

**The reality of the application of corporate social
responsibility in the economic institution
Case study: Urban and Suburban Transport Institution of
Algiers**

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Abstract

This study aims mainly to determine the reality of the application of corporate social responsibility in the transport institution and to highlight the efforts it makes to preserve the environment and society, taking into account the nature of its activities and the achievement of its economic profits.

The field study included the Urban and Suburban Transport Institution of Algiers (ETUSA) to find out the level of application of corporate social responsibility in this institution through a field internship and an interview with various officials. The study concluded that there are applications of corporate social responsibility in its various dimensions, but in varying proportions, focusing on the economic and legal dimensions; however, they have not reached the required level and still suffer from some shortcomings. Through the results obtained, a set of recommendations was presented.

Keywords:

Corporate social responsibility;
Dimensions of corporate social
Responsibility;
Economic institution;
Urban and Suburban Transport institution of
Algiers.

JEL Classification Codes: M14; L 32

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1. INTRODUCTION

In a world marked by economic crises and globalization, it has become imperative for institutions to be aware of their impact on society and the environment because the evaluation of institutions no longer relies on their profitability nor on building their reputation on their financial positions alone. Instead, modern concepts have emerged that help establish a work environment capable of dealing with the rapid developments in global economic, technological, and administrative aspects. "Corporate Social Responsibility" is one of the most prominent of these concepts.

Institutions have shown interest in corporate social responsibility in the past few years through various and diverse endeavors to review special models for measuring institutions' social performance. This is because institutions consider social responsibility a source of opportunities, innovation, and competitiveness enhancement.

Based on what was mentioned above, the following research problem has been put forward: What is the reality of the application of corporate social responsibility in the Urban and Suburban Transport Institution of Algiers, ETUSA?

In order to answer the research problem, sub-hypotheses were developed that reflect the most important dimensions applied by the Transport Institution in the field of corporate social responsibility. These hypotheses are as follows:

- **Hypothesis 1:** The Urban and Suburban Transport Institution of Algiers carries out activities related to the economic dimension of corporate social responsibility. CSR.

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- **Hypothesis 2:** The Urban and Suburban Transport Institution of Algiers carries out activities related to the legal dimension of CSR.
- **Hypothesis 3:** The Urban and Suburban Transport Institution of Algiers carries out activities related to the ethical dimension of CSR.
- **Hypothesis 4:** The Urban and Suburban Transport Institution of Algiers carries out activities related to the philanthropic dimension of CSR.

Objectives of the Study

- Comprehend the notion of corporate social responsibility and its different dimensions.
- Determine the most important reasons that drive institutions to adopt the concept of corporate social responsibility.
- Introduce transport institutions and evaluate the reality of the application of corporate social responsibility and the practices adopted by them.

Accordingly, using a descriptive analytical approach, the research paper, in its first part, deals with the concept of corporate social responsibility. The second part deals with the application of corporate social responsibility to the ETUSA institution.

2. The concept of corporate social responsibility

2.1 Definition of Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate social responsibility has gained global attention and acquired a new resonance in the global economy. In the past,

corporate social responsibility (CSR) was considered corporate "philanthropy," but today, it is considered a strategic approach to gaining a competitive advantage. Nowadays, CSR is considered essential for long-term success, reputation, and brand image, and companies are realizing that they have to become socially responsible in order to stay productive, competitive, and relevant in a rapidly changing business world (Iffat.Z, 2013).

The EU defines CSR as the incorporation of social and environmental concerns by companies in their business operations and their voluntary interaction with their stakeholders. In October 2011, the EU introduced a fresh perspective emphasizing that CSR is the responsibility of enterprises for the effects they have on society (Michael Hopkins, 2014).

According to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), "corporate social responsibility" is the ongoing commitment by businesses to ethical behavior and the contribution to economic development while enhancing the quality of life for their employees, their families, the local community, and society as a whole (Raluca, A. P., 2015).

Carroll's definition of social responsibility states that corporate social responsibility includes conducting business in a manner that is economically profitable, compliant with laws, ethical, and socially supportive. Being socially responsible means that profitability and obedience to the law are foremost conditions when discussing the company's ethics and its level of support for society through contributions of financial resources, time, and talent (Nisar, A. N., & Saad, A. K., 2014).

