the business manages and engages affected stakeholders; sets and funds material topics; and conducts its CSR interventions to create social value and impact. Social and ethics board subcommittees reporting guidance and standards, such as those issued by AccountAbility, as well as the GRI standards, the IIRC and the King codes, among others, have conventionalised not only the process of monitoring corporate social and ethics performance, but also that of social reporting to stakeholders (Rossouw 2018).

Driving force 2: Political ideology and statutory and regulatory requirements

Several studies have been conducted internationally to investigate the role of governments as critical driving forces behind the CSR agenda (Albareda et al 2008; Carroll and Shabana 2010; Ndlovu 2011; Steurer 2010). This driving force manifests in the form of the political ideology of the ruling political party and the resultant legislation, regulations and guidelines emanating from it.

In the South African business context, the main aim of the transformative agenda of the ANC is to serve three developmental priorities, namely bringing about fundamental changes in society by improving the employment opportunities of the previously disadvantaged through accelerated socio-economic growth; improving innovation and skills development among the unemployed; and improving the state's capability

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to play a developmental and transformative role (ANC 2017; The Presidency 2020). This agenda is driven by enforceable legislation and regulations such as the Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act 53 of 2003 (and associated B-BBEE Codes of Good Practice) and the Companies Act 71 of 2008. Amendments to the B-BBEE codes have been promulgated to emphasise skills development, enterprise and supplier development, and socio-economic development (Boddenberg and Aletter 2010). The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) envisages that the B-BBEE Codes of Good Practice will result in an integrated and coherent socio-economic process that contributes to the social transformation of South Africa and significantly reduce inequalities (DTIC 2003). The objective is for businesses that score more than 750 in the financial year under review, as calculated in accordance with Regulation 26(2), to spend 1% of their net NPAT on their socio-economic development generic scorecard compliance targets (DTIC 2011, p.30).

Although strides have been made by businesses to be seen in the CSR space, as long as there are no clear legislative obligations in South Africa, the impact of such involvement might remain trifling (Aletter et al 2010; Ndlovu 2011). Fredericksz (2015) and Johannes (2016) support this view. Both authors insist that it should be compulsory for CSR issues to be interwoven into the governance structures and business decision-making processes. If not, some businesses might limit their CSR interventions to the bare minimum. Other businesses might also wait for the response of government or the media to expose their deficiencies before they act in a more socially responsible manner. It is thus not surprising that contemporary empirical evidence suggests that, despite the legislative measures and well-intended initiatives from international and domestic organisational bodies, the South African business sector's conventional CSR practices still have little tangible social impact (Brown and Nicolaides 2015; Sewell et al 2014).

Driving force 3: Scholarly and theoretical shifts in thinking

As thought frameworks, paradigms are strongly influenced by shifts in thinking regarding CSR-related matters. The academic fraternity generally contributes to the corpus of knowledge by assessing current practices and designing new approaches through continuous multidisciplinary research and makes recommendations based on scientifically identified gaps (Maroun 2016; Young 2016). Scholarly and theoretical shifts in thinking can be categorised within the following three themes:

Theme 1: Shifts in thinking regarding corporate citizenship, accountability and social responsibility

Eccles and Cohen (2016) and Kloppers (2018) contend that the last decade saw shifts in conceptions of corporate citizenship. This shift is characterised by a new role being ascribed to corporations as legal persons in terms of administering citizens' rights and participation in social affairs, inclusive of adherence to universal human rights, responsibility towards the ecosystem and accountability to stakeholders. New notions of business responsibility mean that the board of directors should act responsibly towards stakeholders and that the executive and management should allow for just and corrective action (Erasmus et al 2016). Responsible business leadership entails, among other things, modelling the ideals of ethical behaviour and contributing to the wellbeing of humanity (Manning and Curtis 2012). Responsible corporate citizenship implies that businesses need to conduct regular social impact assessments by analysing, measuring, monitoring and managing, with the involvement of communities, the planned and unplanned social effects of business actions (Bice 2015; Manohar 2019). By assessing the outcomes and measuring the effectiveness, a business could get a more precise and more meaningful picture of the intervention and its sustainability (Newcomer 2015, p.129). Contemporary social responsibility goes beyond merely donating food to the underprivileged, funding a charity or sponsoring activities that give a level of brand exposure. It rather requires businesses to be "law-abiding corporate citizens" characterised by good corporate governance, responsive leadership and adherence to ethical business practice.

