Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

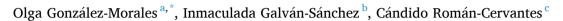


Research in Transportation Business & Management

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/rtbm



# Social responsibility as a source of satisfaction for worker-members in a social economy transport company



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## ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility Social enterprise Worker-members Job satisfaction Seniority

## ABSTRACT

This research paper examines the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and worker-member satisfaction in social economy enterprises. Focusing on an intercity passenger transport company in Spain, the study examines the impact of CSR practices on worker-member satisfaction. The actions of the company were analyzed, and information was collected from 252 worker-members through a questionnaire on the aspects that make up CSR according to the European Commission. The research introduces a novel perspective by bridging the fields of CSR, social economy enterprises, and the intercity passenger transport sector, which have received limited attention together. The findings reveal a significant positive influence of CSR on worker-member satisfaction, highlighting the value of responsible business practices in enhancing employee satisfaction. This study contributes valuable insights to the literature on CSR and its impact on worker-member satisfaction and provides practical implications for social economy enterprises seeking to promote sustainable development through worker-members engagement. The contribution of this work is the method used itself, which allows the company to identify areas for improvement and make decisions when developing its CSR strategy.

## 1. Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is transforming business culture from the search for value and maximum economic benefit to the commitment to sustainable development. The positive and negative externalities generated by companies have an impact on society and CSR is considered as a strategy in which companies collaborate with different social agents, governments, international organizations, global civil society, and social movements in the process towards sustainable development (European Commission, 2011). In this regard, it should be considered that real positive externalities should always be promoted, without CSR being used by the companies themselves as an opportunity to apply social pressure actions to increase profits (Ramanna, 2020).

CSR is not a new strategy for companies in the Social Economy and, of course, it should not be a two-way strategy used as a trick to improve the company's public relations (Lyon et al., 2018). The definition of

Social Economy is provided by European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) as "the set of private, formally-organized enterprises, with autonomy of decision and freedom of membership, created to meet their members' needs through the market by producing goods and providing services, insurance and finance, where decision-making and any distribution of profits or surpluses among the members are not directly linked to the capital or fees contributed by each member, each of whom has one vote" (Monzon & Chaves, 2008). Cooperatives are the most numerous and longstanding social economy companies. CSR values and principles have been present in the cooperative model since its origins (Mozas Moral and Puentes Poyatos, 2010), with democratic structure, self-help, equity, social inclusion, solidarity, care of the environment and relevance of its members in decisions, serving the interests of its workers and the community. Tomé, Bandeira, Azevedo, and Costa (2020) described that the activities these social companies carry out are of an economic and social nature and must be developed in the general interest of their

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https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rtbm.2023.101070

Received 6 April 2022; Received in revised form 31 July 2023; Accepted 13 November 2023

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members, users and beneficiaries, *i.e.* in the general interest of the community. These institutions are also concerned with sustainability in all its dimensions (economic, social, and environmental), in which organizational performance takes on a particular importance, since it is imperative to guarantee their continuity and to encourage and promote their social action.

It is important to note that in the social economy, the workers are defined as "social workers" because they have an ownership link with the company. This is why the term "worker-member" is used in the nomenclature of social economy companies. The relevant role of the worker-members should be mentioned due to their knowledge of the social responsibility actions carried out by the company which affects decision-making, and because the worker-member is an important element of the company that disseminates these actions in society. In the case of credit cooperatives, Belmonte Ureña and Cortés García (2010) consider that the member is the guarantee and the transmission belt between the values and objectives of the society and the credit cooperative itself. When the base of worker-members is broad, it is necessary to create mechanisms so that they are informed and participate in decisions.

Almeida and Coelho (2019) identified how culture and communication can influence the corporate image and their impact on the attitudes and behavior of workers, increasing the organizational commitment and individual performance of workers. These authors understand that the perception of CSR practices can increase the ties between employees and their organization. Lee (2020) suggests that the links created between CSR, the relationship between the organization and employees, and internal reputation strengthen the company's perceived external reputation. According to Pintão, Chaves, and Castelo-Branco (2018), workers perceive a CSR action according to whether it satisfies their needs and, therefore, the CSR action is determined by the perceived value of each partner-worker and not by the objective action itself, so it is necessary to analyze partner-workers' perceptions to know their satisfaction with the company.

Bus passenger transport is a fundamental pillar of the transport sector, with significant economic and social impacts. However, research on corporate social responsibility (CSR) in passenger transport companies remains limited, despite the significant economic and environmental impact of the sector (Arimany-Serrat, Sabata-Aliberch, and Uribe-Salazar, 2019). In addition, existing studies on CSR show a lack of research specifically focused on the transport sector (Dabic, Colovic, Lamotte, Painter-Morland, and Brozovic, 2016); Rotaris, Scorrano, Campisi, and Rossi, 2023) Dabic et al. (2016) conducted a literature review that uncovered only two studies focused on the transport sector, mainly focusing on maritime and river transport. Despite this gap, the transport sector occupies an important position in terms of job creation and its role as a catalyst for sustainable social and economic development (Rotaris et al., 2023). In particular, Rotaris et al. (2023) found a unique study by Agliata, Ferrone, and Tuccillo (2017) that examined employee satisfaction with CSR, although not as a primary objective, as it also considered customer perceptions. In particular, companies, including those in the bus industry, strive to increase productivity and efficiency by improving working conditions and promoting job satisfaction. As a result, researchers are exploring various ways to increase job satisfaction, including evaluating the impact of work environment and economic factors (Kwon, Byun, and Park, 2019).

