




# “Mapping CSR and employee organizational commitment: A bibliometric review of thematic evolution and research frontiers”

<b>AUTHORS</b>	Manjiri Gadekar  Eliza Sharma 
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Manjiri Gadekar, Research Scholar,  
Faculty of Management, Symbiosis  
International (Deemed University);  
Assistant Professor, School of Business,  
Dr. Vishwanath Karad MIT World  
Peace University, India. (Corresponding  
author)

Eliza Sharma, Ph.D., Symbiosis Institute  
of Business Management, Bengaluru,  
Symbiosis International (Deemed  
University), India.



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Manjiri Gadekar (India), Eliza Sharma (India)

# MAPPING CSR AND EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: A BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW OF THEMATIC EVOLUTION AND RESEARCH FRONTIERS

## Abstract

Amidst growing employee-related challenges such as turnover, declining trust, and disengagement, examining the impact of CSR initiatives on behavioral outcomes, such as organizational commitment, becomes critical. This study systematically maps the social, conceptual, and intellectual structure of fragmented research on the CSR–organizational commitment link. Using Biblioshiny and VOS viewer, it analyzes 432 documents from the Web of Science spanning 2005–2025. Results show a consistent growth in publications over two decades, with China as the most prolific contributor and the UK as the top international collaborator. The study showcases recurring contributions from multiple journals and authors. Keyword co-occurrence reveals eight thematic clusters, and thematic evolution shows how the CSR–employee commitment relationship has expanded to include HRM practices, corporate governance, and the underexplored SME context. Analysis of trend topics indicates a clear shift in research focus from ethics and stakeholder theory to literature examining intervening variables in the CSR–organizational commitment association. The study suggests future research directions, including investigating new mediator–moderator variables, deeper integration of CSR and HRM, and greater focus on SMEs, where empirical data are limited. These findings reflect the growing interdisciplinary nature of CSR–employee commitment research, which merges sustainability, behavioral, and organizational perspectives.

## Keywords

CSR, employee organizational commitment, clusters, affective commitment, science mapping, corporate governance, bibliometric analysis

## JEL Classification

M12, M14, M54, C89

## INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has undergone a rapid transformation since its introduction from a philanthropic focus to a multi-dimensional strategy that influences the business-society relationship (Morgeson et al., 2013; Scott, 1995). CSR is no longer seen solely as an external requirement or compliance with any law; it is increasingly integrated into the everyday business function, with employees recognized as important partners in achieving long-term sustainability goals. This transition has given rise to an employee-oriented perspective, often termed micro-CSR, as an increasingly prominent stream of research (Paruzel et al., 2021). In micro-CSR research, the focus is on how employees respond to CSR activities that not only directly affect them, but also those aimed at other key groups such as customers, local communities, or the environment (De Roeck & Maon, 2018).

Aguinis and Glavas (2012) have emphasized that employee behaviors and attitudes are strongly influenced by how they perceive their

employer's sustainability efforts. Organizational commitment emerges as one of the most frequently studied workplace outcomes according to Yassin and Beckmann (2024). The CSR–organizational commitment relationship is essential amid increasing employee expectations, societal calls for responsible practices, and organizations' efforts to retain talent. It holds both theoretical and practical significance, as socially responsible actions can enhance employee commitment and strengthen organizational performance. As organizations face the dual challenge of meeting sustainable development goals and retaining talent, CSR has emerged as a strategic tool for managing these interconnected objectives.

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic interest in corporate social responsibility (CSR) dates to the 1950s (Bowen, 1953) when it was perceived as a philanthropic activity. Gradually, the focus shifted to a more structured understanding of CSR as many studies began recommending its integration into firms' business strategies. Carroll (1991) conceptualized CSR as a hierarchical structure comprising economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities that balance the interests of all stakeholders. Freeman's stakeholder theory reiterated that the essence of business lies in its relationships with all stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, employees, society, and lenders. He further proposed that the impact of CSR must be examined at the individual level. Gradually, as CSR evolved, a new, distinct stream of research, the psychological micro foundations of CSR, emerged, focusing on employees' perceptions and reactions to internal and external CSR. Reviews by Gond and Moser (2019), Rupp and Mallory (2015), and Glavas (2016) further contributed to the micro-CSR literature focusing on how employees perceive, interpret and respond to organizational responsibility. These reviews lay a foundation for understanding employee outcomes such as organizational commitment.

Many past review studies have synthesized the literature on the influence of CSR practices on employee attitudes and behaviors. A meta-analysis by Paruzel et al. (2021) reported a significant correlation between CSR and organizational commitment and confirmed that identification acts as a significant mediator, and culture or gender are contextual moderators. Onkila and Sarna (2022) synthesized findings on how CSR strengthens organizational and employee relationships and concluded that many studies support the idea that CSR enhances organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. In their recent systematic literature review on CSR and behavioral outcomes, Yassin

and Beckmann (2024) found that different dimensions of CSR have different impacts on employee outcomes such as organizational identification, organizational commitment, and employee engagement. Additionally, there has been a surge in micro-CSR research over the past decade, particularly since 2017. Other reviews also support these findings. For example, De Silva and De Silva Lokuwaduge (2021) in their scoping review proposed a conceptual model to examine the CSR–organizational commitment relationship and suggested its application across all industries facing high employee turnover. The above reviews emphasize that CSR is a significant determinant of employee behavior and that the literature on CSR–behavioral outcomes is fragmented, justifying the need for the current study.

Several mediating variables are discussed in literature as intervening mechanisms that influence the association between CSR and organizational commitment. Organizational identification is a significant mediating variable (Paruzel et al., 2021). When employees strongly identify with their organization, they feel more committed and satisfied and are hence less likely to leave the organization (Riketta, 2005). CSR practices instill a strong sense of purpose in employees and enhance job satisfaction, which in turn increases employee commitment (Manzoor et al., 2023). Organizational justice, defined as the perception of fairness of treatment (Colquitt, 2001; Lu et al., 2020), significantly influences the perceived CSR–organizational commitment relationship. Organizational trust is another prominent mediator in the CSR and organizational commitment relationship, as it supports the idea that the CSR initiatives directed toward internal as well as external stakeholders are perceived favorably by employees (Robinson, 1996). Perceived organizational support is a widely researched intervening concept in the case of CSR–organizational commitment association. CSR initiatives directed toward employees can make them feel valued and increase their perceived

organizational support. John et al. (2022) concluded that human resources practices like ‘work from home’, ‘salary cuts,’ and ‘leave with pay’ had a positive impact on the CSR–organizational commitment relationship during COVID-19, while ‘layoff’ and ‘leave without pay’ had no impact on this association.

Literature has discussed numerous variables that moderate the association between CSR and organizational commitment. Demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, and position, have been discussed in numerous studies, including those by Paruzel et al. (2021) and Garrido-Ruso and Aibar-Guzman (2022), with mixed results. Job level (Oh et al., 2021), the attitude of employees (Van Der Westhuizen et al., 2023), cultural values (Paruzel et al., 2021; Van Der Westhuizen et al., 2023) and perspective taking (Kim et al., 2019) are a few moderating variables tested for their significance in the relationship.

Bibliometric analysis has become increasingly popular in management and sustainability research because it allows large volumes of scientific output to be systematically analyzed (Ho et al., 2025) and tracks the progression of knowledge in a field by mapping citation networks, authorship patterns, and keyword trends (Donthu et al., 2021). Though bibliometric analysis has been applied in other areas of employee research, a bibliometric study on CSR–organizational commitment nexus remains scarce. In the bibliometric study mapping employee engagement, Kişi (2023) highlights how CSR and sustainability recently surfaced as significant antecedents of engagement and that organizational commitment is a prominent behavioral outcome. Her study also emphasizes that global employee engagement research increasingly incorporates CSR and psychological categories into common theme clusters, hence strengthening the convergence between the engagement and micro-CSR literatures. Further, Cvetkoska et al. (2024) in their bibliometric study on the association between CSR and job satisfaction, provide insights into leveraging CSR for increasing employee satisfaction. Aggarwal and Singh (2023), in their bibliometric analysis of employee-based CSR, found organizational commitment as one of the several other frequently studied outcomes.

