University Social Responsibility USR: What Value For The University/Company Relationship?

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Abstract: In recent decades, there have been increasing concerns about the role of Social responsibility in the organisations, It is obvious that today Universities are not exempt from this wave. They can be considered small cities due to their dimensions, the high number of students and employees engaged, and the magnitude of their institutional activities, Added to this is the challenge of adaptation, particularly with the advent of the "Covid 19" health crisis, which is incumbent on the Algerian University, to rethink its governance to integrate a socially responsible approach.

The objective of this work, is to analyze and remark the role of University Social Responsibility (USR), and to provide answers to the reality of its contribution to enhancing the relationship of the university with its stakeholders, particularly the company, through testimonies relating the university / company partnership. or via intermediaries such as private consulting or training companies, civil society INJAZ El DJAZAIR or employers' associations.

Keywords: CSR, university social responsibility USR, sustainable development, stakeholders, university, company.

JEL classifications codes: M14, I23.

I- Introduction:

the Communication of the 2009 UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, Paris, 2009 held in compliance with the guidelines of the 1998 Declaration and the list of objectives of the Bologna Process highlight that social responsibility is increasingly considered an intrinsic aspect of the higher education system, particularly of

the universities (Vasilescu &al,2010).

Universities, as educational institutions, play a vital role in the development and improvement of the society, contributing to the welfare of citizens.

The declaration of UNESCO (2009) presented contributions of great interest in the principles and values of university life related to life in society (dignity, freedom, citizenship, democracy and participation, sociability and solidarity coexistence, common good and social equity, sustainable development and the environment, acceptance and appreciation of diversity) and specifically about university values (commitment to truth, integrity, excellence, interdependence and interdisciplinary). universities have been considered primary actors able to directly or indirectly contribute to all the 17 SDGs.

In its World Declaration on Higher Education, UNESCO (1998) states that "higher education and research are now essential components of the cultural, socio-economic and ecologically sustainable development of

individuals,communities and nations.

It is obvious that today, universities can not remain outside the current sphere regarding the reflection of social responsibility and sustainable development, already adopted in many companies in recent years. Added to this is the challenge of adaptation, particularly with the advent of the "Covid 19" health crisis, which is incumbent on the Algerian University, to rethink its governance to integrate a socially responsible approach.

The university is not perceived only as an organization that consumes resources but as an organization that creates societal wealth. Indeed, its mission is to enable society to benefit from the results of its research, the University which has integrated the Social Responsibility vision in its strategy, is concerned of doing economic, social and environmental actions in their four specific working tasks: teaching, research, management and projection to society, and it is required to prepare young people for an active and productive life through solid intellectual and academic training, by anticipating

the expectations and needs of the market in terms of qualifications by making them acquire the skills necessary for their professional integration.

(Brown & Clock, 2009) believe that companies should engage in persuading universities to organize their curricula (courses program) to train quality staff and to implement a number of actions aimed at improving the relevance and value of this training, in particular through: the restructuring of its offer (development of professional training and reduction of training cursus with few job prospects) (Cisagara Bisimwa & Musole Binwa, 2020).

The Algerian Minister of Higher Education mentioned in a speech in May 2020 the challenges of the University of the future, which require it "to be attentive to industrial demand, to be flexible and not static, as well as the creation of centers of excellence and intelligence campuses", he adds "the new vision of the University must be stuck to the reality of the world".

Clearly, the link with the socio-economic world is essential and decisive. Companies are therefore a crucial stakeholder for higher education institutions; This link is also part of the commitments recommended in the international standards of behavior enacted by the SDGs and the CSR.

USR would therefore be a commitment that is not limited to its main protagonists, namely students, teachers and administrative staff, but would extend to all stakeholders.. Through this communication we will try to answer the following questions by providing examples of university / company links in the context of social responsibility.

What is the interest for universities to implement a Social Responsibility approach? How can they do it? What the value for the university/company relationship?

