

# The Development and Trend of Corporate Social Responsibility in The Past 30 Years

Xuefeng Xie

Graduate School of Business, Graduate University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, 11000, Mongolia

**Abstract:** Corporate social responsibility is a hot topic of research in recent years. Based on nearly 30 years of research literature on corporate social responsibility, the researchers used bibliometrics to analyze these literatures, found the research status in this field, and elaborated the development trajectory and future development trend of research hotspots.

**Keywords:** Corporate Social Responsibility; Literature Research; Development Trends; Knowledge Graph.

## 1. Introduction

Corporate social responsibility is increasingly valued by enterprises, especially in the field of human resource management. The main role of human resource management in CSR can be expressed in enhancing the centrality of employees in CSR strategies and co-design processes, and employees shape CSR practices. This is essential to develop CSR policies that reflect and meet the needs of employees, and can prevent companies from taking a paternalistic approach to CSR while ignoring employees' perspectives. In the process of promoting CSR practice and research, it is necessary to fully understand the trend and development context of CSR-related literature research.

Due to the large number and variety of research results in this field, it is difficult to achieve the expected purpose only by staged summary and traditional literature analysis. The bibliometric method uses visualization technology to accurately analyze massive research literature, and can comprehensively analyze the changes and development trends of hot spots in a certain field, objectively describe the changes of research hotspots in this field, and discover the development trend of research.

## 2. Research Design

### 2.1. Data Collection

In the Web of Science search interface, use the advanced search method, the literature category is "business", the type is "article", the subject is "corporate social responsibility", and the year is set from January 1, 1992 to July 2022 on 1st, the language is "English". After the retrieval, the documents were screened, irrelevant documents and duplicate documents were eliminated, and 2163 documents were finally determined for visual analysis.

### 2.2. Research Method and Software

The bibliometric method uses visualization technology to accurately analyze massive research literatures. In this paper, the bibliometric method is adopted. CiteSpace is a scientific literature analysis tool jointly developed by Dr. Chaomei Chen from the School of Information Science and Technology of Redsell University in the United States and WISE Laboratory of Dalian University of Technology. This tool is mainly used to measure the literature in a specific field to find out the key path and knowledge turning point in the

evolution of the subject field. Therefore, this study adopts the bibliometric method and uses the bibliometric tool software CiteSpace 6.1 R6 to conduct visual analysis on the relevant core literature.

## 3. Research Results

### 3.1. Study Trends in the Number of Literatures

From the perspective of the number of documents, during the 10 years from 1992 to 2002, the number of papers published was relatively small, all-in single digits. From 2003 to 2009, the published academic papers rose significantly from 20 to 152. From 2010 to 2016, the number of papers was relatively stable, around 100. The number of documents has increased rapidly since 2017. It can be seen that there are peaks in the related keywords clustering literature. For example: the years of public publication of English research literature related to the large cluster name of corporate governance appeared in 2009-2014 and 2018-2021; 2014, 2017.

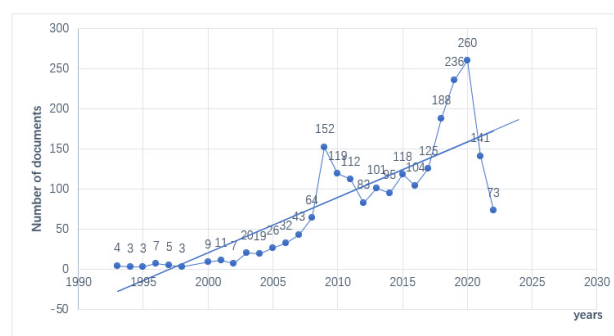


Figure 1. Changes of literatures on corporate social responsibility (1992-2022)

### 3.2. Literature Visual Analysis

Run CiteSpace 6.1.R6, set the time range as January 1992-June 2022, Node Type as Keyword, algorithm as Log-Likelihood Ratio (LLR logarithmic maximum likelihood ratio), and keyword aggregation for 2163 documents by class analysis, keyword cluster map (Fig. 2) can be obtained. Figure 2 shows that the Mean Silhouette value is an index to measure the homogeneity of the entire cluster members, and the larger the value, the higher the similarity of the cluster members. The keyword co-occurrence map shows a total of 704 nodes and 3534 connections, the network density is 0.0143, the Q

value is 0.4078 (the Q value is greater than 0.3, indicating that the cluster structure is significant), and the MS value is 0.7127 (the MS value is greater than 0.7, indicating that the clustering convincing results). These data show that the keyword cluster map has a reasonable structure and good homogeneity.

It can be seen from Figure 2 that the names of the top 10 clusters are: corporate governance, organization citizenship behavior, private regulation, business ethics, corporate social performance, institutional theory, firm value, corporate sustainability, tax avoidance and world bank.

