Review

A Matter of Responsible Management from Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract: Higher education institutions (HEIs) are influential social institutions which disseminate knowledge, promote innovation, and educate future decision-makers. The increasing awareness of HEIs as social actors has increased the pressure on them to accept and act upon their social responsibility. Processing this responsibility requires a structured management approach. The little attention given thus far to management performance and structured steering processes of social responsibility in HEIs marks the research gap the present study is focused on. This article provides a systematic review of scientific and academic publications, applying the concept of Social Performance after Wood (1991). The study aims to combine different research and modeling approaches to examine individual elements of social performance along the dimensions of processes of social responsiveness and outcomes of institutional behavior. With this approach, the study aims to answer the question of how HEIs assume their responsibilities as social institutions. The results show that observable outcomes of social behavior in the academic environment reflect a broad understanding of different approaches. By clustering the encoded literature into processes and outcomes, the study structures the fragmented body of research reflecting the various characteristics of the higher education sector.

Keywords: responsible management; higher education institutions; social performance; institutional theory; systematic review

1. Introduction

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), as influential social institutions, act as promoters of change through research and education [1]. Within this function, they create and disseminate knowledge, emphasizing their role in social capacity in society [2].

With a general dissemination of business tools in public institutions, the proliferation of responsible management practices likewise increases the awareness of effects of organizational activities within HEIs [3]. The orientation towards a higher level of awareness through improvement based mechanisms and performance enhancement leads to a professionalization of HEIs' management structures [4,5]. This constitutes an essential capacity for providing resources to process responsibility [6].

Since structured management appears to be a critical success factor for operating responsibility, the question of systematically approaching management performance and steering social sustainability activities defines a research gap currently not being addressed in the scientific literature.

Previous studies approach the implementation of responsibility [4,7] or the integration of stakeholder interests in the context of sustainability considerations [8,9]. Other authors address responsibility by examining frameworks and indicators [10–13].

Though measuring effects and outcomes is an important aspect, this forgoes the idea that controlling and managing activities require a superstructure to steer these practices. So far, operations for processing responsibility have received little attention in the literature [14–17].

This paper seeks to determine the efforts of HEIs practicing social sustainability and responsible management. For this case, the study applies a systematic literature review based on the model of social performance after Wood [18].

The review pursues the research question of how HEIs assume their responsibilities as social institutions within the dimensions of social performance of Wood (1991). The objective of this study is to apply a structured approach to HEIs' management activities concerning social sustainability, which consequently makes it feasible to apply tools for steering. Accordingly, the study makes two contributions to the literature stream of responsible management and social performance at HEIs. First, archival data research provides a welcomed opportunity to analyze current research approaches and systemize the status quo of how HEIs manage their social responsibility. In this regard, the review is useful for mapping current management performance in that research field and identifying further research areas not yet studied [19]. The review adds to the mostly qualitative and case-based research in this area, reporting on implementation approaches [19–21] or discussing factors of success [17,22,23], by proposing a pattern for the assessment and management of social performance issues in HEIs.

Second, the study expands the existing literature on sustainability in HEIs by investigating the managerial perspective on practicing social responsibility. The study highlights the role and function of social performance management after Wood [18] and applies this to the context of HEIs. This enables new perspectives on aspects of systematic steering and processing organizational responsible behavior, which contributes to a better understanding of balancing local and global demands, and to closing the gap between social values and organizational behavior in order to improve the social legitimacy of HEIs.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows: the study continues with a more detailed theoretical background on HEIs, responsible management, and social performance after Wood in Section 2. The methodology, the research design, and measurement of constructs are explained in Section 3. In Section 4, the results of the study are presented. Finally, the study concludes with findings, and presents limitations and implications for future research, in Section 5.

2. Theoretical Background

In the last 20 years, social responsibility has been considered relevant for nearly all entities providing services to the public, including HEIs [20]. HEIs, as public institutions with a primary mission revolving around teaching and research, have an emphasized role in society, since they develop professional skills and knowledge for conscious acting and foster research on sustainable solutions and innovations. This social mission, being embedded within the responsibility to act in the general interest of society, produces social legitimacy and forms the HEI's license to operate. Creating legitimacy by fulfilling a social mission and responsible acting more or less describes a management task, with assessment being a vital component that enables its success. Anticipating this, an increasing number of coordinating bodies have emerged in HEIs [11]. Although the assessment of research and teaching performance is a field that has received significant attention, the area of managing social responsibility in the course of fulfilling social legitimacy has not [17]. The relatively low proliferation of action being taken is grounded in a diverse understanding of the term social responsibility, which goes back to the lack of a generally accepted and common definition [24–27]. Vasilescu et al. [28] approach the social responsibility of a university as "the need to strengthen civic commitment and active citizenship; it is about volunteering, about an ethical approach, developing a sense of civil citizenship by encouraging the students, the academic staff to provide social services to their local community or to promote ecological, environmental commitment for local and global sustainable development". Others define the social responsibility of HEIs from a stakeholder-oriented perspective [22,29,30]. In another approach, Reiser [31] identifies distinct types of social responsibilities: (1) organizational responsibility to lead as an ethical example, (2) cognitive responsibilities of scientific output, (3) social responsibilities towards the community on issues of social development, and (4) educational responsibilities for responsible citizens.