The literature review illustrates the evolution of CSR from a macro-level concept grounded in stakeholder theory to a micro-level construct that impacts be-

havioral outcomes, such as organizational commitment. It synthesizes the significant mediators and moderators influencing the CSR–organizational commitment relationship. Prior review studies reveal that, though the CSR–organizational commitment domain is theoretically sound, the field remains inconsistent and fragmented. Also, although numerous reviews and meta-analytical studies have examined the CSR–organizational commitment relationship, these studies do not capture the evolution of the intellectual, social, and conceptual structures within the field and this gap underscores the need for a comprehensive bibliometric study.

The objective of this study is to conduct an in-depth bibliometric analysis of the CSR domain to map its intellectual foundations, thematic clusters, and conceptual evolution. By doing so, we consolidate the fragmented evidence across this field and identify influential contributions, emerging themes, and future research directions.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Data collection

The data were obtained from the Web of Science database by retrieving documents using keywords such as TS = (“corporate social responsibility” OR CSR OR “CSR initiatives” OR “corporate social performance”) AND TS = (“organisational commitment” OR “organizational commitment” OR “employee commitment” OR “employee organisational commitment”). Web of Science is a well-known platform that provides comprehensive coverage of research in the social sciences (Norris & Oppenheim, 2007), and it provides access to a wide range of publications (Sánchez et al., 2017). The data were extracted on January 23, 2025, yielding an initial set of 463 records from 2005 to 2025. The timespan from 2005 to 2025 is chosen because it includes the complete chronological range of publications in this field, beginning with the earliest indexed studies and extending to the most recent contributions. After applying filters for language (English) and document types (including review articles, early access papers, book chapters, and journal articles), the final dataset is reduced to 432 records. An overview of the data is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Summary of extracted bibliometric data (2005–2025)

Category	Metric
<b>General Publication Details</b>	
Coverage Period	2005 to 2025
Number of Publication Sources	206
Total Documents	432
Annual Publication Growth (%)	8.38
Average Age of Documents (Years)	5.89
Mean Citations per Document	39.17
Total References Cited	25,022
<b>Keyword Analysis</b>	
Total Keywords Plus Entries	788
Author-Provided Keywords	1,102
<b>Authorship Overview</b>	
Total Unique Authors	1,151
Single-Author Contributions	45
<b>Collaboration Indicators</b>	
Number of Sole-Authored Documents	46
Average Co-Authors per Paper	3.02
Percentage of International Papers	34.72%
<b>Types of Documents</b>	
Journal Articles	375
Book Chapters	13
Early Access Papers	21
Conference Proceedings	4
Books	1
Review Articles	18

The study covers 20 years, spanning from 2005 to 2025. A total of 432 documents were included in the analysis, covering 375 journal articles, 13 book chapters, 21 early access publications, four conference proceedings, one book, and 18 review articles. The dataset also includes 1,102 author-supplied keywords and contributions from 1,151 distinct authors, of which 45 are single-author publications.

To conduct the analysis, two main tools are used: VOS viewer and Biblioshiny. VOS viewers assist in constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks, offering intuitive and interactive graphical representations of relationships such as co-authorship, keyword co-occurrence, and citation patterns (Van Eck & Waltman, 2011). Using a user-friendly interface, Biblioshiny, an R-based tool, automates performance analysis and enhances science mapping (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017).

## 2.2. Data processing and cleaning

The data set obtained included metadata like titles, abstracts, author information, etc., and it was observed that the metadata are complete, ensur-

**Table 2.** Data quality assessment of bibliographic records

Description	Missing Counts	Missing %	Status	Interpretation
Author	0	0.00	Excellent	All documents have author details, ensuring reliable author-level analyses.
Document Type	0	0.00	Excellent	Every record includes a type, allowing accurate classification.
Journal	0	0.00	Excellent	Complete journal information ensures robust source and outlet analysis.
Language	0	0.00	Excellent	Language data are complete, supporting correct categorization.
Publication Year	0	0.00	Excellent	Complete coverage of publication years, enabling valid trend analysis.
Science Categories	0	0.00	Excellent	All records have categories, ensuring proper subject classification.
Title	0	0.00	Excellent	No missing titles: document identification and citation tracking are reliable.
Total Citation	0	0.00	Excellent	All citation data available; citation impact metrics are valid.
Cited References	2	0.46	Good	Minimal missing data: co-citation and reference analysis remain reliable.
Affiliation	3	0.69	Good	Almost all documents include affiliations; institutional analysis remains valid.
Corresponding Author	3	0.69	Good	Most records identify a corresponding author, enabling collaboration insights.
Abstract	10	2.31	Good	Abstract coverage is strong; it ensures the robustness of future research directions discussed.
Keywords Plus	15	3.47	Good	Minor gaps in Keywords Plus may slightly affect thematic mapping.
DOI	17	3.94	Good	Some records lack DOIs; citation linking may be slightly affected.
Keywords	30	6.94	Good	A small proportion is missing; keyword-based trend analysis remains acceptable.

ing the reliability in bibliometric analysis (Table 2). Variables such as author, document type, journal, language, publication year, scientific categories, title, and total citations are available in full, indicating a reliable trend and authorship analysis. For cited references, affiliations, corresponding authors, abstracts, keywords, and DOIs, although small gaps are observed, the proportion of missing data is relatively low. This indicates that the data are reliable for further analysis. A similar approach of ensuring the completeness of metadata before conducting bibliometric analysis is recommended by Belgibayeva et al. (2025).

### 2.3. Bibliometric analysis

In examining the CSR–organizational commitment relationship research landscape, a mix of bibliometric indicators was employed. Descriptive statistics were used to capture the volume of publications across time, the leading journals, highly cited papers, and the most active authors and institutions. The analysis also highlights the geographical distribution of research by identifying productive countries and mapping patterns of international collaboration.

Collaboration was further explored through networks of author affiliations and co-authorship at the country level. Keyword analysis provided another lens, highlighting recurrent terms and grouping them into thematic clusters. To trace changes over time, a thematic evolution study was conducted, showing how research priorities shifted and which areas gained or lost prominence. Together, these analyses outlined both the performance of the field and its structural development.