II- From CSR to USR in an RSO context

The notion of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as introduced by Bowen focused only on the field of companies which implies an ethical character carried by the businessmen

themselves. Other terms used for CSR in specialty literature are corporate responsibility, corporate citizenship, corporate sustainability or corporate sustainable development. For its operational aspect, we have chosen to retain the ISO 26000 standard which defines CSR as the responsibility of an organization vis-à-vis the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, resulting in a ethical and transparent behavior (Auburn & al, 2010).The social responsibility of organizations aims to contribute to sustainable development. CSR is increasingly recognized as being about having good business practices and its impacts are seen as contributing to an organization's reputation and performance. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure peace and prosperity for all people.

Later, CSR also extended to the non-profit sector, including education. This is how the social responsibility of universities (USR) was born, which is nothing other than CSR in the field of higher education. Commonly found terms like community engagement, community outreach programs, civic engagement, public engagement, and society university stakeholdership, all these terms express a specific aspect of how the act of university social responsibility is manifested (Esfijani et al., 2012).

University Social Responsibility is the ability of the University to disseminate and implement a set of general principles and specific values, using 4 key processes: Management, Teaching, Research and Extension, through the provision of educational services and transfer knowledge following ethical principles, good governance, respect for the environment, social engagement and the promotion of values. The University has a direct impact on the future of the world for the training of professionals and leaders, but it is also a social actor, which can promote the education of students in accordance with the external social reality, and make knowledge accessible to all (Domínguez Pachon, 2009).This is "the integration by universities

of cultural, socio-economic and environmental concerns into their activities and their relations with the world of work, local authorities and other components of society. It is part of the sustainable development approach", It is about 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. (Vasilescu &al,2010).

Reiser (2008) defines the USR concept as "a policy of ethical quality of the performance of the university community (students, faculty and administrative employees) via the responsible management of the educational, cognitive, labour and environmental impacts produced by the university, in an interactive dialogue with society to promote a sustainable human development." This desire is all the more present as the university becomes, according to Dewatripont et al.

(2001), "a real company". It must be accountable to all of its partners, be attractive to students and communicate with the business world. (Luangsay-Catelin & Gasner-Bouquet, 2018).

1- USR Implementation Areas

The new "sustainable development" mission at the university requires reviewing and rethinking its governance,a better implementation of social responsibility at the university would not be possible without a new governance centered on autonomy, innovation, ethics, profitability, managerial excellence, and openness to stakeholders, in order to meet their needs, but above all to benefit from their support. (PFEFFER & SALANSICK, 1978).It is first necessary to identify its stakeholders who are diverse, firstly internal with teachers, students and administrative staff, and secondly externally associated with the management of the public service of higher education, we identify the state and public authorities, but also companies increasingly

involved in training actions and research partnerships (Ory, 2018).

Knowing the expectations of students in terms of academic training will help them develop their knowledge, life skills and know-how. To do this, it is essential to review and renew the teaching techniques for transmitting this knowledge. (Hadj Slimane-Kheroua & Tabet Aouel-Lachachi, 2021). Allowing students to position themselves, as soon as they leave, as "providers of skills" and not as simple job seekers" (Ciruisef, 2008); It's about rethinking education in terms of durability. The training program must integrate questions of ethics and moral responsibility, an awareness of the protection of the environment and the planet and an awareness of the learners on the organizational principles which result therefrom. The implementation of ambitious and quality interdisciplinary research projects is also becoming necessary..

In terms of professional integration, the University must forge links with the socio-economic world, because companies are fully-fledged stakeholders. It should not limit its responsibility to obtaining their first job but also promote their personal development and their adaptability so as to contribute to innovation in companies.

A socially responsible university is one that adopts socially responsible behavior in each of its main areas (skills-creating training, actionable and innovative research, participatory management) (Ngoloko Ngomb & Biwole Fouda, 2019).

Moreover, university strategic management must include in its strategic plan the mission, vision and definition of objectives and actions, ensuring an appropriate use of resources to serve to its social mission and the development of internal and external diagnostics. The conceptual proposal is presented as follows (Figure 1).