Since this categorization delivers a suitable approach for understanding the different types of responsibilities of institutions, the examination applies this as a working definition for the examination of responsible management from a managerial perspective, although the study also investigates the implementation of type (1) and (3) responsibilities. The study furthermore follows the assumption that defining social responsibility should deliver information on the purpose of acting, how to pursue this purpose, and the ethical obligations serving as guiding principles [32].

To avoid confusion with environmental topics, the study excludes them from the present study in order to produce a clear construct. Consequently, the study applies the term responsibility instead of sustainability [32]. Following this working definition, the study aims to seek a proper tool for the identification of certain activities. With a focus on management activities and steering mechanisms, the application of performance-driven frames focusing on social issues provides appropriate tools for the subsequent analysis.

The application of Wood's model [18] on social performance (see Table 1) enables a mapping of existing management efforts around social issues. The model serves as a framework to reveal social performance in HEIs' management, since it delivers an open structure to map the scattered field of activities in HEIs. Thereby, Wood's model is well-suited for systematically reviewing the literature along internal and external perspectives, as well as processes and outcomes. This enables a wide focus, in order to depict a broader spectrum of activities, with implications for the non-observable issues of organizations (as proposed by principles of CSR). On the other hand, the systematic review of the literature serves to check the applicability and practicability of Wood's model for theory and practice, since it demonstrates whether responsible management performance follows an underlying structure (as proposed by the model), which makes it assessable for management bodies.

In order to discuss these questions, the following section describes Wood's model of social performance in detail. Wood's model goes back to Carroll's approach [33] to mapping the social performance of organizations. In his model, Carroll describes three integral parts of social performance, which are split into the following dimensions:

(1) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as legal, ethical, or economic responsibilities;

(2) Social Issues as categories CSR refers to (environment, certain interest groups/stakeholders);

(3) Corporate Social Responsiveness as action patterns dealing with CSR or social issues [33].

Complementing his thoughts, Wartick and Cochran [34] modified Carroll's model by restructuring the dimensions of social performance based on the assumption of an interaction between the principles of social responsibility, the process of social responsiveness, and the policies addressing social issues [34]. One major contribution of this modification is the recognition that social issues need to be actively managed. In response, Wood developed the model of social performance as an " . . . organization's configuration of principles of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness, and policies, programs, and observable outcomes as they relate to . . . societal relationships" [18].

Table 1. Corporate social performance according to Wood (1991) (own illustration).

Corporate Social Performance		
Principles of Corporate Social Responsibility	**Processes of Corporate Social Responsiveness**	**Outcomes of Corporate Behavior**
Institutional level	Environmental assessment	Social impacts
Organizational level	Stakeholder management	Social programs
Individual level	Issues management	Social4 policies

According to this understanding, Wood defines the dimensions of social performance as follows:

(1) Principles of corporate social responsibility describe basic motivations and expectations on different levels of consideration. The principle of legitimacy justifies responsible acting on an institutional level, as there are general expectations from society for all kinds of entities.

Public responsibility describes the expectations towards distinct forms of organizations, which is exercised by managerial discretion on the individual level. At this level, responsibility is understood as a moral task, which cannot be completely determined by the organization. According to Wood, the principles are not observable features of an organization.

(2) The processes of corporate social responsiveness describe action patterns contrasting normative principles of CSR. According to Wood, processes are indirectly measurable by inference [18]. Furthermore, Wood proposes the application of a three-stage management process, consisting of environmental assessment, stakeholder management, and issues management [18]. Environmental assessment describes the examination of the organizational environment to identify and anticipate relevant influences. For the case of stakeholder management, Wood refers to the definition of Freeman as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives." [35]. Unfortunately, further details on how to identify or manage stakes and claims are not given. Issues management is the last process and entails the monitoring and handling of relevant topics. In contrast to Wartick and Cochran, Wood assorts issues management as a process, since this topic is less oriented towards the performance itself, but rather on the outcome, as defined in the third dimension of the model [18].

(3) The outcomes of corporate behavior describe the observable/assessable part of social performance. Outcomes classify into social impacts describing their direct influence on society, social programs as processes to fulfill specific goals, and social policies as patterns of decision-making within an organization. Thereby social programs and policies are inspired by processes of corporate social responsiveness [18].

The high level of detail and its broad acceptance within the scientific community [36] make this model an appropriate basis for the case of this research. Although the concept originates from a business context, it is feasible for the HEI context as well, since the model shows a highly contextual and organization-dependent degree of integration. Practical application within the systematic screening of the literature requires a customization of Wood's model for the context of this inquiry. Though principles of corporate social responsibility describe the ethical layer behind organizational social performance, this highly contextual issue describes non-observable features [18], which, consequently, cannot be measured. Due to this, the dimension of principles will be excluded from this examination. Hence, the modified model for the examination of management performance on responsibility in HEIs comprises only the dimensions of processes of social responsiveness and outcomes of social behavior (see Table 2)

Table 2. Model of Social Performance following Wood (1991).

Social Performance	
Processes of Social Responsiveness	**Outcomes of Social Behavior**
Environmental assessment	Social impacts
Stakeholder management	Social programs
Issues management	Social policies

3. Materials and Methods

This study applies a systematic review of scientific papers and academic publications, following a structured multi-stage process after Fink and Tranfield et al. [36,37]. The study uses Wood's model for systematically scanning literature on the research question of how HEIs put social performance and responsible management into practice along the dimensions of processes and outcomes of institutional social performance (see Table 2) and follows a three-stage procedure, as described below.