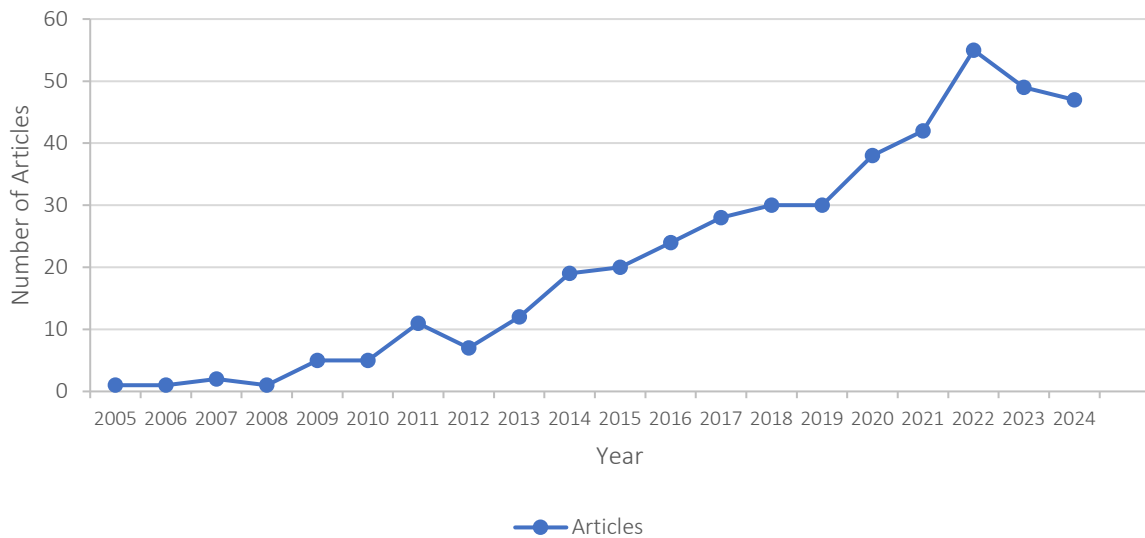
### 2.4. Data visualization

To facilitate more straightforward interpretation of the results, the findings are supported by a combination of tables and visual displays. Annual publication output is shown through line graphs, while summaries of sources, documents, and countries were presented in tabular form. Country collaboration is visualized using maps generated in Biblioshiny, and keyword co-occurrence is displayed through network diagrams built in VOS viewer. Thematic evolution is illustrated

using Sankey-type diagrams to show the evolution of research areas over a two-decade period. Additionally, a trend-topics map is included to illustrate how frequently used keywords rose or declined in popularity.

## 3. RESULTS

Figure 1 illustrates the data on annual scientific production. Since the data set was retrieved on January 23, 2025, the output for 2025 represents data only for a month and to avoid misleading findings, the annual production period is restricted till 2024. The number of articles was low in the initial few years, starting from 2005, indicating that the CSR–organizational commitment topic was in its early stages. However, from 2013 onwards, the number of articles show a consistent upward trend, representing the progress of the topic into a dynamic research stream (De Roeck & Maon, 2018) and coinciding with the adoption of global sustainability frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The total number of published articles peaked in 2022 with 55 articles, possibly triggered by COVID-19, which paved the way for research on CSR, employee well-being, and resilience. As discussed by Yassin and Beckmann (2024), articles focusing on CSR–employee outcomes have experienced rapid growth in recent years, which corroborates the increased academic attention to employee-centric perspectives of CSR. The upward trajectory in publications can be connected to the recognition of employees as the most prominent stakeholders who respond to CSR initiatives and drive the business advantage of CSR (De Roeck & Farooq, 2018). Also, organizations are increasingly integrating their CSR or ESG strategies with SDG goals, both in their internal governance and external reporting (López-Cabarcos et al., 2025; Saha et al., 2024). Due to such advances, CSR has progressed from a philanthropic activity to a strategic imperative, prompting researchers to explore its impact on employees and organizational outcomes. The steady and increasing rise in publications up to 2023 indicates that the CSR–organizational commitment relationship has matured into a core area of inquiry.



**Figure 1.** Annual scientific production of publications on the relationship between CSR and employee organizational commitment from 2005 to 2024

Table 3 lists the most relevant journals from a total of 238 journals. Sustainability includes 37 articles, followed by Journal of Business Ethics with 20 articles. Other journals with comparatively higher representation include Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, Social Responsibility Journal, and Frontiers in Psychology.

Table 4 presents the journals and their citation-based indicators, like H-index, g-index, m-index, and total citations, for sources associated with CSR-organizational commitment. For example, Sustainability shows an H-index of 17 and 37 publications beginning in 2014, while the Journal of Business Ethics shows an H-index of 16 with publications dating back to 2006. The journals listed are from various disciplines reflecting contributions from sustainability studies, business ethics, organizational behavior, and related fields.

**Table 3.** Most relevant sources

Source	No. of Articles	Percentage (%)
Sustainability	37	25.2%
Journal of Business Ethics	20	13.6%
Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	18	12.2%
Social Responsibility Journal	15	10.2%
Frontiers in Psychology	11	7.5%
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	11	7.5%
International Journal of Hospitality Management	11	7.5%
Journal of Cleaner Production	9	6.1%
Journal of Business Research	8	5.4%
Journal of Global Responsibility	7	4.8%

The article by Brammer et al. (2007) is the most locally and globally cited article (Table 5). Based on social identity theory, this article examines the impact of three aspects of CSR – employee perception of CSR, procedural justice, and employee training – on affective commitment. After examining the top ten documents, it was found that these publications focused on the impact of CSR initiatives on employee commitment, mediated by variables such as organizational trust and organizational identification, and moderated by variables like collectivism and masculinity orientations of employees. The themes also included reviews of micro-CSR research and frameworks, as well as the integration of CSR literature and organizational psychology.

The data downloaded from the Web of Science indicated that there are 1151 authors, 45 of whom are single authors. Table 6 summarizes

**Table 4.** Most impactful sources

Source	H Index	g_index	m_index	TC	NP	PY_start
Sustainability	17	27	1.417	782	37	2014
Journal of Business Ethics	16	20	0.8	3303	20	2006
Social Responsibility Journal	12	15	1.091	340	15	2015
Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	11	18	0.846	460	18	2013
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	11	11	0.917	592	11	2014
International Journal of Hospitality Management	10	11	0.714	1630	11	2012
Journal of Cleaner Production	7	9	0.7	687	9	2016
Journal of Business Research	6	8	0.545	292	8	2015
Frontiers in Psychology	5	10	0.625	101	11	2018
International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	5	6	0.714	139	6	2019

**Table 5.** Documents with the highest citations

Source	Year	Local Citations	Global Citations
Brammer et al. (2007)	2007	163	786
Turker (2009)	2009	139	591
Farooq et al. (2014)	2014	96	363
Kim et al. (2010)	2010	79	512
Gond et al. (2017)	2017	61	456
Glavas and Kelley (2014)	2014	52	386
Hofman and Newman (2014)	2014	50	162
Kim et al. (2016)	2016	46	161
Akremiti et al. (2018)	2018	42	370

the authors with the maximum number of articles, the authors with maximum H-index, and the authors with the maximum number of citations. For example, Kim BJ has an H-index of 5 and has published 8 articles. Zientara P has accumulated 490 citations across the documents included in the study.

The top relevant affiliations are indicated in Table 7. Amongst the affiliations studying the association between CSR initiatives and employee organizational commitment, the top affiliation is the Pennsylvania Commonwealth System of Higher Education, with 10 publications. This is followed by the Pennsylvania State University (nine publi-

cations) and Vietnam National University (nine publications).

China is the most significant contributor to the CSR–employee commitment research, with 142 publications. The USA (125) and South Korea (97) follow, indicating that this research has a broad reach (Table 8). China's leading position can be attributed to the institutional support lent by the Chinese government for CSR initiatives through policies such as Guidelines for State-Owned Enterprises on Fulfilling Corporate Social Responsibilities issued by State-Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (Moon & Shen, 2010) and subse-

**Table 6.** Top authors

Based on H-index		Based on Number of articles		Based on Maximum citations	
Author	H-Index	Author	Number of articles	Author	Total Citations
Kim BJ	5	Kim BJ	8	Zientara P	490
Chaudhary R	4	Kim MJ	5	Lee CK	279
Kim J	4	Lee CK	5	Kim J	226
Lee CK	4	Lee S	5	Ahmed RR	164
Lee S	4	Chaudhary R	4	Nurunnabi M	156
Nurunnabi M	4	Kim J	4	Chaudhary R	154
Zientara P	4	Nurunnabi M	4	Göttel V	145
Ahmed RR	3	Zientara P	4	Kim BJ	134
Coelho A	3	Ahmed RR	3	Lee S	125
Göttel V	3	Coelho A	3	Coelho A	51

**Table 7.** Top 10 relevant affiliations

Affiliation	Articles	Country
Pennsylvania Commonwealth System of Higher Education	10	The USA
Pennsylvania State University	9	The USA
Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (VNU System)	9	Vietnam
Hong Kong Polytechnic University	8	Honk Kong
Indian Institute of Technology System (IIT System)	8	India
Kyung Hee University	8	South Korea
Universidade De Coimbra	8	Portugal
Yonsei University	8	South Korea
Fahrenheit Universities	7	Poland
Prince Sultan University	7	Saudi Arabia

quent ESG disclosure requirements by the China Securities Regulatory Commission in recent times.