Therefore, it is necessary to identify how this perception could be included in the strategic plan, which includes mainly the integration of USR as philosophy of planning strategic actions. University strategic management should be oriented to evaluate the fulfilment of the needs and expectations of the stakeholders tracing the course of the

university, which must be based on the USR.

Thus, university strategic management will succeed if managers are able to respond to stakeholder's needs and create welfare and if they are capable of gaining trust and generating cooperation between all university stakeholders. (Elva & al,2017).

Fig.1. Role of the USR into the universities
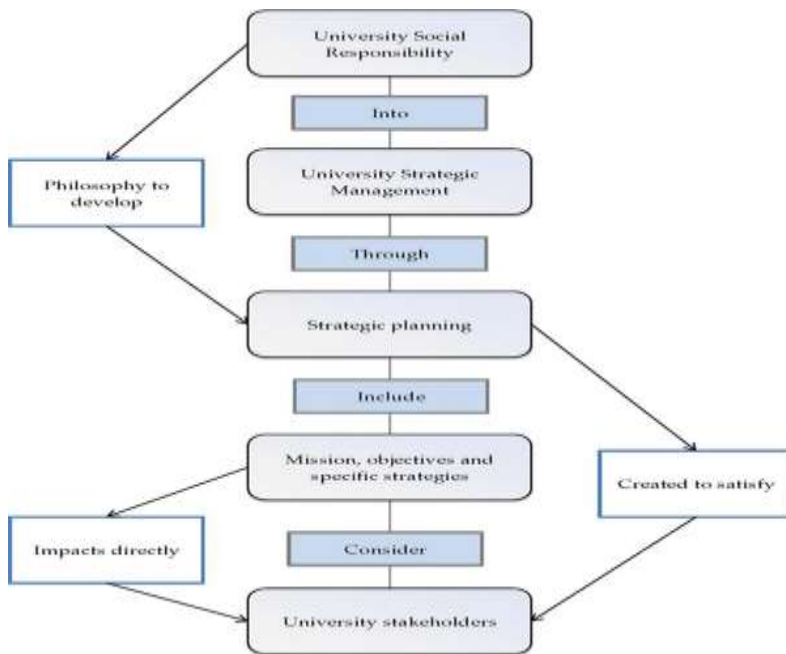
Source: Elva & al,(2017)

2- Stakeholder theory:

the reason for existence of the USR is based on the fulfilment of the needs and expectations of the stakeholders, so it is crucial to study this theory and understand who are those groups and their influence on the university work. Stakeholder theory explains that there are groups that influence or are influenced by the objectives, actions, political decisions and goals of a given organization. Also, there are groups with

legitimate interests that are allowed to interfere

it's a concept that is also used in international behavioral standards and adopted by ISO (international standard organization), in particular ISO 26000, which is the standard relating to the social responsibility of organizations, the organization cannot live without its stakeholders.

The vision of the university as a source of societal values is noted by El Ouazzani, for whom the USR "is an open process that pushes the university to continually question itself on how to establish the link between its various activities, the needs of its stakeholders and the imperatives of sustainable development" (El Ouazzani, 2015),in fact, to guarantee an effective RSU approach, it is important first of all to identify and classify the stakeholders by degree of influence, and establish good communication and dialogue established by competent interlocutors equipped with well-defined tools, and previously defined objectives.

In their guide, Vallaeys et al. (2009) refer to "stakeholders" as a term that encompasses a wide range of individuals, such as: non-teaching staff, teaching and research staff, authorities, students, providers, graduates, recruiters, competitors, local communities, partner organizations and public/governmental entities. Shriberg (2002) reaffirms the need for sustainability tools to thus be comprehensible to a broad range of stakeholders, requiring "mechanisms for reporting that are verifiable and lucid." (Wigmore-Álvarez & Ruiz-Lozano, 2012)

Ansoff will be recognized as the first to refer to stakeholder theory through his perception of corporate responsibility to its stakeholders. (Ansoff, 1968). According to this author, the company must adjust its objectives so as to give each of them a fair share of satisfaction. Hafner asserts that "the university must understand and address the wants, needs, and demands of those it serves". (Hafner, 1998).