Stage 1: Selecting Search Terms and Databases

As the study found no literature issuing the assessment of responsible management or social performance at HEIs on Google Scholar, the structured research process was extended on the electronic databases Ebsco (Academic Search Complete and Business Source Complete) and Web of Science for

publications with topics, titles, abstracts, or keywords. A detailed description of the search and the selection of relevant literature can be found in Tables A1–A4.

The search terms and phrases were derived from the objects of investigation, resulting in three thematic blocks: (1) the social responsibility and social performance, with the phrases "sustainab*" OR "CSR" OR "soc* resp*" OR "soc* perf*" OR "CSP" OR "SR"; (2) management controls, with the phrases "manag* control*" OR "public sector accounting" OR "performance measurement" OR "Public Management" OR "Management Control System*" OR "MCS" OR "Management Accounting" OR "MAS"; and the (3) institutional background of higher education institutions, with the phrases "high* education" OR universit* OR college* OR campus OR "business school*" OR "HEI*" OR "knowledge intensive organi?ation*". The three blocks were linked with the conjunction "AND" to combine them within a query. The search terms aim to cover a vast spectrum of potentially relevant articles on issues of social performance at HEIs. For this case, the search terms in the field of management controls and institutional anchoring also contain phrases from the accounting sector. The search terms on issues of social performance focus on a more general level. The phrases were grouped around the terms of social performance and social responsibility, which were derived from the model of social performance following Wood, as well as Reiser's definition of responsible management.

The need for a wide view is even more evident as the literature is unclear about whether to apply the term sustainability or social responsibility. Consequently, the research included both keywords. Although the objective revolves around HEIs and not a corporate context, the keywords also include the phrases "CSR" (corporate social responsibility) and "CSP" (corporate social performance) to identify further articles on social sustainability.

According to Tranfield [38], the review searched the documents for full text after applying the search terms, in order to not be too restrictively focused on the bibliographic data.

Stage 2: Applying Practical Screening Criteria

To avoid bias within the results, the study included journals, academic journals, and conference contributions published in the English language between the years 1987 and 2019. The study applies the year 1987 as a starting point, since the publication of the Brundtland report marks a turning point in the global debate on responsibility and sustainability. To gain a high number of suitable results, the study uses selection requirements in the screening process to sort out cases without relevance for the research question. Therefore, publications were checked as to whether the title, topic, and abstract fit the objective of responsible management or social performance in the HE sector. Publications with no thematic affiliation, as well as articles beyond the higher education context, were not considered for further screening.

Stage 3: Application of Methodological Screening Criteria

To conclude the screening of the literature, the study checked the literature regarding availability. Moreover, the study applied snowballing to identify further articles from the bibliographies, in order to gain a wider spectrum of potentially relevant publications. To specify and structure the findings, a review protocol was generated (Table 3). The categories for the analysis include the following domains:

1. Bibliographic data: year of publication, geographic origin of research, land of publication and journal, authors, and title;

2. Approach of the publication: research design, data collection method, and data analysis method;

3. Issues of social performance: following the structure of Wood's model, focusing on observable patterns (excluding principles of social responsibility) and snowballing and synthesizing the findings.

Table 3. Review Protocol.

1. Bibliographic Data	
Author(s)	Who is/are the author(s) of the publication?
Year	In which year was the work published?
Title	What is the title of the publication?
Country	Which country does the publication focus on?
Journal name	In which journal was the publication?

Table 3. *Cont.*

2. Approach of the Publication	
Research design	Which research design was used?
Data collection method	How was the data collected?
Data analysis method	How was the data analyzed?
3. Issues of Social Performance	
Processes of Social Responsiveness	
Env. assessment	What factors influence the organization's actions?
Stakeh. management	How does the organization manage relevant interest groups?
Issues management	How does the organization manage distinct concerns?
4. Outcomes of Organizational Behavior	
Social Impacts	How do the organization's actions affect society?
Social Programs	How does the organization manage its targets?
Social Policies	How does the organization realize its goals?
5. Normative Approach	
Theoretical background	Which theory is applied in the publication?
Terminological focus	How does the publication understand responsibility/sustainability?

To be assigned to the dimensions of social performance, the statements had to fit into the definition of either the processes of social responsiveness or outcomes of social behavior.

In the case of processes, the structure splits further, into environmental assessment, stakeholder management, and issues management. Furthermore, the dimension of outcomes consists of the divisions between social impacts, social programs, and social policies. The coding was left open deliberately, to cover a large spectrum of publications on social performance and responsible management in HEIs, and to capture perspectives arguing from different theoretical foundations. The coding was undertaken by one member of the research team and double-checked for intercoder reliability within a PhD workshop to avoid bias and suggestive defamation in the results of the analysis. The application of Wood's model for the content analysis delivers useful results on managerial aspects, even with the exclusion of principles due to their non-observable character.

4. Results

The following section is structured as a bibliographic analysis and a content analysis, inspired mostly by Schaltegger and Wagner [39] and Seuring and Gold [40]. An overview of the procedure is summarized in Table 4.