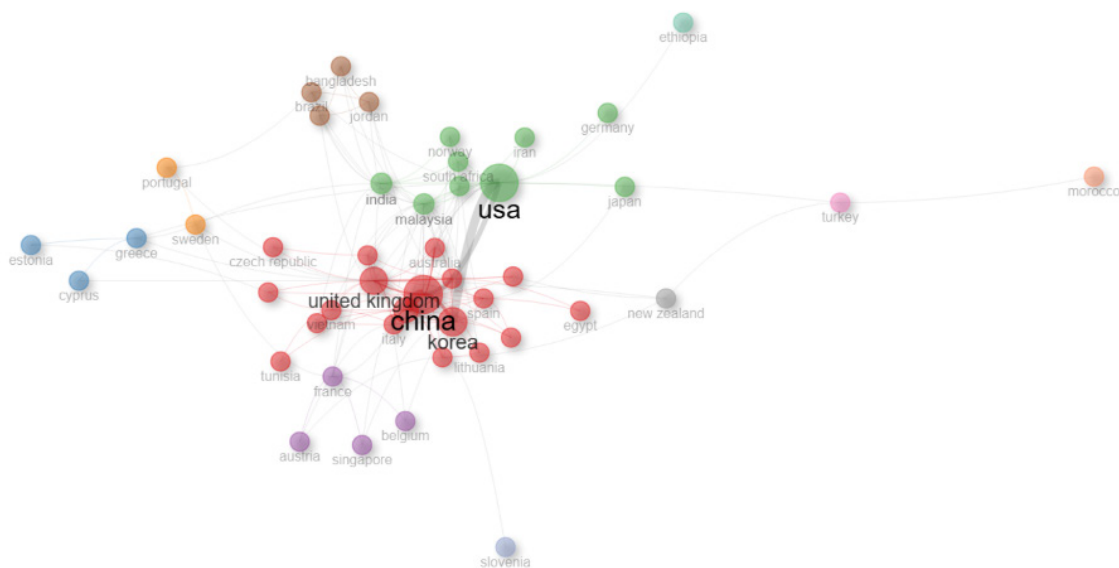
**Table 8.** Most productive countries

Country	Publication frequency
China	142
The USA	125
South Korea	97
India	68
Pakistan	59
The UK	58
Spain	43
Malaysia	36
Australia	33
France	33

According to Donthu et al. (2021), a country collaboration network provides insight into the clustering of research in a specific area or its representation across various countries globally. Figure 2

depicts the various clusters formed. The cluster in red is the most prominent, with the United Kingdom (UK) having the strongest link strength, followed by China, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Poland, and others. The green-colored cluster is the next densely connected cluster, with the USA appearing to be a major collaborator. The strongest link is between China and Pakistan, indicating a prominent regional link.

Keywords that are used frequently are analyzed based on their frequency of occurrence in the records in this section. Table 9 lists such keywords. Apart from corporate social responsibility and organizational commitment, other frequently appearing keywords are performance, impact, job satisfaction, antecedents, mediating role, financial performance, management, work, and behavior, implying that studies focus on these areas.



**Figure 2.** Country collaboration network

**Table 9.** Frequently occurring keywords

Words	Occurrences
corporate social-responsibility	188
organizational commitment	186
Performance	134
Impact	117
job-satisfaction	115
Antecedents	107
mediating role	86
CSR	78
financial performance	58
Management	53
Work	52
Behavior	49
Identification	47
Commitment	45
Citizenship	43
normative commitment	41
moderating role	39
Satisfaction	37
Perceptions	36
Employees	35

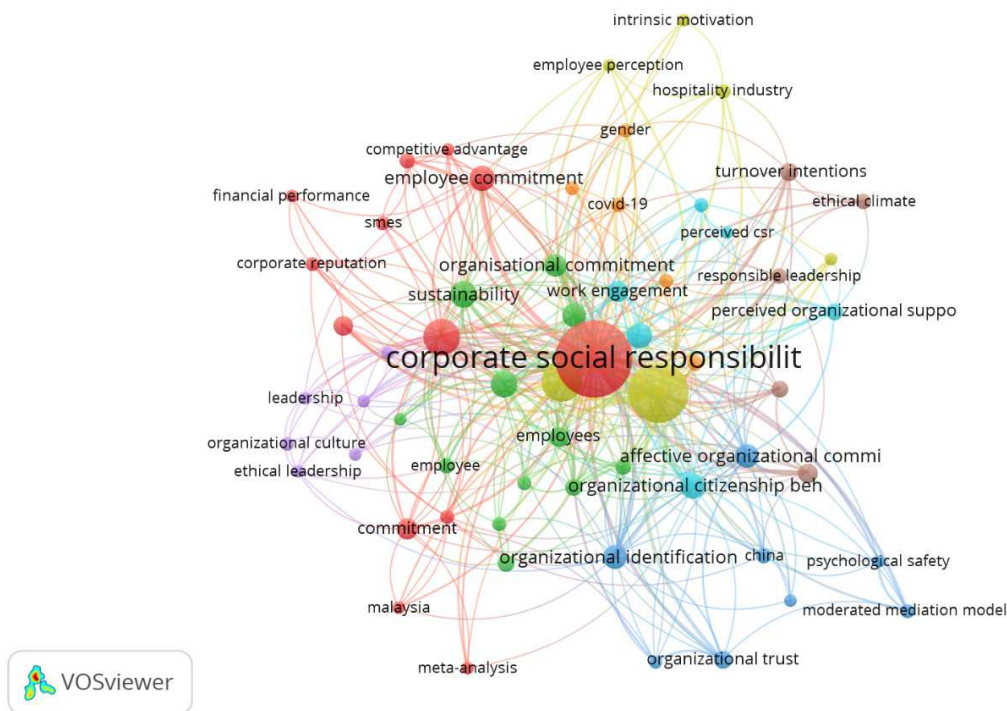
Co-word analysis is a method for studying texts, such as research papers, by examining which words or keywords appear together. If two words often appear in the same papers, it likely means they are connected in some way or discuss related ideas. This method helps researchers understand which topics are commonly linked and how ideas

are related in a field of study (Narong & Hallinger, 2023; van Eck & Waltman, 2014). This study utilized VOS viewer software to generate a network map illustrating the frequency of keyword occurrences and co-occurrence patterns. Figure 3 illustrates a keyword occurrence network, where author keywords serve as the unit of analysis, and indicates that eight clusters are identified.

Based on the keyword with the strongest link strength, Table 10 discusses various themes. CSR, sustainability, organizational identification, and organizational commitment are among the key terms identified.

The trend topics analysis, as indicated in Figure 4, highlights how research themes in the CSR–organizational commitment domain have shifted over time. Early studies focused on broader conceptual issues such as ethics, business ethics, stakeholder theory, and frameworks, reflecting the field’s theoretical grounding. Around 2016–2018, attention turned toward constructs such as employee reactions, identification, perceptions, and citizenship, pointing to a growing interest in micro-level employee outcomes.