However, it was not until the work of Freeman, in his book entitled Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach (Freeman, 1984), that the notion of stakeholders became widespread,

thus giving rise to a multitude of definitions. and a series of controversies regarding the rights attributed to stakeholders (Gond & Mercier, 2003).

Thus, Carroll and Näsi (1997) distinguish between internal and external stakeholders (Carroll and Näsi, 1997; quoted by Mercier and Gond, 2005). Internal such as administrative staff, teachers, support staff, students. and external such as companies, the State, local authorities, regulatory authorities, the media.

Classifies stakeholders considering their participation into an organization as internal actors (participation in internal management), as stake-watchers (generate influence/pressure in the development of activities), and as stake-keepers (impose external control)(Fassin,2009).

Another typology is established by Clarkson, who distinguishes the primary stakeholders that are very important for the university and to which it is bound by contract (students, teachers, the state, administrative staff), and secondary stakeholders, who can affect the university without being bound by a contract such as companies, local authorities, and media. Although some companies and local authorities can get involved in training and research through apprenticeship contracts.

However, the nuance between primary and secondary stakeholders can be very narrow insofar as certain companies and local authorities can become contractually involved in the training of students through work-study and apprenticeship contracts or even the financing of certain university training centres, and to be characterized for this purpose as a primary stakeholder (Ory, 2015).

III- How to situate the university-company relationship in the RSO?

The CSR (Algerian standard), ISO 26000 was implemented as part of a cooperation program (SPRING, 2013), materialized within the framework of the support program for the implementation of the Algeria-European Union Association Agreement (P3A) in which various ministerial institutions took part, the Ministry of Industry has set up the evaluation of the Algerian Standard ISO 26000 in partnership with the Algerian

Institute for Standardization IANOR.

ISO 26000 is not a management system standard. It does not contain requirements and as such is not intended for certification purposes. Any offer of certification, or claim of certification, according to ISO 26000 would be a misrepresentation of the intention and the objective of this International Standard, it is based on seven principles : Accountability, Transparency, Ethical behavior, Respect for the interests of stakeholders, Respect for legality, Consideration of international standards of behavior, Human rights.

The introduction to the standard states that: "Organizations around the world and their stakeholders are increasingly aware of the need for responsible behavior and the benefits associated with it. The objective of social responsibility is to contribute to sustainable development. "

ISO 26000 addresses seven core subjects of social responsibility (SR) promoting sustainability in: (1) Organizational governance; (2) Human rights; (3) Labor practices; (4) The environment; (5) Fair operating practices; (6) Consumer issues; and (7) Community involvement and development, and seven key principles in: (1) accountability; (2) transparency; (3) ethical behavior; (4) respect for stakeholder interests; (5) respect for the rule of law; (6) respect for international norms of behavior; and (7) respect for human rights. (ISO,2012).

Very often companies pride themselves on being socially responsible by sponsoring or ad hoc university-company relations actions. These initiatives are to be encouraged, it is also important to situate this within the wider CSR and encourage to implement the core issues, areas of action and principles as much as possible,

In recent years, a great enthusiasm for Algerian companies in their university-company relationship has been observed. These practices have often been imported by multinationals who have duplicated the practices of parent

companies and also modeled by Algerian companies.