4.1. Bibliographic Analysis

By screening full texts under the application of selection requirements and an availability check with the additional screening of sources within the publications, the review finally identified 50 (45 by systematic review, five by snowballing) relevant studies for inquiry. A detailed itemization is provided in the Appendix A.

Table 4. Selection process of included studies.

1st step: Applying search terms on title, topics and subject terms
26,295 results
↓
2nd step: Filtering topics, titles and abstracts on fit with research question
4327 results
↓
3rd step: Check for availability and full text screening
59 results
↓
4th step: Full text review and snowballing
50 results

Looking into the distribution of articles over time (see Figure 1), the first appearance of relevant publications on topics of social responsibility in HEIs occurred in the early 2000s, which might indicate an association with the draft of the millennium development goals. This might also be assumed for the surge of publications since the year 2016, after the inception of the sustainable development goals.
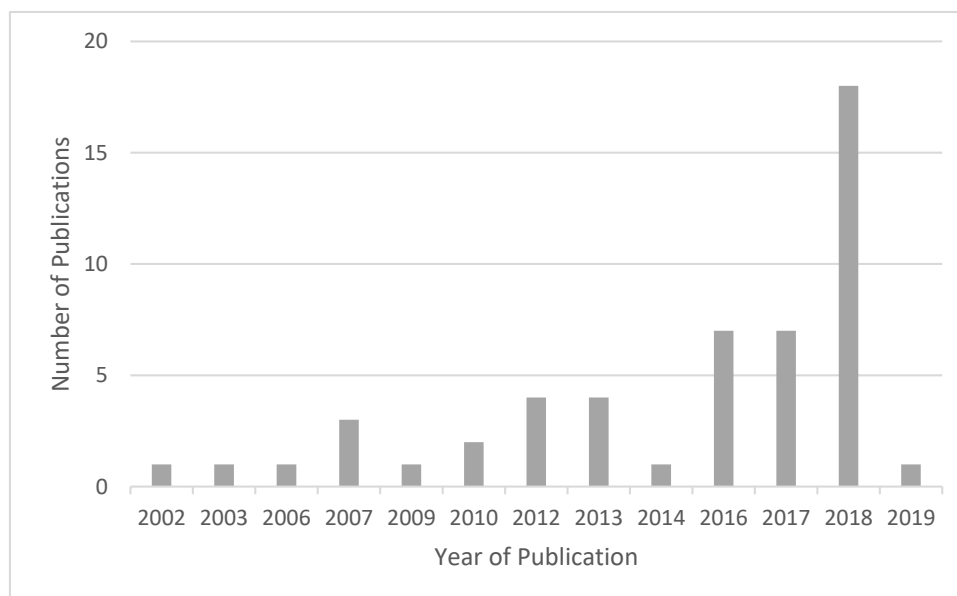

Figure 1. Distribution of Publications over time.

The majority of articles apply case studies for research design (75%), followed by systematic literature reviews (25%). Looking at the global distribution, the publications' origins crystalize around distinct geographical regions. The main focus of research is located in Europe (45%), followed by North America (27%) and Asia (17%). Looking deeper into the publications with a European origin, the study observes a publication focus in middle and eastern Europe (Germany, Austria, Poland, Latvia, Romania, Slovenia). Apart from that, Spain and the United Kingdom show the highest rate of publications.

Taking a closer look at the journals addressing social issues at HEIs, the majority of articles originate from the "Journal of Cleaner Production" (21%) and the "International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education" (18%). The publications from both journals do not originate from a special issue. The remaining publications are scattered across various journals, thematically ranging from Management and Strategy to Public Administration and Organization topics. Table 5 provides a list of included journals and their methodological quality according to the German "Verband der Deutschen Hochschullehrer" (VHB) and the "Australian Business Deans Council" (ABDC) as valuable rankings from the Harzing Journal Quality List.

Table 5. Methodological quality of included journals.

Journal Name	№ of Results	VHB	ABDC
Abasyn Journal of Social Sciences	1	/	/
Australian Journal of Public Administration	1	/	A
Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov Series V: Economic Sciences	1	/	/
Business and Professional Ethics Journal	1	/	/
Business and Society Review	1	C	C
Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space	1	/	/

Table 5. *Cont.*

Journal Name	№ of Results	VHB	ABDC
Global Business and Management Research: An International Journal	1	/	/
Higher Education	2	/	A
International Journal of Public Leadership	1	/	/
International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education	9	/	/
Journal of Business Management	2	/	C
Journal of Cleaner Production	11	B	/
Journal of Contemporary Management Issues	1	/	/
Journal of Organizational Learning and Leadership	1	/	/
New Directions for Institutional Research	2	/	/
Procedia Environmental Sciences	1	/	/
Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences	1	/	/
Public Administration Review	1	B	A
Research Papers of Wroclaw University of Economics	2	/	/
Resources, Conservation and Recycling	1	/	/
Social Responsibility Journal	1	/	B
Strategic Organization	1	B	A
Studies and Scientific Researches—Economic Edition	1	/	/
Studies in Higher Education	1	/	A
Sustainability	1	C	/
Sustainable Development	1	C	C
Tertiary Education and Management	1	/	/
Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences	1	/	/

In addition to this, the methodological quality of the journals should be examined in more detail. According to Cook and Campbell [41], methodological quality is defined along distinct criteria: statistical conclusion validity, internal validity, construct validity and external validity. The present study follows these criteria and adapts them, as Cepeda and Martin (2005) propose a similar approach for the assessment of case studies [42]. Since a large number of the literature examined is based on case studies, this provides a suitable instrument for the following investigation to assess methodological quality (see Table 6)

Following Cepeda and Martin's approach, methodological quality is composed of internal validity, construct validity, external validity and reliability. These criteria aim at capturing the conceptual framework, research cycle and theory building along the stages of planning, data collection, data analysis and critical analysis [42].