From 2019 onward, the literature expanded toward more applied and performance-related



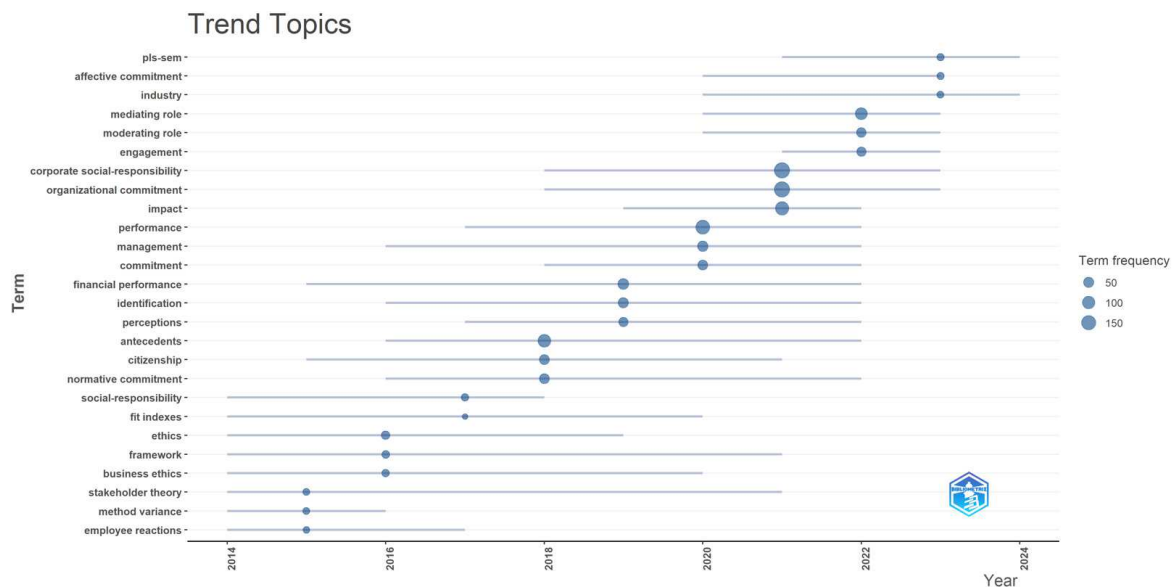
**Figure 3.** Keyword occurrence network

**Table 10.** Keyword occurrences and corresponding clusters

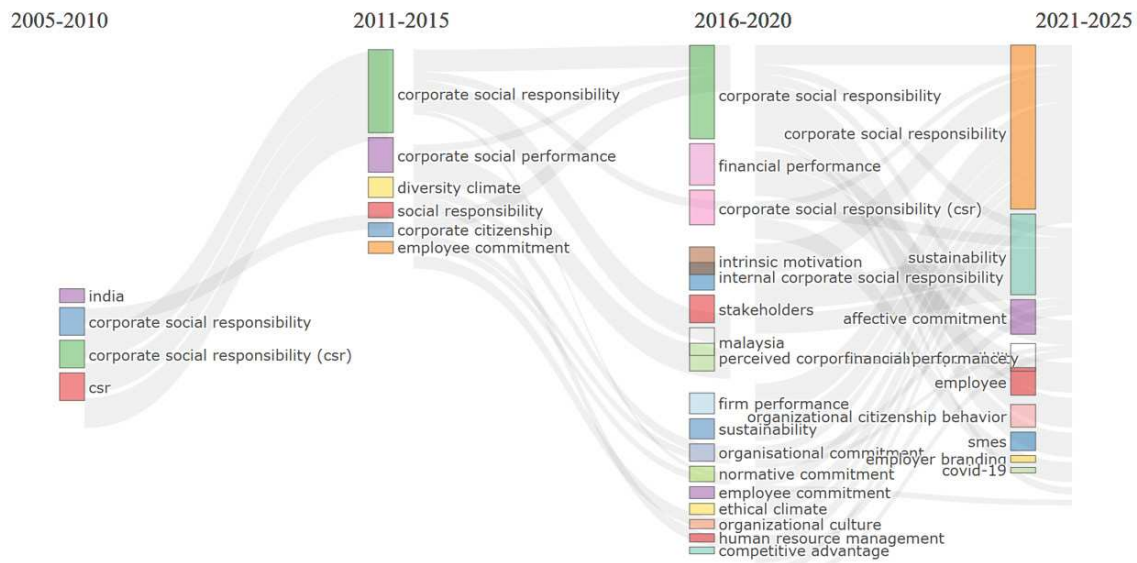
Cluster	Keywords within one cluster	Keyword with the strongest link strength	Theme
1	13	Corporate Social Responsibility	Strategic role of CSR in increasing firm performance, improving corporate reputation, and encouraging commitment
2	12	Sustainability	Effect of sustainability and internal CSR on employee engagement, commitment, and performance, social exchange theory, and human resource management
3	8	Organisational identification	Perceived CSR and impact on fostering organizational identification, trust, and affective commitment, psychological safety as a mediator, China as context.
4	6	Organisational Commitment	Interconnection between organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee perception with the influence of intrinsic motivation and organizational justice, in the hospitality sector.
5	6	Transformational leadership	The impact of transformational and ethical leadership on job performance and organizational culture, demonstrating the key role of internal stakeholders
6	6	Organisational behaviour	Effect of perceived CSR on fostering organizational citizenship behavior, affective commitment, and work engagement
7	5	Normative commitment	Interconnection of CSR and normative commitment, gender, COVID-19, and the hospitality sector
8	5	Social Identity Theory	Role of social identity theory and ethical leadership concerning turnover intentions, stakeholders, and ethical climate

terms such as financial performance, management, commitment, and impact, suggesting an increasing concern with the organizational value of CSR. In recent years, emerging methodological focuses such as PLS-SEM, mediating roles, moderating roles, and affective commitment have gained prominence, indicating a shift toward more rigorous empirical testing and deeper exploration of psychological mechanisms.

This evolution indicates that while the field initially sought to establish its theoretical foundations, it has gradually shifted toward examining the employee-level consequences of CSR and the mechanisms linking CSR practices to organizational outcomes. The current emphasis on mediation and moderation reflects a more advanced stage of research, aiming to explore the complexities of how and why CSR enhances organizational commitment.



**Figure 4.** Evolution of key research terms in the domain of CSR–organizational commitment relationship



**Figure 5.** Thematic evolution

Thematic evolution is performed by splitting the period from 2005 to 2025 into three time slices. The study spans the periods from 2005 to 2010, 2011 to 2016, 2017 to 2022, and 2023 to 2025 to understand the finer nuances of the CSR–organizational commitment association from the introduction of the concept to the current stage (Figure 5).

A thematic map consists of four quadrants that categorize themes by impact and centrality. The motor themes in the upper right quadrant are highly developed and represent major themes in the analyzed papers; in contrast, the niche themes in the upper left quadrant are solitary and peripheral. Fundamental or transversal themes are crucial but have not been extensively explored in literature, while the emerging or declining themes in the lower left quadrant are inadequately addressed (Cobo et al., 2011; Sharma et al., 2023).

Figures A1 to A4 in Appendix A illustrate how these quadrants change over different periods. Motor and transversal themes are outlined due to their significance in emphasizing essential and emerging topics. Figure A1 illustrates that CSR research was in its early stages, and its integration with other domains, such as micro-CSR or employee-related domains, was minimal. The moderate centrality, combined with low density, indicates an expansive yet nascent topic. The word “India” appears as a special theme, indicating a focus on CSR in that country. However, the fact that

it is not central to the discussion suggests it is not yet strongly linked to the wider context.