Taking all these circumstances into account, this study accepts the challenge demanded in the literature to increase research within the transport sector, CSR, and social economy companies. In this sense, a research project is developed in the largest social economy company of the intercity passenger transport sector in the Canary Islands (Spain). This paper is part of the results of a project whose objective was to analyze the CSR actions of an intercity passenger transport company in Spain, according to the European Commission (2001) recommended structure. The main objective of this study is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the impact of worker-members' perceptions of corporate

social responsibility (CSR) policies on their levels of job satisfaction in the context of an intercity transportation company. By examining the subtle differences in worker-members' perceptions of CSR initiatives, this study seeks to uncover the potential effects of such actions on job satisfaction, thereby contributing to the understanding of the relationship between CSR and worker-member engagement within the specific domain of intercity transportation. In addition, another objective is to study the influence of two different variables (the seniority of the worker-member and the resources used to inform about these CSR actions) on this job satisfaction.

This research represents a notable advancement in the field, as it skillfully addresses the identified gaps in CSR research in the transportation sector. Furthermore, it stands out for its focus on the internal perspective of CSR, measuring worker-members' perceptions and their consequent influence on job satisfaction. Therefore, this research presents an innovative perspective by bridging three relatively underexplored areas of research. The study represents a novel approach by analyzing the corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices of a social enterprise operating in the intercity passenger transportation sector. This research breaks new ground in shedding light on the CSR initiatives of such organizations and provides valuable insights into the intersection of CSR, social economy enterprises, and the interurban passenger transport industry.

## 2. Theoretical framework and hypothesis

# 2.1. Corporate social responsibility

Neoclassical microeconomics considers that, in markets in perfect competition, social benefit is achieved when companies maximize their market value, and the economy operates at maximum efficiency. In this situation, government intervention should be minimal because rational individual behavior achieves this balance. Given this situation, the voluntary adoption of socio-environmental criteria in addition to those required by law causes the inefficient allocation of resources with the consequent decrease in social welfare. This argument is made from the point of view in which economic agents behave individually in a situation where there are no failures in the market derived from the impact of their activities, but the current reality is not like that. Even though some economists argue that the only responsibility that the company has is profit maximization and that any other restriction or demand is not necessary and may even be detrimental to the proper functioning of the market economy, it is undeniable that in the today's world these arguments are becoming more obsolete.

In this context, the different public administrations are aware of the importance of promoting CSR because it is the way companies can contribute to sustainable development in its broadest sense. Public institutions transform the context of business decision-making and companies are incorporating CSR into their objectives, accommodating the expectations created by public initiatives.

The European Commission (2001: 6) defined CSR for the first time in 2001 and understands that it is about the voluntary integration, by companies, of social and environmental concerns in their commercial operations and their relationships with their interlocutors which consists of an internal and an external dimension, which can be broken down into different aspects. On the one hand, the internal dimension includes an adequate management of human resources, health and safety at work, the ability to adapt to change, and the management of environmental impact and natural resources; on the other hand, the external dimension is focused on the role of the company in the development of local communities, the choice of business partners and suppliers, awareness of consumer demands, and concern about human rights issues and ecological problems in the world. A decade later, the European Commission (2011: 7) updated the definition and highlighted the importance of the CSR for their impact on society.

Dmytriyev, Freeman, and Hörisch (2021) note that the CSR theory

arises together with the stakeholder theory, providing different but complementary theoretical frameworks with some overlap. The CSR theory considers that socially responsible actions are included within a strategy planned by the management team of a company, but this goes further when combined with the effects of the actions of the institutions and the participation of stakeholders, integrating interests and needs of shareholders, managers, workers, customers, suppliers, unions, competitors, public decision makers and communities (Lee, 2011) and maintains that the effective application of CSR policies and practices can lead to effective stakeholder management (Lahouel, Peretti, and Autissier, 2014). Stakeholder theory suggests that the purpose of a company is to create as much value as possible for stakeholders to be successful and sustainable over time, with managers having to keep the interests of employees and stakeholders aligned in the same direction in the process. Furthermore, organizations should consider any group or individual that may affect or is affected by the achievement of the company's objectives, deriving their responsibility from their ability to affect the company (Friedman and Miles, 2006). Adib, Zhang, Zaid, and Sahyouni (2021) promote the idea of considering stakeholder theory as the key perspective to rethink and reorient research focused on the consequences of CSR, to deepen the search for the multiple contingencies that may be present in the face of a variation in CSR performance. From this perspective, the literature considers that socially responsible companies tend to increase their performance, creating positive synergies with stakeholders, in turn improving their own reputation and relational capital (Bernal-Conesa, Briones-Peñalver, and De Nieves-Nieto, 2016). Besides, CSR can be seen as a reflection of the ethical concerns of executives and managers and can provide a positive image of the company as a responsible corporate "citizen" to investors and other key stakeholders, such as employees (Bacha and Ajina, 2020). In this respect, stakeholders are currently forcing companies to present themselves as good corporate citizens and who promote ethical, transparent, and responsible business practices (Sajjad, Jillani, and Raziq, 2018). The justification for the relevance of stakeholder theory for this research work is based on the fact that employees are the main stakeholders in any organization. As mentioned by Chaudhary (2019), generating good relationships with employees does not have to involve a large capital investment, but it can increase their positive perception of the organization, considering it a responsible company, which translates into substantial gains in commitment and productivity.

Finally, it should be mentioned that CSR is a strategy that can be integrated into social economy companies. In such companies, socioenvironmentally responsible actions are part of their founding genetics. Social economy companies have a long tradition of combining economic viability and CSR, thanks to dialogue between stakeholders and participatory management, which can serve as a reference for other organizations. There is a lack of studies applying CSR to non-capitalist organizations, assuming that its application is intrinsic to the nature of the company and, therefore, will not have any explicit repercussions. This should not be taken for granted as there is a need for research in the literature on social economy companies considering other types of companies, (i.e cooperatives, associated work cooperatives and social companies), with the objective of expanding knowledge about the practical influence of CSR on social economy companies (Sacchetti and Tortia, 2020).