Internal validity examines descriptions of facts and findings, and their internal coherency with the intended objectives.

Construct validity refers to the explicit and detailed description of methods and procedures, including background information on presumed cause and effects.

External validity embraces descriptions, which allows for the assessment of replicability, and evaluates the appropriateness of applied theories and findings.

Reliability evaluates whether the research question is clearly outlined, and the study design is congruent with it.

According to this definition, the following table provides an overview of the methodological quality of reviewed literature.

Table 6. Methodological quality criteria in reviewed literature following Cepeda and Martin (2005).

Study	Author's Interpretation			
	Internal Validity	**Construct Validity**	**External Validity**	**Reliability**
(Adams, Martin, and Boom, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Ahmad, 2012)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Akins, Bright, Brunson, and Wortham, 2013)	unclear	✓	✓	unclear
(Anderson, Ndalamba, and Caldwell, 2017)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Asrar-ul-Haq, Kuchinke, and Iqbal, 2017)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Ayala-Rodríguez, Barreto, Rozas Ossandón, Castro, and Moreno, 2019)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Bacow and Moomaw, 2007)	✓	unclear	unclear	✓
(Bice and Coates, 2016)	✓	unclear	✓	✓
(Bieler and McKenzie, 2017)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Buchta, Jakubiak, Skiert, and Wilczewski, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Casarejos, Frota, and Gustavson, 2017)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Cichowicz and Nowak, 2018)	✓	unclear	✓	✓
(Comm and Mathaisel, 2003)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Dima, Vasilache, Ghinea, and Agoston, 2013)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Dixon and Coy, 2007)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Ferrero-Ferrero, Fernández-Izquierdo, Muñoz-Torres, and Bellés-Colomer, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Friman et al., 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Gamage and Sciulli, 2017)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Gulavani, S., Nayak, N., and Nayak, M., 2016)	×	✓	✓	✓
(Hayter and Cahoy, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Kim, Sadatsafavi, Medal, and Ostergren, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Labanauskis, 2017)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Leal Filho et al., 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Li, Gu, and Liu, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Link, 2007)	✓	✓	unclear	unclear
(Lopez and Martin, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Lozano, 2006)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Lukman, Krajnc, and Glavič, 2009)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Malandrakis, Panaras, and Papadopoulou, 2017)	✓	✓	✓	unclear
(Marinescu, Toma, and Constantin, 2010)	✓	✓	✓	unclear
(Mohamad et al., 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Mosier and Ruxton, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Murray, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Nadeem and Kakakhe, 2012)	✓	✓	✓	unclear
(Nejati and Nejati, 2013)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Pearce, Wood, and Wassenaar, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Popescu, M. and Beleaua, I.C., n.d.)	✓	unclear	✓	unclear
(Popović and Nedelko, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Sassen and Azizi, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Schaffhauser-Linzatti and Ossmann, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Sedlacek, 2013)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Sepasi, Rahdari, and Rexhepi, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Shriberg, 2002)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Turan, Cetinkaya, and Ustun, 2016)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Vasilescu, Barna, Epure, and Baicu, 2010)	✓	✓	unclear	unclear
(Vaughter, McKenzie, Lidstone, and Wright, 2016)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Wigmore-Álvarez and Ruiz-Lozano, 2012)	✓	unclear	✓	✓
(Yáñez, Uruburu, Moreno, and Lumbreras, 2019)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Zahid, Ghazali, and Rahman, 2017)	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Zorio-Grima, Sierra-García, and Garcia-Benau, 2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓

4.2. Content Analysis

For the analysis of the publications' content, the study applies the model of social performance after Wood. The focus on processes of social responsiveness and outcomes of social behavior make up the core of the analysis. The presence or absence of social performance indicators, especially in the dimension of outcomes of social behavior, allows conclusions to be drawn on the general management of responsibility within HEIs.

Before looking into the dimensions of social performance, the first issue of interest was to determine the terms in use when discussing social performance. Do the publications apply the term 'sustainability' or 'responsibility' to describe the actions of the organizations in their study? The results show that a vast majority (65%) applies the label 'sustainability', whereas 25% apply 'responsibility', when referring to issues of responsible management or social performance. Ten percent of publications apply both terms interchangeably. Among them, seven articles explicitly concern university social responsibility.

For the investigation of processes of social responsiveness, the study adapts the classification process proposed by Wood.

To evaluate the organizational environment, the study distinguishes between the organizational context in which the HEI is embedded and the institutional approach, which outlines how the institution handles responsibility/sustainability.

The external field in which the higher education organization operates is strongly centered around the different responsibilities they face, ranging from a local to a global level. Casarejos et al. [43] provide an overview of the different matters an HEI has to master. A strong factor acting upon the social responsibility of a university is socio-economic pressure on different levels. This includes the influence of corporations through partnerships, legal requirements/regulation from the government, and megatrends like the demographic development or globalization, challenging the organization to act responsibly. International commitments for sustainability/responsibility, complemented by obligations for disclosure or the availability and efficient use of funding, determine the activities of HEIs.