2.2 Dimensions of corporate social responsibility (Carroll's pyramid)

Prior to Carroll's CSR pyramid, the concept of CSR involved a wide range of ethical, economic, legal, and philanthropic aspects. Still, it was discretionary to place any element anywhere according to the business situation without any sequence. Carroll (1979) introduced a significant development by providing a structured hierarchy to these dimensions, known as Carroll's pyramid of CSR. Within this pyramid, he prioritized the economic dimension due to its significance in terms of GDP contribution, employment opportunities, and shareholders' wealth. Carroll claimed that if economic activity is not functioning properly, the other dimensions of CSR become irrelevant. According to Carroll (1979), the legal dimension was ranked second in importance, as compliance with the government's rules and regulations by a company enables proper and timely function. Similarly, the ethical dimension was placed third, followed by the philanthropic dimension at the fourth level. Therefore, Carroll (1979) devised the pyramid of CSR that has continued to be highly relevant (D. Štreimikienė & R. Raheem, 2021), and it is widely recognized and frequently referenced as a comprehensive framework for understanding corporate social responsibility (Antti.T. & al., 2021).

Fig.1. The pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility (Carroll 1991)



Source: Archie b. Carroll, 2016.

2.2.1 Economic responsibilities

According to Carroll, the most important social responsibility of business is economic in nature (Carroll, A.B. 1979). As he explains that economic responsibility is a fundamental requirement of existence and that businesses have an economic responsibility to the society that permitted their creation and sustainment (Carroll, A. B. 2016), Based on this concept, it is

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argued that businesses cannot act responsibly in a society unless they are financially successful and ensure their long-term existence. Profitability is also an essential means to incentivize investors to invest money in the production of goods and services that benefit both society and consumers. Carroll views the economic responsibility of generating profit as vital for the long-term existence of companies and as a way to incentivize investors (Antti.T. & all, 2021). It is also affirmed that all other responsibilities of business are predicated on economic responsibility, as all cannot be performed without it (Lai, V.T., et al., 2013).

The following are key statements characterizing economic responsibilities: (Archie B. Carroll, 1991)

- It is crucial to perform in a way consistent with maximizing earnings per share.
- Commitment is important to achieve maximum profitability.
- Maintaining a strong competitive position is important.
- Sustaining a high level of operational efficiency is essential.
- It is crucial that a successful company be defined as one that consistently generates profits. Business is predicated on economic responsibility, as everything cannot be performed without it (Lai, V.T., et al., 2013).

2.2.2 Legal Responsibilities

Businesses need to comply with certain legal guidelines when operating their activities. It means that companies are required to fulfill their economic responsibilities according to the

legal structure. Moreover, the combination of legal and economic duties becomes the basic statute for companies to run their businesses (Jintao. Lu, 2020). These principles involve laws and regulations that reflect society's view of "codified ethics," outlining the fundamental notions of fair business practices as established by lawmakers at the federal, state, and local levels. Compliance with these laws and regulations is both expected and required from businesses as a condition of operating (Archie B. Carroll, 2016). While meeting these legal responsibilities, important expectations of business include: (Archie B. Carroll, 2016)

- Operating in a manner consistent with the expectations of the government and law.
- Complying with various federal, state, and local regulations.
- Behaving as law-abiding corporate citizens.
- Fulfilling all their legal obligations to societal stakeholders
- Offering goods and services that at least meet minimal legal requirements.

2.2.3 Ethical responsibilities

This level of Carroll's pyramid is about societal expectations. It indicates that businesses had better operate in a fair and ethical way. This involves going beyond what the law requires and making changes that reflect ethical decision-making on the part of the entire business (Paul, P., 2023).

The ethical dimension of the pyramid refers to engaging in morally upright behavior, practicing fairness in all circumstances, and avoiding causing harm. A company should not only comply with the law but also conduct its business ethically. Unlike the preceding levels, this aspect is not obligatory for a company.

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However, it is highly beneficial for a company to prioritize ethics. By doing so, they demonstrate to their stakeholders that they uphold principles of morality and justice. Additionally, people are likely to feel more comfortable and at ease when purchasing goods or services from the company (Hency, T., 2019).

Therefore, ethical responsibilities embrace a wide range of activities, standards, policies, and practices that society expects or prohibits, even if they are not codified into law. The objectives of these expectations are for businesses to assume responsibility and be responsive to the full range of norms, standards, values, principles, and expectations that reflect and honor what consumers, employees, owners, and the community regard as consistent with respect to the protection of stakeholders' moral rights (Archie B. Carroll, 2016).