As far as business accountability is concerned, businesses are expected to give an account of their past, present and future actions, not only to the shareholders, but also to groupings in society (Blowfield and Murray 2014). CSR interventions require businesses to account for activities and maintain effective oversight and control of such activities throughout the organisational hierarchy.

Theme 2: Shifts in thinking regarding business impact on the environment

Blowfield and Murray (2014) and Newcomer (2015) accentuate the fact that there are shifts in thinking regarding business effects and the impact on the environment. These shifts generally fall under notions of sustainable development. According to Cimadamore (2018), the recent addition of sustainably to CSR was due to the continuous scientific observation of the negative impact of conventional business operations on both society and ecological systems. This association between CSR and sustainable development has evolved over the years to accommodate aspects such as climate change, global warming, disaster risk reduction and poverty alleviation, among others (Reklitis et al 2018).

Theme 3: Shifts in thinking regarding business stakeholders

Stakeholder management and their participation in business have their origins in the early 1980s due to societal pressure to clearly define the social responsibility of business (Chodokufa and Cronjé 2016). Business stakeholders refer to individuals and/or groupings whose well-being is affected and whose natural rights could be violated or reduced by business operations (Freeman 2001). Stakeholders are generally divided into internal and external stakeholders, also called primary and secondary stakeholders (Erasmus et al 2016). Stakeholders are increasingly exerting pressure on businesses through picketing, service disruptions and the initiation of regulations that could potentially have an impact on the long-term going concern status of businesses and how they engage and manage stakeholders (Erasmus et al 2016).

Shifts in conceptions of stakeholders and their increasing influence on business operations have led to the notion of corporate constitutionalism (Nalle 2015). Corporate constitutionalism involves prioritising, institutionalising and incorporating the views, demands, interests and values of individuals or groupings who are to some extent affected by the short- and long-term activities and, in some instances, the aftermath of a business (Erasmus et al 2016).

In response to these driving forces, businesses need to design suitable strategies to transform its CSR practices and pursue socio-transformative agendas.

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4. Managing a social transformation CSR paradigm in business

According to Fromberg (2017), the dynamic nature of social transformation requires a suitable vision for business change. In this regard, adaptive and transformational business leaders should constantly assess and diagnose the systems and subsystems of the organisation and involve stakeholders in decision-making processes (Yukl and Mahsud 2010). Transformative CSR practice is best led by a transformational business leader who focuses on the material change and betterment of society, organisational change, innovative ways of structuring a business, high moral values and high ideals (Botha 2016).

According to Isa and Reast (2014, p.170), there is an urgent need for improved operationalisation and measurement of CSR "as the current measures appear to be inadequate". In this respect, Pederson (2010) argues that businesses need to institutionalise and operationalise CSR by adopting an appropriate CSR model to establish and understand how a business should respond to its environment. Isa and Reast (2014) add that it has become imperative for implementers of CSR to adopt, adapt and scientifically align CSR practices to the business environment in which they operate. Isa and Reast (2014) identified the following eight dimensions that provide a basis for a CSR operationalisation processes:

- Process: protracted activities and interactions between a business and its stakeholders and between stakeholders
- Policy: compliance with statutes that extend beyond the required legal and ethical obligations
- Value: a prevailing belief that aids businesses to separate their status and character and steer their communication exertions
- Environment: businesses' responsibility towards ecology through effective management and the fortification of natural resources
- Personal: the individual characteristics of stakeholders as represented through individual perceptions and expectations from the business
- Profit: a business's financial advantage derived from its commercial activities and returned on its CSR investment
- People: the shareholders and stakeholders responsible for business and to whom a business commits
- Politics: manipulation of an agenda or process by individuals or third parties for their own gain or interest.