#### 2.2. Human resources and CSR

Studies on CSR started to pay more attention to employees as a specific unit of analysis the beginning of the 21st century, emphasizing the relationship between leadership and corporate social behavior (Waldman, Siegel, and Javidhan, 2006). Although some studies have included theoretical models of corporate social performance and explicitly include employees as a unit of analysis, very few authors actually examine how internal CSR practices influence worker job satisfaction.

Bauman and Skitka (2012) say that it is necessary to examine whether the socially responsible actions of companies affect employees, since employees are one of the most important stakeholders that directly contribute to successfully implementing CSR actions. Glavas (2016) proposes that, in cases where there are low levels of employee commitment in the workplace, workers should be involved in CSR actions, following a bottom-up approach that would increase the commitment of workers to the company.

The findings of Albasu and Nyameh (2017), Bouraoui, Bensemmane, and Ohana (2020) and Pintão et al. (2018) show that companies need to improve employee perception of CSR because a positive perception has a positive effect on employee emotional commitment and productivity. Other later studies in the same vein analyze the perception that workers have of these actions because it allows the decision maker of the company to reorient them, implement them and/or improve the dissemination channels. Vera Muñoz, Martínez Méndez, Vera Muñoz, and Martínez Lagunas (2018) study these perceptions considering the differences according to hierarchical levels in the company. Frick (2018) highlights the positive relationship of the effects that a socially responsible company has on the recruitment of personnel, since CSR improves the reputation of the company, and this leads to a higher number of job applicants. According to Tafolli and Grabner-Kräuter (2020) as well as Vitaliano (2010), organizations should endeavor to promote their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives among their employees. However, relying solely on certain media channels might not be optimal, as certain actions may lack sufficient visibility. Gaudêncio, Coelho, and Ribeiro (2021) show how CSR can influence worker attitudes, especially in terms of innovative behavior; they also suggest that managers should implement CSR practices and should invest in communication and in the process of updating the corporate image.

Considering the theoretical contributions described above, the following working hypothesis about the importance of communication media is proposed:

**H1.** The communication medium has direct and positive impact on the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) actions undertaken by the company.

In addition, Martínez-León, Olmedo-Cifuentes, Arcas-Lario, and Zapata-Conesa (2018) deal with the term job satisfaction within the scope of the social economy, emphasizing labor-intensive companies, where the satisfaction of human resources is paramount. This idea follows the classical concept of organizational perspectives proposed by Locke (1976), where satisfaction is defined as the positive or pleasant emotional state resulting from a personal valuation that the individual makes of their work in general or of some facet of it. The present study assumed also that the worker-members' personal assessment of the CSR actions affects their job satisfaction with the company. Peterson (2004) shows that there is a positive correlation between workers' perception of CSR actions and their commitment to the company, since employees who believed in CSR showed a stronger bond with the company. Ellemers, Kingma, van de Burgt, and Barreto (2011) argue that perceived organizational morale conditions, affective commitment, and job satisfaction as relevant indicators of employees' work motivation. Tafolli and Grabner-Kräuter (2020) support this idea that the CSR perceived by employees can increase their positive feelings towards their work and, therefore, will result in improved job satisfaction.

Given these theoretical contributions from several studies, the following general research hypothesis is proposed:

**H2.** CSR has a direct and positive influences the job satisfaction of the worker-members.

In this sense, and considering the theoretical foundations mentioned above, research hypothesis H2 is reformulated in order to consider each sub-dimension of CSR separately. It should be noted that one of the contributions of this work is to measure the impact of these CSR actions by grouping them according to the proposal established by the European Commission, which suggests 4 sub-dimensions (see Section 2.1). Hypothesis 2 is therefore divided into 4 sub-hypotheses in order to test separately the influence of each sub-dimension on the overall satisfaction of worker-member.

In this regard, the studies by Barakat, Isabella, Boaventura, and Mazzon (2016) show that the good organizational image derived from CSR actions has a positive influence on employee satisfaction and negatively on job rotation intentions. Specifically, Vitaliano (2010) concludes that the adoption of business policies that lead to the company being classified as socially responsible reduces the annual abandonment rate and absenteeism, as well as positively affects the costs of hiring and training new employees. Similarly, Mirvis (2012) analyzed the importance of CSR for employees to determine its influence on motivation and the feeling of identification with the company itself. In this regard, there are proposals to merger these two terms, which explains the recent growing interest in studying the relationship between CSR and human resources practices, which has been termed as socially responsible human management (Bustamante, 2019). Considering the HRManagement sub-dimension of CSR the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H2a.** Actions on *HR Management* have a positive influence on the satisfaction of the worker-member.

Furthermore, the involvement in CSR has been shown to stimulate work commitment. Raub and Blunschi (2014) conclude that employee awareness and involvement in CSR activities are directly related to their job satisfaction and their level of commitment to the company and are negatively related to job burnout. Haar, Russo, Suñe, and Ollier-Malaterre (2014) conclude that generating healthier work environments will in turn generate mental balance in employees, which will improve employee job satisfaction. According to the sub-dimension of CSR called *Health and safety work*, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H2b.** Actions on *Health and safety at work* has a positive influence on the satisfaction of the worker-member.

In addition, Wells, Smith, Taheri, Manika, and McCowlen (2016) understand that an appropriate CSR strategy needs to ensure that employee's feel identified with the values of the company and act in accordance with their own personal pro-sustainability values. In addition, the findings of Heiner and Boon (2002) about external dimension indicate that the environment, relations with the community and diversity have a stronger influence on the attractiveness of employees than other aspects of CSR. In order to analyze the importance of the company's environmental management on worker-members' satisfaction, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H2c.** Actions on Adaptation to change and environmental management has a positive influence on the satisfaction of the worker-member.