2.2.4 Philanthropic responsibilities

According to Carroll (2016), there is another significant aspect of CSR known as the philanthropic dimension. However, this dimension does not have direct authority over CSR activities. This responsibility involves engaging in activities that allow firms to be good corporate citizens, such as making philanthropic commitments or preparing local people who lack skills for jobs (Jintao. Lu, 2020).

Corporate philanthropy embraces businesses' voluntary or discretionary activities. While not a strict obligation, philanthropy or business giving is commonly anticipated in today's business and forms a part of the public's everyday expectations. The quantity and nature of these activities are voluntary or discretionary. They are guided by businesses' willingness to engage in social activities that are neither mandated nor required by law and are not generally considered ethical obligations.

Today, when considering the social contract between business and society, it is found that the public expects businesses to be good corporate citizens just as individuals are (Carroll, A. B. 2016).

lastly, as stated by Li et al. (2013), when an organization is willing to forgo some of its profits in order to fulfill ethical obligations, customers will acknowledge and appreciate the organization's philanthropic dimension. This recognition ultimately has a positive impact on the company's brand and image positively.

In brief, a company that meets its obligations must be financially successful, operate within legal boundaries, uphold ethical standards, and be a good corporate citizen.

2.3 Principles Motivating CSR

Maignan and Ralston (2002) developed the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and identified three underlying motivational principles behind it, which are outlined below:

- CSR driven by values: CSR is depicted as an integral aspect of the company's culture or as an expression of its fundamental principles. The personal values and beliefs of managers can also serve as significant motivating factors for CSR (Johan G., 2012).
- CSR driven by performance: CSR is presented as an integral component of the company's economic mission, serving as a tool to enhance its financial performance and competitive position.

CSR driven by stakeholders: CSR is portrayed as a reaction to the pressure and scrutiny imposed by one or more groups of stakeholders (Anand J., James C., 2015).

2.4 Importance and Benefits of Corporate Social Responsibility

Numerous literary works discuss the advantages that companies can gain from engaging in CSR activities (Balcerowicz, 2015; Perry and Towers, 2013; Gupta, 2012). These authors frequently highlight a range of improvements, such as revenue growth, which serves as motivation for both big and small businesses to spread the concept of CSR and implement it in their day-to-day activities (Paulina K., 2016).

Strategic significance can also be attributed to corporate social responsibility. Companies can utilize CSR as a strategy to build brand image and raise their profile in customers' minds. Additionally, CSR activities often encompass environmental policies, allowing these companies to contribute to the preservation and conservation of the environment by implementing eco-friendly practices within their operations.

CSR aids companies in establishing trust relationships and social connections, which serve as valuable assets for the companies in the long run, in addition to the increased level of emphasis placed on CSR that has a direct impact on the success of a company in the markets (Ng. W. Y., Rashad. Y., 2012). Furthermore, CSR enables the establishment of positive relationships with all of the stakeholders, demonstrating the company's commitment to meeting their needs. Additionally, CSR boosts employees' morale by fostering loyalty and increasing motivation, resulting in more productive work. Moreover, potential consumers consider a company's social responsibility when making purchasing decisions, as modern customers are more careful during shopping (Paulina K., 2016).

3. The Application of corporate social responsibility to the ETUSA Institution.

ETUSA leads public transportation in urban and suburban modes in the Wilaya of Algiers, providing daily movement for millions of people. This facility offers innovative mobility solutions that adapt to every movement and problem by listening to travelers, departments, and companies. It is now benefiting from the experience and expertise that it has gained through more than a century of its existence. The institution also aims to serve all municipalities and expand its activities to the new urban centers known as the City of Algeria.

3.1 The technical card of the Institution

Name: Urban and Suburban Transport Institution of Algiers.

In French: Établissement Public de Transport Urbain et Suburbain d'Alger.

Slog:



ETUSA everywhere, ETUSA for everyone.

Legal form: A public institution of industrial and commercial nature.

Creation: The Institution was created by Executive Decree No. 03-435 on November 13, 2003.

Address: 21 Ahmed Ghermoul Street, Algiers.

Mission: To meet the requirements of citizens for urban and suburban transportation in all circumstances and with the greatest number of features provided in terms of safety, quality of service and comfort.

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Number of lines: 154 lines, all utilized.

Buses: 275 buses owned by the institution and others rented.

Employees: The institution provides more than 3,700 jobs in various ranks and positions (www.etuza.dz).