Various models have been proposed regarding an appropriate socio-transformative response. Some of them are general change management models (e.g., Lewin's change management model, the McKinsey 7-S model, ADKAR change management model, Kotter's 8-step change management model and Bridges' transition model), while others, such as the DNA Model of Transformative CSR (Visser, 2012), are directly aimed at CSR. The DNA Model has its roots in the premise that the conventional CSR practices of business have failed to address issues such as ecology, climate change and poverty, and there have been exposés of unethical business conduct (Henderson 2018; Mosselini 2013; Visser 2012). The DNA Model of Transformative CSR, or CSR 2.0, envisages that CSR practitioners will revolutionise and embrace the future under transformative CSR practices through value creation, good governance, societal contribution and environmental integrity (Visser 2014). It consists of principles that require a business to reassess, realign,

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redefine and redesign its vision and objectives to benefit its stakeholders, broader society and the environment (Chams and García-Blandón 2019).

The application of one or a combination of change management models is complicated by the fact that the purposes of the models vary, they have differing strengths and weaknesses, and are usually context and time dependent. In addition, businesses are heterogeneous entities focusing on particular industries. Therefore, the type of change management model used to manage a new CSR paradigm necessarily differs from business to business. It would depend on the business case and a business's culture and appetite for change (Manning and Curtis 2012). However, there are generic factors of business change processes, such as an analysis of the drivers for change, the design of change interventions, the appointment of a change champion, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (Valters 2015). Based on an assessment of the respective models, the authors adopted McKinsey's 7-S model to gauge business readiness for CSR and Kotter's 8-step change model to manage a socio-transformative agenda.

McKinsey 7-S model for business CSR readiness

According to Weiner (2009), business readiness for change is a multifaceted and multilevel construct. Business readiness broadly indicates the alignment between strategy, structure, people, skills, and systems, among others (Foster-Fishman et al 2007). The aim of treating change as a process is to transform a business, change people's mindsets, and adopt and adapt to a new business culture. Therefore, the business (people and management) ought to be ready to accept and embrace change (Weiner 2009).

The McKinsey 7-S model originated from the consulting firm McKinsey & Company. Waterman and Peters are credited as the leading developers of the 7-S model in the early 1980s to assist businesses to identify any misalignments of departments, allow the business to achieve its set objectives and investigate the variables that contribute to transformational change (Ravanfar 2015). According to Grant (2008), the model allows for evaluation between the existing and envisioned state, and it enables business leaders to recognise which areas of the business need to be transformed and to find a smooth transitional solution. The seven interconnected elements, also termed "levers", are all interdependent. The levers are grouped into "hard" and "soft" elements (Alshaher 2013, p.1952). The hard levers (i.e., strategy, structure and system) are under the direct control of the board of directors and executive leadership. The soft levers are those elements that are governed mainly by the business's culture, operations and practices. The soft levers provide useful checklist items, laying out which parts of the organisational system need to change or adapt, and what resources would be needed to affect the identified changes (Cameron and Green 2015). It includes management style, staff competency and talents, skills, and shared values representing the norms and standards that guide staff behaviour in not only realising economic success for the business, but also creating value for the host society by addressing its needs and challenges (Alshaher 2013; Ravanfar 2015).

As far as the application of CSR as an instrument for a socio-transformative business agenda is concerned, probably the most significant contribution of the McKinsey 7-S model is that the elements are interlinked and designed to gauge the readiness status of a particular business to transform its operations, culture and mindset. Furthermore, the efficiency potential of the McKinsey 7-S model is centred on self-assessment to guide comprehension of how the respective business units and elements fit into each other (Ravanfar 2015). To operationalise a socio-transformative agenda, business leaders ought to have an open

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dialogue with stakeholders and assess the status of these elements. This would facilitate the identification of current gaps, opportunities and probable weaknesses that could be reinforced to strengthen business readiness for a CSR agenda. Once the business is in an adequate state of readiness, Kotter's 8-step change model can be utilised to manage the new CSR approach.

Kotter's 8-step change management model to manage the CSR business transition

The rationale for selecting Kotter's eight-step model is that the architecture of the model provides for an easy step-by-step approach. According to Kotter (1995), the model is flexible and offers a visual description of the entire change process. Furthermore, it emphasises building a climate, alliances and acceptance of the type of organisational change envisioned (e.g., new CSR paradigm), instead of focusing only on the actual implementation of the change process.

Kotter (1995) posited that the business leaders responsible for change management who follow the eight steps depicted in Figure 1 would do eight things effectively if they did them in the correct sequence. The aim of the first three steps is to create a suitable climate for change, while steps 4 to 6 involve changes to the dimensions of the business, while steps 7 and 8 concern the implementation, consolidation and institutionalisation of the change.