Additionally, Barakat et al. (2016) contend that a favorable organizational image stemming from CSR initiatives further enhances employee satisfaction. Specifically, Closon, Leys, and Hellemans (2015) investigated the impact of the various dimensions of CSR on organizational commitment and job satisfaction and their results suggest that job satisfaction is positively influenced by internal and external ethical-legal practices, as well as by philanthropic practices. These philanthropic actions or acts of support for the local community are included in the sub-dimension " Development of the local community and collaboration with business partners, suppliers and customers ". With these theoretical contributions in mind, hypothesis H2d is proposed:

**H2d.** Actions on Development of the local community and collaboration with business partners, suppliers and customers has a direct influence on the satisfaction of the worker-member.

The present study also aimed to analyze the variable seniority and its influence on job satisfaction. Although there are results that confirm the

influence of seniority, it is necessary to further investigate this variable due to the controversial results. In particular, Kwon et al. (2019) in their research about South Korean drivers concluded driver satisfaction increases with driving experience, which is likely related to seniority pay. Besides Filipkowski and Derbis (2023) even have differences between various models that consider the seniority in their study company. They showed that there is no indirect effect of job seniority, occupation seniority, and age on sense of security and job satisfaction relationship. Moreover, Anaya-Nieto and Suárez Riveiro (2006) and, Lanfranchi & Pekovic (2014) found that seniority is negatively correlated with indicators associated to job satisfaction. Due to the importance that seniority can have on the worker-members of a social economy company with more than 20 years of existence as the one studied in this work; the following hypothesis is proposed.

**H3.** The seniority of the worker-member in the company directly influences worker-member satisfaction. The greater the seniority, the lower the satisfaction.

# 3. Methodology

The intercity bus social company analyzed here is a Spanish social economy company in the passenger transport sector. With over 20 years of experience in this sector, this company was created from the merger of two previous companies that geographically shared the interurban transport services. In 2000, the merger of the two firms was intended to join forces to offer passengers a quality service on the island from north to south and east to west. This intercity bus company connects different cities or towns. In most cases, terminals are located near the center of each city. This intercity bus service may have frequent stops along secondary roads, but it also offers in some schedule's intercity services, along highways, usually without stops. In addition, it is highly considered by passengers, since 78% of them say that they would continue to use the services of this bus company, even if they had their own vehicle. The enterprise is committed to the community and the users of its services. It has implemented a quality project based on CSR in order to enhance the satisfaction of customers, workers-members, and the community, supporting cultural, educational, and environmental projects that contribute to the care of the environment and sustainable development.

The population under study is the group of worker-members of this intercity transport service firm, which, at the time of the investigation, 2018, had 724 worker-members, a fleet of 308 vehicles covering more than 27 million kilometers a year on the 121 routes in Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, and more than 25 million passengers a year.

# 3.1. Method

The intercity bus social company was asked to provide the documents where the information on the CSR actions it was carrying out was compiled. After which, the content was analyzed and the actions were organized according to the structure set out by the European Commission, using the Ethos Institute indicators, adapted to the idiosyncrasy of the company, which are harmonized with the G4 standards of the Global Reporting Initiative, which guarantees an internationally homogenized standard analysis.

After the CSR actions were classified, it was observed that the company had developed many actions in aspects related to human resources management and health and safety at work, but very few actions regarding the rest of the aspects proposed by the European Commission. Consequently, it was decided to group the rest of the actions into groups of more related aspects depending on the nature of the action. This provided a first result of the investigation which is that the company has not developed a broad CSR strategy, but rather actions in some aspects of it.

Consequently, an ad hoc questionnaire was prepared for the worker-

members that encompassed 4 large groups of CSR actions with their respective items, three corresponding to the internal dimension and one to the external dimension of CSR. The questionnaire also contained a question about the number of years that the worker-member has worked in the company, a further question where the participant needs to show the means of dissemination used by the company to communicate the actions and, finally, a question asking the worker-member to assess their overall degree of satisfaction with their company on a Likert scale (0–10). A coefficient of 0.820 was obtained after applying Cronbach's Alpha  $\alpha$  as an index of internal consistency.

A representative sample of the study population was calculated, anticipating that the entire population would not respond. The significant sample for a population of 724 worker-members was 251 participants. Although 271 responses were obtained, 19 did not respond to the question about the overall assessment of the company, which reduced the sample size to 252. This number of responses allowed the results to be extrapolated to the entire population under study, with a confidence level of 95% and a sampling error of 5%.

## 3.2. Statistical analysis

Contingency tables were prepared to analyze the differences in the responses of the worker-members to the four groups of CSR actions by crossing these items with the valuation of the worker-members' degree of satisfaction with the company. The Chi-square test was applied to check whether the frequency distributions fitted a model distribution. If the probability is less than 0.05 (it adopts a significance level of 5%), shows that the observed distribution does not behave as the expected distribution, therefore, there are significant differences between the three analyzed groups.