Shifting the focus to the internal perspective of environmental assessment, the study identifies governance and leadership as core aspects forming the center of contemplation. Leadership operates the responsibility for outcomes, the society, and the world as a whole [44], with strategy, mission, vision, and values defining the point of departure for the commitment and participation of the community. This creates the social license to operate for the organization, as Ayala-Rodriguez et al. [29] point out. Management frameworks and patterns for change develop a culture and understanding for conscious acting, as with the institutional orientation between faculty and administration. Marketing and communication of engagement build a bridge from the internal to the external bonding of the institution. Communication tools (e.g., indicators) finally enable the assessment and benchmarking of efforts.

In the case of stakeholder management, the study examines the question of whether stakeholders play a certain role in the management of social responsibility at HEIs and how their interests are managed by the institution.

A central assignment follows a categorization of the groups of students, staff (academic and non-academic), and administrators [12,20,42]. Students are often perceived as the initiators of engagement, following a bottom-up approach, since they have the opportunity to " . . . operate outside traditional decision-making systems and their capability to pressure their universities in ways that employees simply cannot" [45,46] or have the power to attract a certain level of attention through their actions as agents of change. However, students have only a limited time of residence at HEIs and their long-term influence is limited. Faculty and staff act as the long-term campus population and therefore dominate long-term changes [47]. A detailed examination of this interest group reveals the managing staff (presidents, faculty leaders, academic directors, or professors) to be major drivers in terms of sustainable development. This confirms the assumption that top-down approaches are decisive for the implementation of responsibility in HEIs.

In the case of managing stakeholders, HEIs apply a broad spectrum of approaches ranging from (nonfinancial) reporting frameworks on ESG providing unilateral information for the assessment of engagement [10] to the provision of action plans proposing multi-stakeholder management processes [48], shared governance [49], or participation [12,46].

The investigation of issues management, the last aspect of processes of social responsiveness, tackles the management of participatory activities within HEIs. An examination of leadership demands in order to identify relevant attributes seems useful here. Besides individual traits like integrity, respect, or courage, the strategic planning and a sustainable leadership development (embracing teaching and mentoring) which imparts self-reflection, and the empowerment of staff, are considered to be crucial for handling stakeholder demands [46,47]. On the side of procedural issues management, a strategic anchoring within long-term visions affecting the institution's policy and targets positively stimulates responsible leadership processes. As one example, the PDCA cycle is mentioned as an appropriate tool [14].

The analysis provides insights into exchange relationships between HEIs and their environment. Understanding these contextual factors creates a more tangible background from which to gather the organizational approaches to acting socially responsibly as directly observable characteristics. With the examination of perceptible outcomes, the study discloses existing practices reflecting indirectly observable processes, which moreover allows for a verification of the internal consistency of the findings.

Determining community outreach is generally perceived as a difficult task [50,51]. The analysis of impacts on social behavior requires a more detailed proceeding which enables an in-depth analysis. Therefore, the analysis of aspects of organizational philanthropy, impacts on society, and their perception/assessment make up the stages of the examination.

HEIs' impacts are strongly tied to their mission to educate responsible citizens by responding to social needs and adding value to society [4]. Communication and collaboration with the surrounding communities can be seen as an opportunity to strengthen the perception that HEIs are a valuable part of the local community, because they improve the quality of life.

Organizational philanthropy describes the institution's efforts to positively influence its environment. Although HEIs play a key role in society, evidence regarding their direct involvement in the surrounding community focuses on rather general positions. Providing social welfare and synergies with local partners from business or government, or positioning the campus as a living laboratory, describe ways in which they positively influence the local community [52].

The assessment of HEIs' social performance follows the application of measures to quantify efforts and results. Various measurement tools for the university context enable a pursuit of these objectives. A variety of tools, ranging from GRI, SSR, AASHE, STARS to the Campus Assessment Framework or the Sustainability Pathways Toolkit, provide ample opportunity for the assessment and communication of engagement and community outreach. In terms of distinct tools for the measurement of social performance, the possibilities are more limited [13]. Since most indicators are embedded in an overarching sustainability assessment scheme, environmental aspects dominate reporting standards or are prioritized. Current indicators firmly referring to social performance and responsible management include research compliance (e.g., anti-corruption, respect of privacy or outcome-responsibility), human resource management topics (health, training, diversity, satisfaction), human rights (anti-discrimination, child and forced labor), or education issues (curriculum content, teaching quality, graduation rates).

The examination shows that, so far, no reporting tool serves as a standard for assessing social performance. In the context of assessment tools, (environmental) sustainability issues seem to be a managerial fig leaf for HEIs to shrink from their (social) responsibility.

Notwithstanding, even without assessment tools of social performance, it is possible to be sustainable and act responsibly as an institution of higher education [11].

The social programs of HEIs describe the process perspective in the pursuit of certain goals. For a detailed examination, the research on this topic is divided into social (performance) objectives and management perspectives of processes, to enable a better overview of the field.