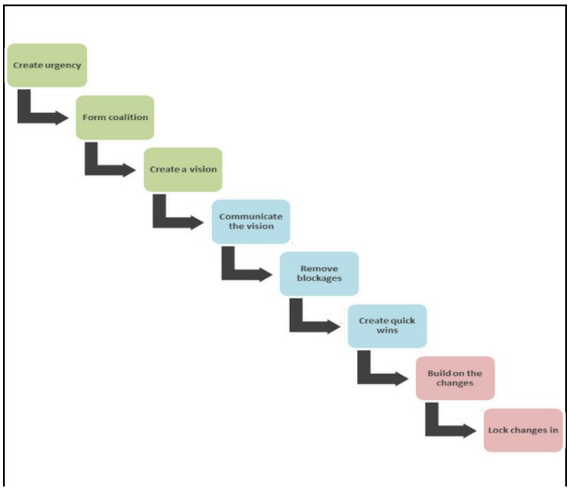

Fig. 1: Kotter's 8-step change management model
Source: Adapted from Kotter (1995, p.61)

The model is set out in three phases. In Phase 1, a climate for change is created. It is characterised by the following elements:

- Create urgency. While creating a sense of urgency, it is crucial that business stakeholders explore competitive environmental realities, identifying and storming potential future scenarios such as potential crises or significant opportunities. Based on brainstorming outcomes, the "felt need" for change should be advocated (Cameron and Green 2015, p.115).

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- Form a coalition. Form a powerful guiding coalition of people with enough power who can work well together and lead the change effort. This activity encourages stakeholders to build a climate of collegiality alliances in order to attain the set vision (Cameron and Green 2015; Kotter 2012).
- Create a vision. An innovative, forward-looking vision should be built to guide the change effort and to develop a plan to set out the roadmap to realise the set transformative objectives. The vision must be more than an idea, but set as achievable, measurable and tangible outcomes (Cameron and Green 2015; Kotter 2012).
- Communicate the vision through all available platforms and vehicles. Empower others to act on the vision. There might be a need to frequently communicate particular messages to certain actors so that they can anchor or lock in. The communication of the guiding coalitions is critical as the first to be role-modelled as new behaviours (Cameron and Green 2015; Kotter 2012).

In Phase 2, the initiative leader engages stakeholders and creates an enabling environment by performing the following actions:

- Remove blockages. Business leaders should eliminate obstacles and blockages that could hamper the change process, such as unhelpful bureaucratic structures or systems (Cameron and Green 2015; Kotter 2012).
- Create quick wins by planning for and creating short-term successes. Short-term observable improvements should be planned, expressed and advertised. Those who implement and amplify the proposed changes should be recognised and the actors involved should be rewarded publicly for any improvements (Cameron and Green 2015; Kotter 2012).

Lastly, in Phase 3, business leaders implement the mutually agreed upon change by doing the following:

- Build on the changes by consolidating improvements and produce ongoing change. Credibility for changing policy, structures and systems that do not fit the vision should be promoted and rewarded. All relevant business stakeholders should be engaged and actors who can best implement the set vision should be upskilled. Throughout the change process, the progression of change should be reinvigorated and energised with new themes, projects and change agents (Cameron and Green 2015; Kotter 2012).
- Lock changes in and institutionalise new approaches. The correlation between the acquired behaviour and business advantage should be clearly articulated. Common understanding of the new behaviours should be ensured (Cameron and Green 2015; Kotter 2012).

Kotter (1995) notes several factors that can affect the transformational outcomes of the eight-step model negatively, namely a lack of a real sense of urgency, weak guiding coalitions, the lack of a smart vision, insufficiently communicating the vision to all actors, too many unremoved bureaucratic blockages in the path of the new vision, not systematically planning, declaring victory too early and, lastly, changes in the business culture not being securely locked in (Kotter 1995). Another negative observed by Cameron and Green (2015, p.115) is that it appears as if the steps encourage “an early burst of energy, followed by delegation and distance”. This observation is mainly due to the silence of the model on explicitly accentuating the requirement for managers to follow and monitor each step of the process, implying that if managers of the transformation process are not committed, their efforts to change might be superficial and therefore not sustained.