3.2 The emergence and development of the Urban and Suburban Transport Institution of Algiers

After several restructuring operations for the institution responsible for transportation in Algeria, which was established in 1882, the Algiers Transport Union was established in 1959, and after independence, this institution continued to operate transportation in the capital until the liberation of this sector in 1988.

The institution faced an economic crisis in the nineties, when the same economic laws and management laws related to the economic liberalization of the sector were imposed on it; thus, the institution became dominated by a commercial nature, and it had to achieve profits and benefits in order to maintain its survival and competitiveness in the market, as all of the above prompted it to raise its prices and reduce the number of employees. It also abandoned some types of transportation that do not achieve a large profit, such as transportation for students and employees, and some lines that are characterized by weak returns.

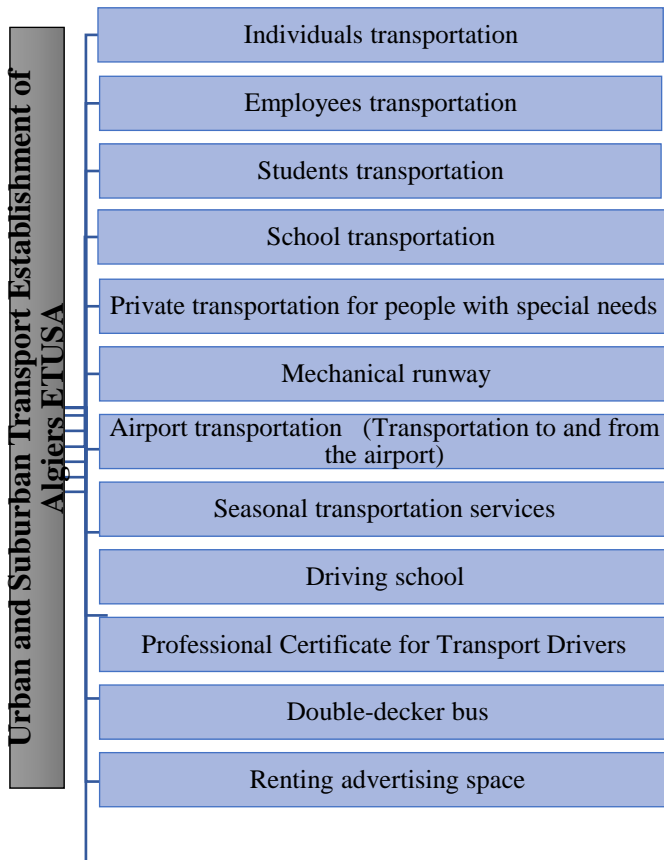
In the early 2000s, Algeria began to witness economic growth and political stability, and this led to the intervention of the state in the sector to reorganize it through the Ministry of Transport. Here, the institution was revived in 2003. According to Executive Decree No. 03/435 of November 13, 2003, The institution was reconstructed and reorganized, received support from the state, and became known as the Urban and Suburban

Transport Institution of Algiers (ETUSA). It expanded its activities to target a wide range of individuals (www.etuza.dz).

3.3 Services Provided by the Institution

In addition to the basic service of the institution, which is the transportation of individuals, it provides many other services, namely (interview with the central director of ETUSA):

Fig.2. Services provided by ETUSA



Source: Prepared by the researchers based on documents from the Institution.

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From the previous figure, we notice that public transport of individuals by bus is the main activity of the institution, in addition to other complementary services.

3.4 The objectives of the Institution

The Urban and Suburban Transport Institution of Algiers, ETUSA, seeks to provide the best services to the users of Algiers' buses by all appropriate means in accordance with the transport plan set by the public authorities. It also aims to:

- Achieve a coherent and organized network by providing an effective solution for the movement of individuals in Algiers in the long term and for long periods during the day (night services).
- Ensure optimal operation of the network and provide high-quality service to its customers.
- Ensure optimal service, comfort, and safety for individuals
- Ensure public solidarity service (transportation of persons with reduced mobility and school transport)
- preserve and promote the heritage (based on the institution's documents).