The period from 2011 to 2016, as represented in Figure A2, indicates that employee commitment emerges as a key theme, suggesting it is a significant construct in CSR research. It signifies a surge in interest in the relationship between CSR and employee behavior. CSR remains a fundamental theme, and the presence of social responsibility suggests expanding CSR beyond its traditional definition to investigate organizational and employee-related outcomes. “Employee perceptions of CSR” is an emerging theme indicating an increase in how employees see organizational CSR and the impact of this perception on employee commitment. Niche themes like “diversity climate” and “corporate citizenship” suggest that, though these topics are explored, they remain distinct research areas.

Figure A3 represents the period from 2017 to 2022 and depicts motor themes, including CSR, employee organizational commitment, financial performance, and competitive advantage. The strong interconnection of these themes conveys a linkage between CSR activities and both firm performance and employee behavior. This highlights CSR as a key strategy for driving business profitability. Sustainability and organizational culture emerge as key themes, alongside CSR. The positioning of niche themes, such as human resource

management (HRM), brand performance, and normative commitment, suggests that CSR's impact on HRM and brand management is explored in a few specific studies.

The most recent period, from 2023 to 2025 (Figure A4), indicates a transition in CSR research, with novel areas and emergent interdisciplinary topics. CSR, corporate governance, organizational citizenship behavior, and COVID-19 are the basic themes. This indicates an increasing significance of governance and behavioral outcomes for a firm. COVID-19, as a basic theme, highlights the latest emphasis on how CSR has evolved during the global pandemic. Some of the key motor themes include sustainability, affective commitment, customer satisfaction, and employer branding. The growing focus on affective commitment indicates that CSR is taken as a mechanism for staff retention and motivation. Niche themes like green commitment, employee outcomes, bibliometric analysis, and antecedents indicate that, although research is increasing in these areas, they remain very specialized domains. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) appear to be an emerging or declining theme, reflecting both a growing and still nascent interest in introducing CSR to smaller firms. The topic of corporate financial performance remains important, but it is no longer being studied as extensively as it was in the past. This indicates that researchers are shifting away from traditional perspectives on how CSR impacts financial performance and are now employing more contemporary ideas and approaches.

## 4. DISCUSSION

The current study examines the connection between CSR initiatives and employee organizational commitment. Using Vos viewer as well as Biblioshiny, the study found that research publications are experiencing a steady increase, indicating a rising interest in the field. Recently, the literature on micro-CSR research has been increasing, making it an emerging area in the field of CSR (Rupp & Mallory, 2015). Additionally, CSR and organizational commitment are high-frequency keywords that indicate a strong association. P. Jarkovská and M. Jarkovská (2020) and Mensah et al. (2017) endorse a positive relation between the two con-

structs. In terms of scholarly contributions, several authors, journals, and documents appear more frequently within the dataset, indicating their recurring presence in CSR–organizational commitment research. ‘Contribution of corporate social responsibility to organizational commitment’ by Brammer et al. (2007) has received the maximum number of global and local citations, representing a seminal article in this field. Similarly, journals such as Sustainability and the Journal of Business Ethics appear prominently in the dataset, indicating contributions from sustainability, ethics, and organizational behavior perspectives. The top affiliation studying the CSR–commitment relationship is the Pennsylvania Commonwealth System of Higher Education. China, followed by the USA and South Korea, depicts a global appeal for this topic. The United Kingdom is the most prominent collaborator amongst all countries, with the strongest link strength being between China and Pakistan. The keyword occurrence analysis revealed eight major clusters, each shaped around the keyword with the strongest connections. These clusters include CSR-related constructs, employee-centered outcomes, organizational behavior themes, and performance-related concepts. From these clusters, themes that reflect the main directions and focus areas on CSR–organizational commitment research are developed. The trend topic analysis indicates how research in the CSR–organizational commitment relationship area has progressed from foundational themes, such as ethical and stakeholder dimensions, to employee-specific concepts like affective commitment and identification. Terms like mediation-moderation and PLS-SEM, in recent years, indicate rigor in empirical analysis in this area of study.

The thematic evolution across four time periods reflects significant changes in the CSR–organizational commitment domain. This bibliometric analysis indicates a consistent increase in academic interest in the CSR and organizational commitment relationship, especially after 2013. The prevalence of themes such as employee perceptions, corporate citizenship, and sustainability suggests a significant emphasis on the psychological and cultural foundations of employees' reactions to CSR. The growth of specialized subjects, such as environmental commitment, integration of HRM, and studies centered on SMEs, indicates diversifi-

cation of the area. Nonetheless, their restricted occurrence underscores the need for further focused research in these fields. This thematic evolution suggests that, although core notions are well-established, future research must explore contextual and sector-specific elements to enhance the discourse, as well as new mediating and moderating variables.

Several opportunities for future research arise from the thematic patterns observed. Prior studies like those of Bouraoui et al. (2019) highlight the need to further examine intervening mechanisms that connect CSR to organizational commitment. Future papers can include new mediator variables like moral pride, need fulfilment, psychological empowerment, and perceived external prestige of the employer to capture alternative explanatory pathways. Constructs such as meaningful work and purpose are also some potential mediators, given the fact that CSR practices of the organization may give a sense of contribution to the employees (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Glavas, 2016). CSR activities may fulfil employees' needs for belonging, esteem, or self-actualization, thereby enhancing commitment. For example, employment with a reputable firm can enhance an employee's self-respect, foster a sense of belonging to a praiseworthy organization, and reinforce dedication. Mediators such as need fulfilment or psychological empowerment merit examination. Organizations' CSR initiatives can enhance their public image, which, in turn, can elevate employees' pride and strengthen their commitment to the organization. Certain past studies have explored external prestige in related contexts (Lee et al., 2013). However, it remains an indirect yet significant construct warranting further exploration in CSR contexts.

Although past studies have examined moderating variables such as moral identity, cultural values, and corporate ability (He et al., 2022) to examine the influence of CSR initiatives on commitment, many relevant moderators remain undiscovered. Moral attentiveness, an emerging construct in this domain, refers to how an individual observes and contemplates the moral dimensions of life (Reynolds, 2008), which can be further explored. Employees with strong moral attentiveness tend to have a significant influence on their organization's

CSR efforts (Uçkun et al., 2020). They are likely to have a more substantial commitment than those with a lower moral identity. Along with individual characteristics such as personal values and beliefs, generational context (perceptions of younger workers vis-à-vis older workers), and employee engagement level, future studies should focus on moral attentiveness as a moderator. Additionally, moderators like workplace diversity, organizational culture, leadership style, and job characteristics (He et al., 2022) can enhance the understanding of the CSR–commitment relationship.

Future studies may investigate the integration of CSR and HRM, including how organizations can strategically embed social responsibility principles into HR policy and the impact of this integration on OC. Integration of HRM into CSR can lead to better employee outcomes (John & Tiwari, 2025). An emerging idea is “socially responsible HRM,” which refers to HR practices that express CSR values (Shen & Zhang, 2019; Shen & Zhu, 2011). When CSR ideals are implemented in daily HRM activities, employees tend to recognize a more consistent and genuine commitment from the organization to its principles, thereby increasing their commitment in response (Shen & Zhang, 2019).

Corporate governance has emerged as a key theme in the thematic evolution of this study. Its elements, such as board independence, leadership, transparency, and accountability procedures, can enable impactful CSR activities, effectively communicating their noble intent to employees. Employees in such organizations will trust the authenticity of CSR initiatives undertaken and respond with stronger commitment. Future empirical research can explore whether governance indicators increase the positive impacts of CSR on employee organizational commitment. Young and Thylil (2009) contend that strong corporate governance incorporating employee participation can considerably improve employee behaviors, resulting in a passionate and dedicated workforce. Future studies may explore the intersection of employee inclusion in governance policies and CSR.

Finally, SMEs represent an area where research remains comparatively limited. Much of the existing literature focuses on large organizations with established CSR structures, whereas SMEs often

face resource constraints that create different CSR dynamics. Future work could explore how CSR is conceptualized, implemented, and communicated within SMEs, and how these practices relate to employee attitudes and commitment.