In terms of organizational responsibility, major targets include issuing holistic approaches fostering quality management or society outreach to satisfy stakeholder needs and tackle social problems [19,50]. As there is a lack of mission statements embracing responsibility issues [53,54], the use of blanket statements [51] fostering the public image of the organization [53] suggests the need for more responsible management. The evolution of mission statements simultaneously calls for an investigation of managerial processes [55] to achieve better governance and leadership [48]. As a driver of institutionalization, processes depend on the selection of objectives before initiating collaborative structures fostering commitment and comprehension [7] in order to overcome barriers and trade-offs [56]. These integrative efforts lead to an improved understanding and organizational culture of holistic and systematic change [44].

As the last aspect, social policies describe procedures concerning social issues at HEIs, as well as their implementation. The examination shows certain processes often begin in the course of informal activities [20] leading to an incremental incorporation [7], flanked by participatory processes, management frameworks, or guidelines, and driven by top level support, clear objectives, monitoring, and an institutional framing [7]. Mission statements [54] defining a certain policy [57] with transparent objectives, clear processes, monitoring, and communication patterns [58] promote a culture of social responsibility [7]. Human Resource Management functions as a critical success factor by providing the necessary resources [16] and spurring organizational change and commitment.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The present study examines the social performance of HEIs and the operationalization of responsibility management, and answers the question of how HEIs' social performance management can be quantified within the dimensions of social performance following Wood [18]. The systematic literature review gives insight into the status quo of responsible management practices of HEIs and investigates HEIs' social performance along the dimensions of processes of social responsiveness and outcomes of social behavior. The study examines a structured approach to management activities, which makes it feasible to exercise steering and assessment processes. The results show social performance is an issue of HEIs' responsible management, though the forms and distribution across the examined dimensions vary.

The present study contributes to the discussion on management performance on social issues and responsible management at higher education institutions in three ways.

First, the study provides a systematic overview of different research approaches to responsible management affecting the social performance of HEIs. The study shows that, regarding the management of social issues, there is no common practice. It becomes evident that HEIs predominantly focus their engagement on processes of social responsiveness, especially environmental assessment and stakeholder concerns. This shows a general willingness to perceive social responsibility and act accordingly, but falls short regarding outcomes, especially in the case of determining impact or transferring commitments into actions. This can be explained by the generally low hurdles for HEI management to produce statements on voluntary obligations. Taking action, though, by implementing concrete structures and processes, appears to be of minor interest, since this step has an obligatory character as it requires the allocation of distinct resources with only loosely predictable long-term outcomes. The low proliferation of responsibility management structures and processes suggests a weak institutionalization, which might result from vague objectives, which inhibit to achieve certain goals. Since environmental assessment and stakeholder management appear to be well-elaborated topics, HEIs seem to suffer from a lack of translation mechanisms to integrate these issues into their responsible management.

Second, the study expands on the current literature on responsible management in HEIs by exploring the role of management performance for the implementation and steering of social issues. The application of social performance measures opens up new perspectives for the understanding of aims and conditions of a successful implementation of managing social issues within HEIs.

The abundance of performance information on the features of environmental assessment and stakeholder management, contrasted with the weak expressions of structures and processes, illustrate the need for a systematic management approach. Though the willingness to shoulder social responsibility values is recognizable, implementation so far is limited to a measurement of outcomes.

Third, the large variety of case-based research underlines the demand for a structured approach. The non-standardized use of the terms 'sustainability' and 'responsibility' in the examination on social performance issues opens a general discussion on whether 'responsibility' and 'sustainability' should be treated as complementary or competing terms [56]. Moreover, the subsumption of instances, and of responsibility, under the term 'sustainability', is misleading when talking only about social performance. The versatility of the topic makes it occasionally difficult to assess and manage all dimensions under one management or to supply responsibility from a single source (e.g., different stakeholder claims, functional overlaps of different institutional units and responsibilities).

Based on these findings, the study proposes implications for decision-makers and researchers. First, the assessment of the literature reveals a recent interest in social matters, responsible management issues, strategy implementation, and leadership, as well as the measurement of outcomes at HEIs. So far, ecological sustainability prevails within the scientific discourse and reporting, whereas social (performance) issues play a minor role. Following the triple bottom line, the role of social sustainability has to be emphasized and strengthened in order to be more balanced alongside environmental sustainability. Therefore, a consistent wording and a clear definition of both concepts are crucial to gaining and improving consistency. The synonymous use of the terms 'responsibility' and 'sustainability' mirrors the goal of a harmonization of both terms. The current underrepresentation of social performance issues in HEI management, caused by an unclear ex-ante assessment of consequences entailing voluntary commitment with incalculable future obligations, must be overcome by a clearly defined management construct.

Second, HEIs bear a special responsibility towards their staff members. Besides the fact that the staff constitutes the long-term campus population, their role is often given minor importance compared to other stakeholder groups. The study discovers that participatory approaches and shared governance formats can create a proper framework for the implementation of responsible management affecting social performance. Voluntary engagement has the potential to initiate activities, which can later be transferred into formalized structures and processes. This has the potential to maintain interaction with stakeholders in an ongoing process that reflexively reviews the university's efforts to improve social impacts.

Third, the examination of institutional impacts of universities' social performance provided weak evidence for the application of appropriate tools, as well as for long-term measurements, which deliver a satisfying assertion on engagement. A missing definition might be cause for the diverse understanding of responsible management, which results in the relatively weak impact of actions. So far, existing assessment tools for sustainability at HEIs provide unsatisfactory results.