A multiple linear regression analysis (MLR) was then applied to analyze the relationship of a dependent variable (Y) with several independent quantitative and/or dummy variables (predictor variables). However, the nature of the items included in the four groups of CSR actions requires a transformation of the responses so that they can be used in the MLR in the form of factors. This transformation was performed by means of an exploratory factor analysis with the items that, in the Chi-square test,  $\chi_2$ , were significant at a significance level of 1%, as can be seen in Table 1. The validity of the factor analysis was verified by the Bartlett's sphericity test and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test. The null hypothesis of non-correlation of the variables in the population

## Table 1 Variables.

Dependent	Satisfaction with the company	score 0–10				
	Factor Analysis Statistics KMO 0.	828 Bartlett sig. 0.000				
Independent	FACTOR 1. Management of	P1.1, P1.2, P1.3, P1.4, 1.6, P1.7,				
	human resources	P1.8, P1.9, P.1.10, P1.13, P1.15,				
	% variance 63.912	P1.16, P1.19				
	FACTOR 2. Health and safety at	P2.1, P2,2, P2.3, P2.5, P2.6,				
	work	P2.7.1, P2.7.2, P2.7.3, P2.7.4,				
	% variance 15.739	P2.7.5, P2.7.6, P2.7.7, P2.7.8,				
		P2.9, P2.10				
	FACTOR 3. Adaptation to	P3.1, P3.2, P3.3, P3.5, P3.7				
	change and environmental					
	management					
	% variance 11.080					
	FACTOR 4. Development of the	P4.1, P4.2, P4.3, P4.4, P4.5				
	local community and					
	collaboration with business					
	partners, suppliers, and clients					
	% variance 9.268%					
	Seniority	Dichotomous (less than 10 years,				
		10 years or more)				
	Means of dissemination	Four binary variables (company meetings, newsletters and circulars, company email and				
		website, communication media)				

under study was tested with the first test. If a high value is obtained, it means that there is a correlation between the factors and the null hypothesis is rejected, in this case, its values were ideal. The second test confirmed that the KMO index had values between 0.5 and 1.

The model is  $Y = b_0 + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 + ... + b_p X_p$  where

Y = scores of the dependent variable.

Xi = scores of the explanatory independent variables (i = 1, ...,p).

b0 = constant.

bi = regression coefficients estimated using the least squares method with n observations that measure the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable (i = 1, ..., p).

The *Backward Stepwise Regression* method or backward elimination was used to construct a model whose variables have a strong relationship; this method introduces all the independent variables at the beginning of the analysis and eliminates the variable whose Fisher's F is not significant in each step, thereby testing the null hypothesis.

For the analysis of the residual scores, two variables are generated: the non-standardized predicted values and the non-standardized residuals. With these variables, the assumptions of normality, homoscedasticity and linearity are studied. The scatter plot corroborates the assumed linearity. With respect to normality, two procedures were used, one graphic and the other analytical. The results of the histogram with the standardized residuals and the normal probability plot show a good approximation to normality. The analytical results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality indicate that the associated probability from the perspective of the null hypothesis (of normality) is 0.0696, so the hypothesis is accepted. Regarding homoscedasticity, the Pearson correlation between the residual scores in absolute values and the predicted scores was found to be -0.089 sig. (bilateral) 0.712. This confirms that there is no relationship between the residuals and the predicted values.

## 4. Results

## 4.1. Results of the CSR aspects

In general, none of the CSR actions carried out by the company were recognized by 100% of its worker-members (Table 2).

The three most recognized actions are, in order of importance: conducts welcome courses for new staff (90.1%), pays the women and men of its workforce equally (88.9%), and provides the same professional expectations to women and men to improve at work (88.5%). The least recognized aspects are: All things being equal, it promotes the group with the least representation in a professional category (22.2%), and reviews salary supplements to avoid inequalities between women and men in its workforce (28.6%).

In relation to aspects of health and safety at work, it is worth positively mentioning: has a safety plan at work known to all staff (86.5%), protects maternity and paternity (86.5%), and has working conditions that improve the strictly legal ones in flexibility in service changes (84.1%). The least recognized aspect was: provides specific leave, suspension or mobility times for staff who have been victims of gender violence (21.0%).

Regarding the aspects related to adaptation to change and environmental management, a high percentage of the worker-members recognize the actions related to the innovations that their company is introducing: *innovates by introducing new products/services for its customers* (90.1%) and *improves existing product/services to adapt them to the social needs of customers or reduce environmental impact* (88.1%), and, to a lesser extent, to actions related to environmental management: *promotes actions to protect the environment, the biodiversity of plants and animals and the restoration of natural habitats*) (49.2%).

The most action highlighted by worker-members in terms of community development and collaboration with business partners, suppliers and clients is related to their clients: *encourages sustainable consumption and efficient use of its resources* (78.6%); while the least recognized is: *when contracting external tasks from other companies and suppliers, it takes into account the practices that these companies follow on promoting health* 