Though the study adopts detailed bibliometric analysis, it has several limitations. The data were obtained from a single database, Web of Science, which, while extensive, may have overlooked other relevant research publications in the CSR–organizational commitment area from other databases like Google Scholar and Scopus, as well as reports and documents that are not indexed. Since the language was limited to only English, valuable publications from other languages may have been omitted. Citation counts depend on database coverage and take time to build up. As a result, newer studies may appear less influential now, though their impact may grow in the future. The results further depend on the accuracy of author-supplied keywords and indexing practices, which can shape how clusters and themes are formed. The study does not review and synthesize the content of scholarly work in the CSR–organizational commitment domain. Future studies can integrate a systematic literature review along with a bibliometric review. Finally, because the dataset was retrieved in early 2025, publications from later in the year were not captured, which likely explains the dip observed in 2025.

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## CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to map the intellectual, conceptual, and thematic structure of research on the relationship between corporate social responsibility and employee organizational commitment using bibliometric techniques. The analysis identified a steady growth in publications, recurring contributions from a range of authors and journals, and distributed collaboration patterns across countries. Keyword co-occurrence clusters and trend analyses showed consistent emphasis on CSR-related constructs and the gradual appearance of employee-centered themes. Thematic evolution results indicated continuity in CSR as a core topic, alongside the emergence of additional organizational behavior and sustainability-related themes over time.

Taken together, the findings indicate that the CSR–organizational commitment relationship has expanded in its scope and analytical boundaries. However, the domain remains fragmented with studies using different conceptual lenses and methods to examine it. The observed trends suggest several significant avenues for future inquiries which include examining governance mechanisms that influence employee responses to CSR, new intervening mechanisms and context specific studies like those with respect to SMEs.

The current study contributes to the literature on the CSR–organizational commitment relationship by offering an integrated overview of how this research area has evolved. The findings provide a basis for future empirical work and theoretical development within the micro-CSR domain, particularly in studies connecting sustainability initiatives with employee attitudes and workplace outcomes.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Manjiri Gadekar, Eliza Sharma.

Data curation: Manjiri Gadekar, Eliza Sharma.

Formal analysis: Manjiri Gadekar, Eliza Sharma.

Investigation: Manjiri Gadekar, Eliza Sharma.

Methodology: Manjiri Gadekar, Eliza Sharma.

Resources: Manjiri Gadekar.

Software: Manjiri Gadekar, Eliza Sharma.

Supervision: Eliza Sharma.

Validation: Manjiri Gadekar, Eliza Sharma.

Writing – original draft: Manjiri Gadekar, Eliza Sharma.

Writing – review & editing: Eliza Sharma.