3.5 Dimensions of corporate social responsibility at ETUSA

The study was conducted on the Urban and Suburban Transport institution of Algiers in order to reach the reality of the application of corporate social responsibility in this institution. After the field study and analyzing the answers to interviews with various officials, in addition to the institution's documents, the reality of the application of corporate social responsibility in the institution was reached through the following dimensions:

3.4.1 The Economic Dimension

ETUSA is an institution that seeks to achieve financial returns, ensure its continuity in the market, and compete strongly. The most important points of the economic dimension of the institution can be summarized as follows:

- Services for mass bus transit are provided by private and public dealers, who provide 82.78% of the market's needs, compared to 17.22% for public institutions.
- The institution exploits 154 lines distributed over the city's neighborhoods along a length of 2,689 km, enabling it to provide mobility services to more than 39 million commuters.
- It relies on a fleet of modern buses, about 275 of which are owned by the institution and others rented.
- It seeks to increase its profits by providing services other than transportation, such as renting advertising spaces on buses, renting a double-decker bus, providing theoretical and practical courses to obtain a driver's license or a professional certificate for the driver for transporting people and goods, and other various services.
- Due to the nature of the institution, it is more concerned with the operational aspects of service performance and those in charge of providing it, especially the drivers and handlers who are in direct contact with the commuters. Therefore, competent individuals are selected to be trained and rehabilitated later, as well as to develop their skills to match the method of providing the transportation service, because they represent the institution in the eyes of the commuter.
- It provides the necessary training programs at home and abroad and assists some employees who wish to complete

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their postgraduate studies in order to develop their technical and administrative skills. From the technological side, the institution:

- Is equipped with modern technological means to keep pace with the development and improve the efficiency of the institution.
- Uses automatic dispensers that are available to users to obtain tickets of all kinds and are located at the level of buses or stations.
- Provides SMS notifications service that is sent to the customer's phone at the time of the first subscription or upon renewal of the subscription, which will make it much easier for the institution's customers to know information about the subscription period (beginning and end).
- Also seeks to communicate with individuals through all modern social media such as phone, Internet, website, Facebook....., and seeks to find an Android mobile application in order to improve communication with all individuals.

3.4.2 The Legal Dimension

ETUSA is a public institution of an industrial and commercial character. It is governed by Algerian law and was established by Executive Decree No. 03-435 of November 13, 2003. This dimension will be addressed through the following points:

Consumer Protection Laws

The institution:

- Provide buses equipped with the necessary security equipment.
- Uses modern used buses equipped with high-quality means in terms of lighting, ventilation, seating and standing spaces.
- Employs trained drivers and trains them on a regular basis. This is in order to provide safe and good driving.
- Follows up the condition of the buses and carries out preventive and remedial maintenance if necessary. This makes it aware of any malfunctions caused to the buses and allows them to take the necessary measures to compensate them.
- Monitors the weather condition permanently in order to warn and inform drivers to take precautions.
- Provides a telephone number for users for any inquiries or in case of losing their belongings while traveling on ETUSA buses.
- The state intervenes in determining the prices of ETUSA's mass transit services, like other public institutions for urban transport, which guarantees the consumer mobility at the lowest cost.
- ETUSA diversifies the means of advertising its services and the advertisement is objective without exaggerating the praise of the service and the institution. The advertisement also includes correct and accurate information
- It puts before the public the phone number 05.55.02.65.94 from (07:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.), in order to receive all calls, respond to the concerns of commuters, record their complaints and study them every week. In addition, the complainant can be summoned to attend the meeting. In addition to the website www.etusa.dz, the e-mail a.communication@etusa.dz and my Facebook page [etuzaalger.navigui](https://www.facebook.com/etuzaalger.navigui).

Environmental Protection

The institution's buses are modern, environmentally friendly, and meet international standards. Their color, shape, and size add beauty to the city. The institution is keen to constantly clean them for the convenience of commuters.

And since the institution has an environmental orientation, it tries in all its production operations to reduce the energy used, prevent pollution, and reduce damage and loss by relying on the recycling of both paper and cardboard in management, glass, equipment, iron, and bus spare parts. The institution has also recently provided waste bins divided according to the nature of the waste (plastic, glass, paper, etc.) in order to facilitate the sorting process.

Safety and Justice

The institution:

- Performs in a manner consistent with government and law expectations.
- Provides goods and services that meet at least the minimum legal requirements.
- Pays taxes and this is a social contribution to help the state finance social services and spend on infrastructure activities.
- Contributes to employees' social insurance with a certain percentage of their salaries and wages to obtain an appropriate retirement pension after retirement.