# Table 2

CSR	factors	(%).
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Factors	Don't know	No	Yes
Factor 1. Human Resources Management	Don't know	110	105
P.1.1.Organizes/provides lifelong learning for its staff	6.0	12.7	81.3
P.1.2.Bears in mind the balance of work/family/leisure time	3.6	34.9	61.5
P.1.3.Pays the women and men of its staff equally	9.9	1.2	88.9
P.1.4.Provides the same professional expectations for women and men to improve at work	9.5	2.0	88.5
P.1.5.When selecting new personnel, it values belonging to vulnerable groups or those at risk of social exclusion	22.2	9.1	68.7
P.1.6.Manages the promotions of its staff properly	17.9	36.5	45.6
P.1.7.Conducts welcome courses for new staff	5.6	4.3	90.1
P.1.8.Has an annual continuous training plan	15.1	9.9	75.0
P.1.9.Has applied an equality module to its entire staff in the annual continuous training plan	28.6	10.3	61.1
P.1.10.Provides specific training for equal opportunities	21.4	25.8	52.8
P.1.11.Reviews salary supplements to avoid gender inequalities	21.4	50.0	28.6
P.1.12.The company documents use gender-inclusive language in their writing P.1.13.There is a person (or several) in the human resources department who manages	20.2 32.9	5.2 19.5	74.6
work/family life balance issues P.1.14.Participates in the annual programming of the Nosotras Global and Senior Global	31.0	3.9	65.1
Association P.1.15.All things being equal, it promotes the group with the least representation in a	53.2	24.6	22.2
professional category			
P.1.16.Encourages internal promotion by making its workers feel attached to it	18.3	28.9	52.8
P.1.17.Has a Canary Islands Global Foundation for social initiatives with projects aimed at the disabled on training and job placement	33.7	4.8	61.5
P.1.18.Has a committee for monitoring and evaluating its equality plan	49.6	5.2	45.2
P.1.19.Has improved the communication channels through which it transfers information on its actions to its staff	3.6	10.3	86.1
Factor 2.Health and safety at work			
P.2.1.Has a safety at work plan known to all staff	6.7	6.8	86.5
P.2.2.Holds information campaigns to promote healthy habits, not just occupational health	8.7	27.4	63.9
P.2.3.Adequately manages sick leave due to work disability or accident	26.2	11.5	62.3
P.2.4.Provides specific leave, suspension or mobility periods for staff who have been victims of gender violence	77.8	1.2	21.0
P.2.5.The working conditions comply with national, regional, and local laws and regulations that are consistent with the applicable international employment standards	8.7	19.1	72.2
P.2.6.Has the mandatory legal employment instruments up to date	13.5	35.7	50.8
P.2.7.Has working conditions that improve the strictly legal ones in:			
P.2.7.1. Request for services	10.7	20.3	69.0
P.2.7.2.Wages	9.5	39.3	51.2
P.2.7.3. Advances and loans	35.3	23.8	40.9
P.2.7.4. Hours of work and weekly rest	6.7	23.9	69.4
P.2.7.5.Holidays	2.8	18.2	79.0
P.2.7.6. Social benefits	16.7	13.5	69.8
P.2.7.7.Flexibility in service changes	2.8	13.1	84.1
P.2.7.8.Paid permits and licenses	15.1	9.5	75.4
P.2.8.Protects maternity and paternity	12.7	0.8	86.5
P.2.9.Encourages the reconciliation of family and work life	6.3	33.4	60.3
P.2.10.Organizes training courses on harassment, prevention, and defense	20.6	19.1	60.3
Factor 3.Adaptation to change and environmental management			
P.3.1.Identifies risks, direct and indirect costs and evaluates options to guarantee job stability	20.2	5.2	74.6
P.3.2.In the event of any change in legislation/regulations, adapts the remuneration to the necessary modifications	17.1	27.7	55.2
P.3.3.Innovates by introducing new products/services for its customers	3.2	6.7	90.1
P.3.4.Improves existing products/services to adapt them to the social needs of customers or to reduce environmental impact	7.5	4.4	88.1
P.3.5.Engages in actions external to the company aimed at the sustainable development of its environment	33.7	5.6	60.7
P.3.6.Promotes actions to protect the environment, the biodiversity of plants and animals and the restoration of natural habitats	43.3	7.5	49.2
P.3.7.Encourages the reduction and/or management of waste	25.4	5.9	68.7
P.3.8.Has a quality management certificate and environmental management system certificate	25.0	1.6	73.4
Factor 4.Development of the local community and collaboration with business partners, su			75.4
Factor 4.Development of the local community and collaboration with business partners, su	15.5	9.1	75.4
	1 · · ·	9.1 14.6	68.7
Factor 4.Development of the local community and collaboration with business partners, su P.4.1.Actively participates in its community and contributes to its quality of life	15.5		
Factor 4.Development of the local community and collaboration with business partners, su P.4.1.Actively participates in its community and contributes to its quality of life P.4.2.Promotes local culture and traditions	15.5 16.7	14.6	68.7

NOTE: the items which were significant at 1% are highlighted in grey.

and safety (27.8%).

In terms of seniority, measured in years of service at the company, 40.1% have been in the company for less than 10 years, with the company's valuations in this group being higher than those who have been in it for more time (73.3% value very positively, with values between 8, 9 and 10, the company's actions compared to 55.6%, respectively).

Finally, the media used by the company to inform its workermembers are grouped into four groups, using, in order of importance, email and web (92.9%), newsletters and internal circulars (82.1%), meetings in the company (79.4%) and the media and social networks (21.8%). Regarding the valuation, the direct information obtained in the informative meetings and periodic monthly meetings organized by the company together with the personal information obtained from the coworkers is significant (67.5% value the company very positively).

## 4.2. Results of the MLR analysis

The results of the MLR analysis determine two models, the first one contains all the variables used and the second one excludes Factor 4 as it is not significant (Table 3 in the Appendix).

An analysis of the ANOVA variance was performed to evaluate the significance of the regression models, which was significant at p = .000 for both models, therefore, the null hypothesis that the variability observed in the response variable is explained by random and an association between the dependent variable and the independent variables is admitted.

Model 2 has a correlation between the set of independent variables and the dependent variable (Y), of 0.809, so that 65.4% of the variability of Y is explained by the independent variables considered in the said model. The fit of the model can be considered as good.

 $Y = 7.694 + 0.588^*$  Human resource management

 $+\,0.302^{*}$  Health and safety at work

 $+0.414^*$  Adaptation to change and environmental management

 $-0.576^{*}$  Seniority  $+0.646^{*}$  Meetings

The equation reflects that four of the three coefficients are positive, which indicates that the overall valuation of the company increases when these variables increase based on the value of their coefficient, while the valuation decreases in the case of seniority in the company.

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

The objective of this work is to analyze the perception that workermembers have of the social responsibility actions carried out by their company and to verify the degree of influence that these actions have on their job satisfaction with the company. In summary, the number of investigations has increased in recent years however, they are still needed in the context of social economy companies and, even more so, when the unit of analysis is the worker-members. This study attempts to close this gap by focusing the research on this group, analyzing the relationship between their perception of CSR actions and their satisfaction with the company, using the different aspects of CSR integrated in the internal dimension of the company.