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## APPENDIX A

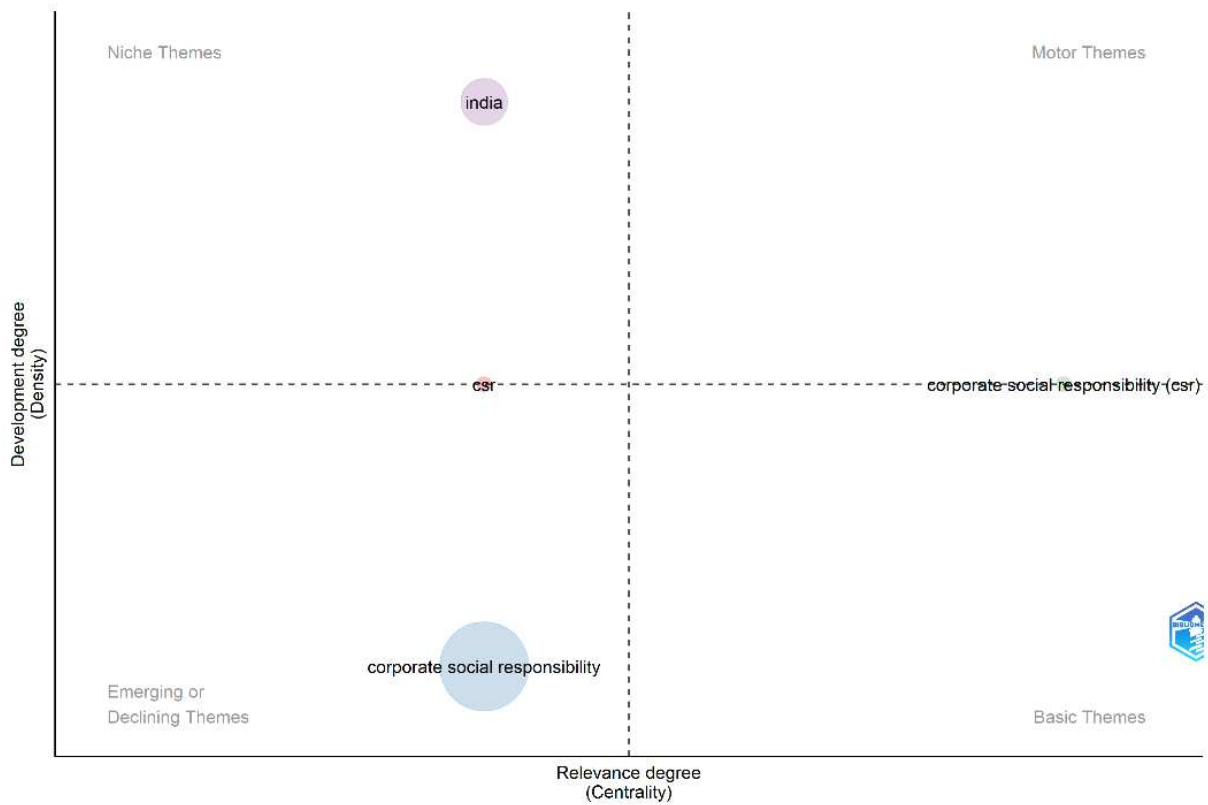


Figure A1. Thematic evolution, 2005–2010

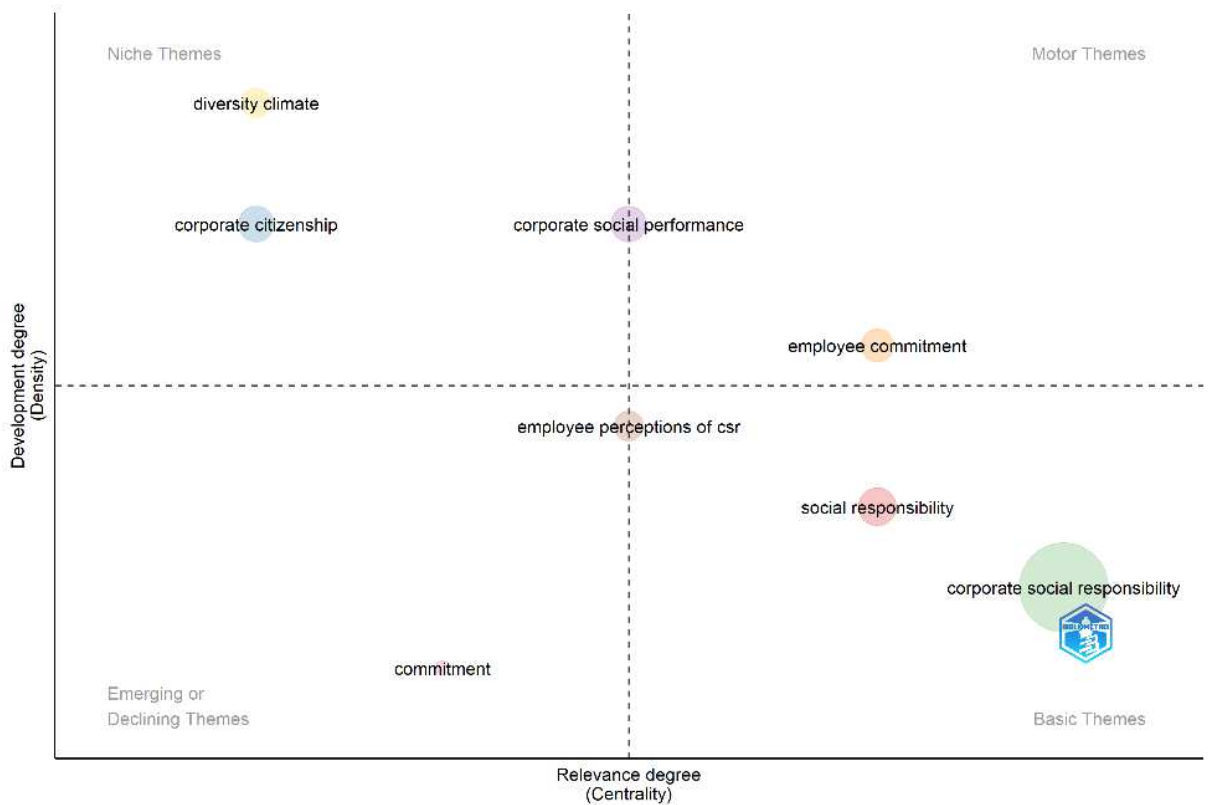


Figure A2. Thematic evolution, 2011–2015

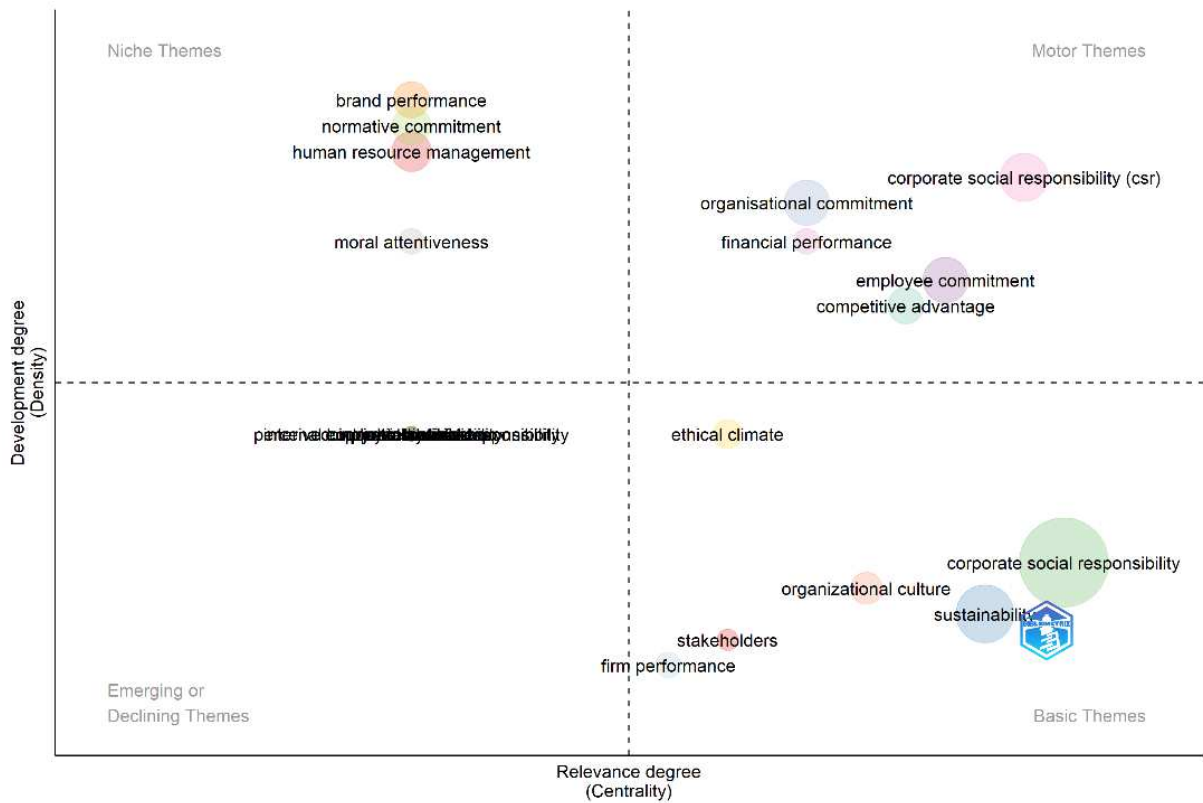


Figure A3. Thematic evolution, 2016–2020

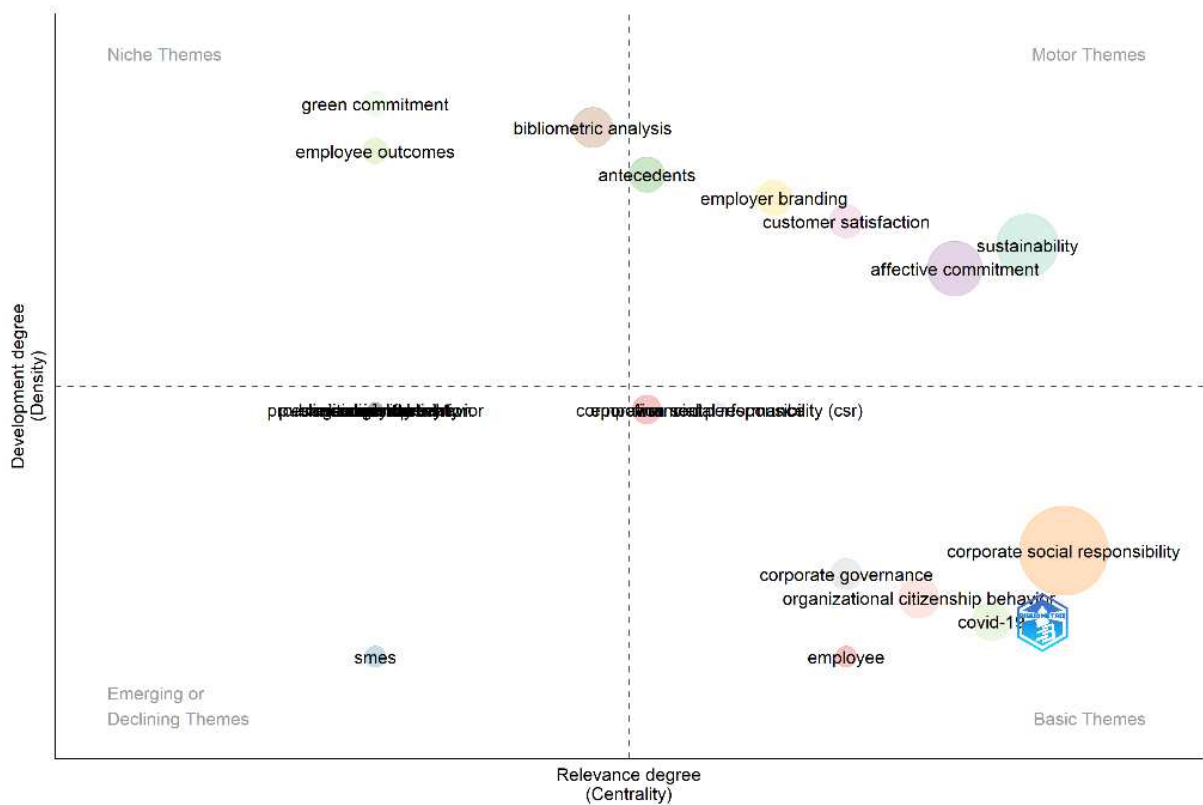


Figure A4. Thematic evolution, 2021–2025