- Establishes systems for health care, hospitalization, access to social security services, and a deduction for medical expenses for employees and their families.
- Provides a special transportation bus for employees that transports them from the residential areas to the institution headquarters and vice versa.
- Provides security during work and avoids accidents in the institution.
- Is making equality between male and female employees in terms of rights and duties, as the categories of employees vary in terms of gender, age, origin...
- Is keen, on a regular basis, throughout the employee's career, to subject him to multiple training courses (the employee benefits from at least two training courses annually).

3.4.3 The Ethical Dimension

The institution takes into account the ethical aspect in its decisions and tries to be fair in all situations and also to avoid harm to others. We try to explain this dimension in the following points:

- ETUSA buses are equipped with 3 doors, two for getting off and one for boarding, which facilitates and speeds up the boarding and getting off process of passengers and allows attention to people with special needs, the elderly and children.
- Each bus has the capacity to accommodate 100 passengers, who are divided into 24 seats and seats for people with special needs.
- The institution Contribute to absorbing unemployment by providing jobs.

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- The institution respect for the customs and traditions of society and prohibits the use of radio or songs during work.
- The institution advertises and hangs posters on the bus urging the preservation of the environment and the cultivation of positive behaviors.

3.4.4 The Philanthropic Dimension

The institution acts as a good citizen in society by:

- mainly providing transportation service, which is a service of great importance in the community because it saves time and effort and increases social communication... and improves the quality of life in general.
- Offering free transportation to museums, especially for children.
- Providing transportation with a symbolic price to the seaside in summer.
- Offering free transportation for women on Women's Day.
- Giving tickets discounts according to the age, occupation and number of trips.
- Granting a card for free transportation to people with special needs.
- Providing "AME" service directed to people with special needs has been addressed.
- Providing "AME" service directed to people with special needs has been addressed. It was approved in 2011. The service in question supports anyone with a disability of more than or equal to 80% and users of wheelchairs or crutches, and includes about 500 beneficiaries. This service guarantees transportation to rehabilitation centres and hospitals located in the capital and its surrounding areas upon request and phone reservation. (Based on the personal

interview with the institution's official

Based on the analysis of the results, it is possible to:

- Prove the validity of the first hypothesis under study, where the institution has proved that it carries out activities through which it adopts the economic dimension of social responsibility.
- Prove the validity of the second hypothesis under study, where the institution has proved that it carries out activities through which it adopts the legal dimension of social responsibility.
- Prove the validity of the third hypothesis under study, where the institution has proved that it carries out activities through which it adopts the ethical dimension of social responsibility.
- Prove the validity of the fourth hypothesis under study, where the institution has proved that it carries out activities through which it adopts the philanthropic dimension of social responsibility.

4. CONCLUSION

In this study, we tried to address the issue of corporate social responsibility in the economic institution and the extent to which it applies to the various distinctive dimensions of corporate social responsibility, through which we reached the following:

Results:

- By placing significance and worth on corporate social responsibility within the business entity, it enables the reduction of operational expenses and enhancement of the overall reputation of products and their quality. As a result, this leads to increased sales, customer trust and loyalty, as well as productivity, and improved quality.

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- Not publishing the media and contributions that are based on corporate social responsibility to give the impression within the community that the institution is not fulfilling its role in this field.
- In general, training in this institution, according to the answers of the members of the studied sample, indicated that everyone involved in the institution is aware of social responsibility, but to varying degrees and with small values.
- The study concluded that there are applications of corporate social responsibility in its various dimensions, but in varying proportions focused on the economic and legal dimension, but it did not reach the required level and still suffers from some shortcomings, especially from the philanthropic dimension.
- The state intervenes in determining the prices of ETUSA's mass transit services, like its counterparts from public institutions of urban transport, as it is one of the basic services with a vital and direct contact with the lives of individuals. This limits the institution's ability to determine the price and thus the profit margin.
- That private dealers have the largest market share compared to public institutions, despite all the efforts made by the state to return and dominate the transport market.

Recommendations:

- The need to work on finding mandatory formulas for this responsibility through criteria for measuring it, and setting rewards and incentives when acceptable levels of it are achieved.
- Attempt to urge and encourage economic institutions to realize the importance of social responsibility in corporate

governance.

- Give employees the right to participate in the internal and external decisions of the institution.
- Public awareness can be heightened by organizing conferences, seminars, media campaigns, and workshops focused on topics related to social responsibility, with an emphasis on encouraging the active involvement of diverse government sectors.
- Full disclosure of information related to the social activities carried out by the institutions during the year, presenting them in reports and financial statements, and publishing them in the media, so that individuals can know the philanthropic role of the institution.

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