5. Managerial recommendations

Considering the phases and elements of McKinsey's 7-S and Kotter's 8-step change management models, businesses should carefully consider and select the most suitable approach to design and operationalise a socio-transformative agenda for CSR. The change management dimensions of this agenda should closely involve the board of directors to act as change agents, reinforcing the new CSR agenda. No longer does a board of directors provide only direction to business and act on behalf of shareholders. The constant pressure from some communities, governments and international and domestic civil society organisations increasingly prompt boards of directors to lead and become actors in a broader range of business affairs and pay more attention to others. The board of directors generally acts to reinforce the leadership role of the executive in advancing issues such as corporate governance, support for the implementation of voluntary international treaties such as the UNGC and consideration of government regulatory strategies, among others. Furthermore, the board of directors should play a critical role in enhancing corporate governance and ensuring that a business remains legitimate and fit for purpose. To remain legitimate and fit for purpose, the board of directors needs to identify and gauge a constantly shifting end goal, ensure that the director and the executive team work together to create a vision for the future, and introduce and oversee the necessary change processes to achieve its objectives. These changes should take place in relation to multiple business elements (business strategy, structure, culture and/or technology), and take various forms (gradual, incremental or continued).

As with internal stakeholders (employees), external stakeholders also play a significant role in the business CSR change process and should be engaged and managed accordingly. Consequently, it becomes vital to identify the stakeholders, engage them and prioritise them in terms of their power, interests and influence. Stakeholder management is regarded as a management tool that could assist the board of directors and the executives to improve stakeholder-related decision making. In fact, it is perhaps the most significant component for the successful delivery of social interventions. It is the responsibility of the board of directors to ensure that the interests of society and that of the business align so that the financial value that is created does not only yield dividends for shareholders, but also transforms the lives of stakeholders through its CSR agenda. To achieve and maintain stakeholder management success, specific phased processes should be performed in a continuum, such as stakeholder identification and prioritising, stakeholder engagement, maintaining relationships, process monitoring and evaluation, programme implementation and progress reporting to stakeholders.

In terms of Section 7 (b)(iii) and (d) of the Companies Act (RSA 2008) and King IV (IoDSA 2016), the board of directors has a fiduciary oversight duty to ensure that a business exercises its CSR-related social, ethical, ecological and governance responsibilities. It is recommended that the board of directors oversee the new CSR agenda by instituting the required change process monitoring and evaluation oversight mechanisms. Monitoring and evaluation is also essential to communicate progress to shareholders and other business stakeholders. Evaluation implies that the process under review must be assessed against the set objectives, the scope of work or terms of reference, and appraised and expressed either qualitatively or quantitatively. Reporting regularly and candidly to stakeholders could significantly improve the business's value base. Furthermore, it could also ensure that the intervention is carried out in accordance with stakeholder expectations. It could facilitate the detection of any deviations, the implementation of mitigation measures and timeous change management.

6. Conclusion

Due to the perceived failures of conventional CSR practices and the driving forces towards more sustainable socially-driven business operations, there is an increasing need for businesses to adopt a socio-transformative CSR paradigm. To adopt such a paradigm requires both "hard" (i.e., organisational arrangements, strategic positioning, reporting) and "soft" (i.e., mindset, culture, accountability, leadership) adjustments to existing business operations. It is expected that businesses will adopt suitable models to assess organisational readiness for a new agenda, as well as a change management process to transition towards the desired future. McKinsey's 7-S model and Kotter's 8-step change management model offer suitable principles and practical steps to give effect to the business transformation process. These models are intended to include all business levels, departments, units and teams by addressing the business's strategy, structure, system, staff, style, skills and shared values.

It is anticipated that the board of directors will perform a leadership role as change agents to oversee transformation towards a new socio-transformative paradigm. Aspects of a socio-transformative paradigm are crucial to a business's profitability and legitimacy. The response of a board of directors and executives to environmental changes ought to benefit all stakeholders. Boards are no longer only giving direction or acting on behalf of shareholders but are increasingly required to be more acquainted with various aspects of a business, such as its CSR agenda. Furthermore, over and above the board's fiduciary duties, it is required to evaluate and advise executives and ensure that CSR interventions are socially, ethically and ecologically acceptable to both the employees and society. A new socio-transformative paradigm can guide businesses to such a desired state.

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