It should be noted that universities have varied and enriched the forms of interaction with companies, moving from the conventional mode of internship insertion to various win-win practices, either directly or through intermediaries such as civil society. INJAZ El Djazair, which is a fraction of INJAZ El Arab, an organization affiliated with Junior Achievement that supports young people in the 15 countries of MENA -Middle East and North Africa- with programs to promote entrepreneurship. INJAZ El Arab has created a partnership with the private sector by involving more than 200 influential businessmen in its mission to ensure that young students have the skills necessary to enter the world of work. INJAZ El Arab supports more than 200,000 young people each year in the Middle East and North Africa. One of its "Business Ethics" programs promotes conscious and ethical decision-making for students who are on

the path to professional life. Hands-on activities are designed to introduce students to ethics by prioritizing, recognizing and evaluating their own progress in decision-making while drawing attention to the enormous impact of business on the surrounding community[*].

We should also mention the Algerian Confederation of Citizen Employers (CAPC), an employers' organization which brings together producing companies from all sectors of activity (industry, services, trade, etc.); through Jil'CAPC which is open to young entrepreneurs, young companies, start-ups and innovative companies and project leaders[†].

Jurex Itek, consulting and training firm, has since 2007 set up a university-company relationship by integrating first-time applicants, by mobilizing its teams for coaching and volunteering at universities and by sponsoring activities such as the startup weekend which has was organized by Oran 2 University,

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[*] INJAZ El Djazair (injaz-eldjazair.org)

[†] The Algerian Confederation of Citizen Employers (capc.dz)

the Women stratup weekend in 2018, and by offering workshops to students, public speaking, business model Canvas, etc..

The role of the Algerian University as an actor in local and regional economic development is manifested through its support for innovation projects and its entrepreneurial culture, in particular: by encouraging the sponsorship of young project leaders from university incubators by local economic actors; by ensuring the employability of young graduates: this by the adequacy between the training offer of higher education establishments and the employment needs of the territory of the university and the territory of birth of the student; also by networking in order to lead a common reflection on sustainable development with local actors (Hadj Slimane-Kheroua & Tabet Aouel-Lachachi, 2021), as defined by ISO

"Territorial anchoring is the proactive proximity work of an organization vis-à-vis the community. It aims to prevent and resolve problems, foster partnerships with local organizations and stakeholders, and demonstrate civic behavior towards the community. »

The Algerian Textile Industries, TAYAL, SPA gave the example, located in the industrial zone of Sidi Khettab in the Wilaya of Relizane, has carefully studied its business/university relationship strategy. Located near several Wilayas and in a Rural Area. Its recruitment potential being in full expansion, the requests and solicitations being very broad, the choice was to

· Prioritize the Relationship University of Relizane: capital of the Wilaya (Central question n°7)

· Establish relations with national schools in order to promote the integration of graduates from resident schools in the Wilaya of Relizane, (Central question n°7).

· Establishment of agreements with the universities which have expressed their wish, including the University of Oran 2

·Continuous training of executives with specialized institutes such as the Institute of Maintenance and Industrial Safety, Oran 2 University (IMSI)

·Research agreement (University of Skikda,Algeria)

·Visits of university groups inTayal Society

·Reception of end-of-study interns

·Recruitment of trainee engineers at the end of their cycle and investment in their immersion

·Solicitation of the university for occasional consulting missions (study of the quality of the soil with a view to identifying the species of plants to be planted)

·Encouragement of employees to do volunteer work and coaching with universities, particularly in employability and entrepreneurship.

Conclusion:

Universities have been called to integrate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainability pillars in their curricula to prepare future leaders and decision-makers to contribute to driving the transition toward a more sustainable society ; It's responsible for training and scientific research, is faced with reviewing its mode of governance and defining its stakeholders and committing to integrating the ingredients of sustainable development in teaching, research and in the various economic, social and cultural activities.

Effective governance should be based on integrating the principles of social responsibility into decision-making and implementation processes.

Thus, the scope of the university's activities expands beyond its primary missions of training, research, production and dissemination of knowledge.

The university has become an actor in local and regional economic development. Its research is increasingly focused on innovation, through joint laboratories with companies, through a better structured development approach or through

the dissemination of entrepreneurial culture. Training is increasingly designed in relation to professional circles. If the university must take charge of this new economic responsibility, it cannot be part of this approach alone, forgetting its societal responsibilities.

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