As in many other surveys, the present study also shows different limitations, providing future research needs. As of now, the impact of social performance seems to be an irrelevant measure for HEIs, since existing assessment tools marginalize social topics [13]. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that a voluntary engagement for social responsibility can pursue various pathways through an organization, even without proper measures. Formal, non-formal, and informal institutionalization efforts can raise new possibilities for further research, especially by differentiating the roles of various stakeholder groups and the meaning of contextual factors for possible implementation strings. In that context, it should be questioned whether principles of social responsibility are in fact non-observable features of an organization or if it is possible to redefine and identify them based on changing practical parameters, communication, and transparency. This would also be useful for a definition of the term 'social responsibility'. Since social responsibility is a diverse field in the institutional context and finding a generally accepted definition is challenging, a proper solution finally has to emerge from the communities negotiating the field of tension between sustainability and responsibility [32]. Along

these implications, the research leaves open the question as to which social responsibilities HEIs actually bear in order to fulfill their license to operate as social institutions. Since the study shows that the social impacts of organizational activities are difficult to quantify, a major task for future research will also be to find proper measurement methods with which to solve the question of how HEIs can pursue purpose in line with acting responsibly, and which values should guide them along the way. Further studies could also take up some parts of the results to provide a more significant contribution to the field of responsible management of HEIs. In the end, the major question is whether HEIs will manage to walk the talk, or continue to simply provide lip service regarding their social responsibility.

In short, this paper highlights a model that, by providing accessibility through understanding, enables the active managing of HEIs' social responsibility. The systematic review of the literature shows that HEIs are strongly determined by their mission on research and teaching, which, so far, exceeds other external demands from outside the organization. The strong orientation toward internal affairs emphasizes governance and management topics as relevant influencing variables determining the organizational focus. As a result, HEIs are currently in the process of deepening their engagement with themselves and their mission statement, and forming clearly defined goals, which reflect their social responsibility and have a meaningful effect. Due to a lack of urgency and external pressures, the search for social responsibility beyond research and teaching is difficult. Governance structures and management processes can have a steering effect, in order to proactively shape responsibility and bring it into society along transparent processes.

The implementation of performance measures on social responsibility in HEIs allows their integration into general performance measurement, which strengthens the interconnectedness between economic, environmental, and social issues. Realizing these potentials enables an effective management of social issues and encourages responsible habits, even in fields that have so far evaded measurement (e.g., principles of corporate social responsibility). To become effective operationally, responsible management has to harmonize social performance principles, processes, and outcomes, to create more rooted solutions which balance local and global demands. Managing social performance in this way can help HEIs to close the gap between social values and organizational behavior, and thereby improve their social legitimacy.

Appendix A

Table A1. Search on EBSCO database.

Date of Search	Source	Search-Terms <AND> Journal Names	Filter	Restrictions	Content Filter Restrictions "NOT"
31 January 2019	EBSCO Academic Search Complete EBSCO Business Source Complete	(sustainab* OR "CSR" OR "soc* resp*" OR "soc* perf*" OR "CSP" OR "SR") AND ("manag* control*" OR "public sector accounting" OR "performance measurement" OR "Public Management" OR "Management Control System*" OR "MCS" OR "Management Accounting" OR "MAS") AND ("high* education" OR universit* OR college* OR campus OR "business school*" OR "HEI*" OR "knowledge intensive organi?ation*")	Title Subject Terms Abstract	English Peer Reviewed Journals and Academic JournalsDate: 1987–2019	Education and Research Teaching and Learning Curriculum affairs Environmental and Green Issues Climate and Carbon Waste Transportation and Mobility Building and Infrastructure
		Results:	25,341	1,674	35

Table A2. Steps on filtering relevant literature on EBSCO search.

Steps		Results
1	Search yield (applying content filter restrictions and excluding duplicates)	35
2	Studies considered for practical screening (information delivered from titles, abstracts, and subject terms; excluding: not available)	27
3	Relevant references found in studies	1
4	Studies considered for methodological screening	28

Table A3. Search on Web of Science database.

Date of Search	Source	Search-Terms <AND> Journal Names	Filter	Restrictions	Content Filter Restrictions "NOT"
4 February 2019	Web of Science	(sustainab* OR "CSR" OR soc* resp* OR soc* perf* OR "CSP" OR "SR") AND (manag* control* OR "public sector accounting" OR "performance measurement" OR "Public Management" OR "Management Control" System* OR "MCS" OR "Management Accounting" OR "MAS") AND (high* "education" OR universit* OR college* OR campus OR "business" school* OR HEI* OR "knowledge intensive" organi?ation*)	Topic (Title, Abstract, Subject Terms)	English Date: 1987–2019	Education and Research Teaching and Learning Curriculum Affairs Environmental and Green Issues Climate and Carbon Waste Transportation and Mobility Building and Infrastructure
		Results:	24,621	2653	24

Table A4. Steps on filtering relevant literature on Web of Science search

Steps		Results
1	Search yield (applying content filter restrictions and excluding duplicates)	24
2	Studies considered for practical screening (information delivered from titles, abstracts, and subject terms; excluding: not available)	18
3	Relevant references found in studies	4
4	Studies considered for methodological screening (excluding: learning, teaching, training)	22

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