Firstly, it can be concluded that hypothesis 1 is fulfilled because the worker-members recognize a large part of the actions that their company performs in the area of CSR, even though its influence depends on the type of media that is used to communicate the actions to the staff. The most impact on the knowledge acquired by the worker-members comes from the direct information, obtained in the informative meetings and periodic monthly meetings organized and the personal information obtained from the co-workers. This leads to a higher valuation of satisfaction with the company, which is in line with the conclusions of Bouraoui et al. (2020), Ellemers et al. (2011), Peterson (2004) or Raub and Blunschi (2014) who argue that the perception of employees of the CSR actions carried out by their company has a positive effect on the commitment and satisfaction of the worker with their company. Barakat et al. (2016) also argue that the good organizational image derived from CSR actions positively influences employee satisfaction. Following the recommendations of Tafolli and Grabner-Kräuter (2020) and Vitaliano (2010), organizations should make efforts to publicize CSR initiatives among their employees. On the other hand, other media are not optimal, because there are a series of actions that are not given sufficient visibility. Some actions are recognized by around 90% of the staff and others are known by less than 50%, some of them are even below 30%. These results coincide with those reported by Closon et al. (2015), Gaudêncio et al. (2021) and Tafolli and Grabner-Kräuter (2020), which also means that information, as a medium of guaranteeing internal communication

within the company, needs to be improved.

Regarding hypothesis 2, the model partially confirms this hypothesis. Of the four analyzed factors, three of them are shown to have a significant influence on satisfaction. Therefore, the three sub-hypotheses 2a (Human Resources Management), 2b (Health and Safety at work) and 2c (Adaptation to change and environmental management) are also accepted. Although it is true that, within the model, the CSR dimension related to human resources has more weight in the overall valuation of the company, which confirms the conclusions drawn by Martínez-León et al. (2018) and Pintão et al. (2018). The positive effect of actions related to adaptation to change, and environmental management is also demonstrated, and finally, with a lower incidence, the measures referring to health and safety at work. Hypothesis 2d is rejected. In this regard, it is worth noting the contributions of Chaudhary (2019) and Gaudêncio et al. (2021), which establish the link between CSR actions on human resources management and job satisfaction, as long as they are well communicated and known by employees. Therefore, the company is recommended to expand actions related to those aspects that are currently weak or do not exist in its CSR strategy, especially those actions integrated in the external dimension. It is also necessary to inform the worker-members of the importance for the company of taking actions that contribute to the development of the community, because these actions ultimately revert to the worker-members themselves. Likewise, firms are encouraged to share information about their CSR activities, especially with their employees, as the most relevant internal stakeholders, and include elements of social responsibility in their communication strategy.

Finally, hypothesis 3 is accepted, because there is a direct influence, but in the inverse direction. As the length of service of the workermember increases, the degree of satisfaction with the company decreases (Lanfranchi & Pekovic, 2014). Along the same lines, the study conducted by Anaya-Nieto and Suárez Riveiro (2006) confirms the idea that new workers show greater satisfaction than employees with more years of service.

According to these results, new future lines of research are proposed to continue the analysis of CSR in transport companies. It is necessary to take, as future lines of research, the dimension of length of service as a variable to be analyzed in greater depth and to reach more robust conclusions, which would help to better understand the reason why new worker-members are more satisfied with the company. It is perhaps necessary to continue examining the term job dissatisfaction, related to a variable related to the term "over-claiming" (Schroeder, 2017), to study the dissatisfaction of the older worker-members in greater depth. Furthermore, following the proposal of Kray and Kennedy (2017), other variables such as subjective value should be considered, which predicts job satisfaction and staff turnover better than the economic results themselves, understanding subjective value as the satisfaction of the employee when negotiating their working conditions, their role in the above negotiation and their time in the company. These results are comparable to those obtained by Grolleau, Mzoughi, and Pekovic (2022) who state that seniority has a negative and significant influence on job satisfaction in French companies. Following Sacchetti and Tortia (2020), it is proposed here to continue investigating how the nature of CSR can influence job satisfaction differently depending on the type of company (social or capitalist), the socioeconomic context of the area where it develops its business activity, as well as its local geographic roots. As indicated by Bauman and Skitka (2012), it is also necessary to extend this type of study to social economy companies belonging to other sectors, since it has been verified, for example, that companies in the services sector obtain different results than those in the industrial sector.

Considering the theoretical contribution of the present work is the method itself used that allows specific results to be obtained so that the company can identify areas for improvement and make decisions when preparing its CSR strategy. The present study makes a valuable theoretical contribution through its innovative methodological approach of CSR internal dimensions applied in a social economy transport company. This unique analysis empowers social companies to identify precise areas in need of improvement and make well-informed decisions while formulating their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies. By gaining insights into worker-member perceptions and preferences, the research enhances the overall understanding of the intricate relationship between CSR actions and worker-members satisfaction in a transport company. Moreover, it equips organizations with a solid foundation for evidence-based decision-making, fostering the development of more effective and impactful CSR initiatives that align with the needs and expectations of their workforce.

Regarding the application of this method, in other companies may produce different results, due to both the number and type of actions conducted by the company and the perception that worker-members may have of them. However, a generalized conclusion could be that the worker-members know to a greater extent the actions related to the management of human resources because they affect them more directly. Likewise, the results obtained can be generalized in that the degree of satisfaction of the worker-member is negatively influenced by length of service and positively by the information transmitted by the company.

Therefore, within the practical implications of this research, the company should re-evaluate both the content of the information it provides to its worker-members, and the dissemination mechanisms it uses. Despite providing electronic media and mobile devices, worker-members are not adequately informed, with the traditional meeting system being the one that transmits the most information. The company's website needs to be a source of both external and internal communication; currently its use has been limited to being a small digital bulletin board. For these reasons, a general recommendation is proposed that the company looks at the possibility of introducing more direct communication, using an internal and instantaneous social network where useful communication is provided in a brief and concise manner, which can be hosted on the company's website.

In addition, some companies offer additional benefits or incentives according to seniority. These benefits can help to increase the satisfaction of employees with many years of service. For decision-makers, it may be important to consider these types of incentives in social enterprises. Sometimes social economy enterprises may assume that being a worker partner can be an important enough incentive to maintain job satisfaction because you can be seen as your own boss. As this research has shown, this privilege of being a member worker becomes less motivating with years of seniority, so social economy enterprises should provide other incentives. In addition, organizations must ensure that they maintain a positive and supportive work culture to promote job satisfaction for all employees, regardless of seniority.

Considering all these results, improving the practical implications of this study, it is suggested to the company to try to generate innovative actions or renew the existing ones that can stimulate the most senior employees to be more involved in CSR and thus improve job satisfaction. The practical implications of this study mean that this research goes beyond other previous works because there are few studies focused on analyzing workers-members' job satisfaction in an intercity bus social economy company. Although a social economy company has within its guiding principles the development and linkage with the local territory, it may be that this variable of community development within CSR, it is not clear that this increases the commitment and satisfaction of workermembers. Therefore, when a company has specific CSR objectives, it should establish a system for evaluating these actions to confirm whether they are related to the involvement and work attitudes of its employees. In this case, the worker-partners themselves. The present research is also useful because it has helped to understand that it is not only important to carry out CSR actions, but that it is very important to communicate them to all worker-members. This communication will have a positive effect on the satisfaction of the worker-members, so the company's decision-makers must design effective and visible communication actions so that they reach the rest of the company in an efficient way.

By focusing on a social economy company in the intercity passenger transport sector, the research sheds light on the CSR practices and initiatives of such organizations. This can contribute to raising awareness among other social economy enterprises in the local region and beyond, encouraging them to adopt and prioritize CSR activities. The study's examination of worker-members perceptions of CSR policies and their influence on job satisfaction can have a positive impact on internal corporate culture. Understanding the factors that contribute to employee satisfaction can lead to improved engagement and a more motivated workforce. As the research project is being developed in the largest social economy enterprise in the intercity passenger transport sector in the Canary Islands (Spain), the findings can contribute to the development and growth of social economy enterprises. By showcasing successful CSR initiatives, the study can encourage other social economy enterprises to adopt similar practices.

Nevertheless, caution should be exercised in unconditionally generalizing the findings, given the inherent complexity of CSR implementation and workforce dynamics in different industries and organizational contexts. Thus, it underscores the need for future research efforts in diverse settings to gain a comprehensive understanding of the nuanced interplay between CSR policies and employee satisfaction, and to provide a solid foundation for evidence-based decision making in developing CSR strategies.

# **Declaration of Competing Interest**

The authors have not reported any potential conflict of interest in relation to this article.

## Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the [Proyecto de investigación. La empresa de transporte interurbano Global de Gran Canaria: análisis del valor social percibido por parte de los socios propietarios desde la RSC. Fundación General de La Universidad de La Laguna, Código: A17120426].

## Appendix A. Appendix

#### Table 3

Coefficients in models (a).

Models		Unstand coefficie		Standardized coefficients	t Sig.		Confidence Interval (B at 95%)		Correlations			Collinearity statistics		
		В	Std. error.	Beta			Lower limit	Upper limit	Zero order	Partial	Semi- partial	Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	7.713	0.553		13.942	0.000	6.624	8.803						
	FAC1	0.587	0.097	0.331	6.040	0.000	0.395	0.778	0.376	0.360	0.325	0.960	1.041	
	FAC2	0.302	0.096	0.170	3.159	0.002	0.114	0.490	0.182	0.198	0.170	0.993	1.007	
												(continued on next page)		

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### Table 3 (continued)

Mod	lels	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients Beta	t _	Sig.	Confidence Interval (B at 95%)		Correlations			Collinearity statistics	
		В	Std. error.				Lower limit	Upper limit	Zero order	Partial	Semi- partial	Tolerance	VIF
	FAC3	0.414	0.096	0.233	4.323	0.000	0.225	0.602	0.255	0.266	0.232	0.990	1.010
	FAC4	0.123	0.095	0.070	1.295	0.196	-0.064	0.311	0.061	0.082	0.070	0.997	1.003
	Seniority	-0.589	0.197	-0.163	-2.981	0.003	-0.977	-0.200	-0.242	-0.187	-0.160	0.964	1.038
	Means of	0.647	0.238	0.148	2.714	0.007	0.177	1.117	0.230	0.171	0.146	0.969	1.032
	disseminating												
2	(Constant)	7.694	0.554		13.894	0.000	6.604	8.785					
	FAC1	0.588	0.097	0.332	6.042	0.000	0.396	0.779	0.376	0.359	0.325	0.960	1.041
	FAC2	0.302	0.096	0.170	3.155	0.002	0.113	0.490	0.182	0.197	0.170	0.993	1.007
	FAC3	0.414	0.096	0.234	4.323	0.000	0.225	0.603	0.255	0.266	0.233	0.990	1.010
	Seniority	-0.576	0.197	-0.160	-2.915	0.004	-0.965	-0.187	-0.242	-0.183	-0.157	0.966	1.035
	Means of	0.646	0.239	0.148	2.706	0.007	0.176	1.116	0.230	0.170	0.146	0.969	1.032
	disseminating												

(a) Dependent variable: Valuation of the degree of satisfaction with the company.

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