Click the Cluster Explorer in the CiteSpace software to get the keyword cluster list. From Table 1, we can find the commonality of academic papers in terms of research topics, content and research methods.



Figure 2. Keyword clustering diagram of corporate social responsibility (1992-2022)

Table 1. CSR research literature (1992-2022) keyword cluster list

No.	Size	Silhouette	Mean	Cluster Name	Top Terms
0	115	0.681	2012	corporate governance	corporate governance; board of directors; environmental performance; agency theory;
1	109	0.674	2013	organizational citizenship behavior	organizational citizenship behavior; job satisfaction; cause-related marketing; organizational identification;
2	98	0.69	2009	private regulations	private regulation; stakeholder engagement; stakeholder dialogue; human rights;
3	97	0.764	2004	business ethics	business ethics; sensemaking; multinational corporations; corporate social responsibility;
4	83	0.732	2006	corporate social performance	corporate social performance; stakeholder theory; corporate citizenship; social responsibility;
5	68	0.659	2011	institutional theory	institutional theory; sustainable development; environmental policy; non-financial information;
6	52	0.791	2007	firm value	firm value; institutional investors; socially responsible investment; window dressing; socially responsible investing
7	44	0.706	2013	corporate sustainability	corporate sustainability; green practices; sustainable development goals; corporate social responsibility;
8	9	0.947	2019	tax avoidance	tax avoidance; CSR awareness; moral reasoning strategies; social consciousness;
9	4	0.997	2002	world bank	world bank; mining ethics; involuntary resettlement; displacement; corporate social responsibility

It is easy to find out that during the 30 years from 1992 to 2022, the academic literature published in English can be divided into 13 categories according to the cluster analysis of keywords. In the specific research situation of the first three clusters is as follows:

#0 is corporate governance, the keywords include corporate governance, board of directors, environmental performance, agency theory, corporate philanthropy. Modern society is challenged by a loss of efficiency in national governance systems values, and lifestyles. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) discourse builds upon a conception of organizational legitimacy that does not appropriately reflect these changes. The authors therefore propose a fundamental shift to moral legitimacy, from an output and power-oriented approach to an input related and discursive concept of legitimacy (Palazzo G, 2006). Corporate social responsibility is valued by company managers.

What are the motivations of enterprises to implement corporate social responsibility? An underlying assumption is that the commercial imperative is not the sole driver of CSR decision-making in private sector companies, but that the

formal adoption and implementation of CSR by corporation's ass could be with the changing personal values of individual managers. (Hemingway CA (2004) explores how Chinese consumers respond to corporate social responsibility (CSR). The empirical results show that: (1) Chinese consumers with higher awareness and trust in corporate social responsibility are more inclined to convert good corporate social responsibility records into positive corporate evaluations, product associations, and purchase intentions; (2) ) Consumer responses to CSR vary by product category. Those companies that sell experience products (as opposed to search and trust products) are more likely to gain positive product associations and purchase support from consumers through CSR practices; (3) the relationship between consumer demographics and their CSR responses is not linear Yes, consumers of middle age and income respond more positively to CSR. Management impact is provided(Tian Z, 2011 ) In other words, in order to improve the company's external reputation or increase the company's profits, managers have the motivation to implement corporate social responsibility with wishes.

Can a company's human resource management activities benefit from corporate environmental management? The answer is yes. Whether do benefits arising for human resource management from environmental management activities drive environmental management system implementation? There are research results that prove positive associations of the benefit levels for both variables with environmental management system implementation on a large scale. Also, there is evidence that increasing levels of environmental management system implementation result from higher economic benefits in the human resource domain (Wagner M, 2013).

# 1 is organizational citizenship behavior, and the main keywords are organizational citizenship behavior, job satisfaction, cause-related marketing, organizational identification, corporate governance. Judging from the collected English papers, the research results of this cluster are mainly related to the company's employee behavior, and the peak years of the results are from 2008 to 2014, and from 2017 to 2020.

Under this category, it mainly revolves around employees' attitudes and behaviors, commitments, communication between organizations and employees, ethical leadership, employees' perceptions of corporate CSR activities, customer and corporate social responsibility behaviors, and the relationship between CSR and corporate competitive advantages. Research on the relationship between, employee job satisfaction, corporate human resource management activities, attribution and CSR, CSR communication, and the

moderating effect of CSR.

# 2 is private regulation, the main keywords are private regulation, stakeholder engagement, stakeholder dialogue, human rights, global governance. Relevant research papers mainly appeared between 2006 and 2010, with a peak in 2008.

Mainly research on accountability, conduct, labor standard, fair trade, shareholder value, etc., such as finding that the relationship between board characteristics and CSR in different contexts is weak (Chang YK, 2017), board demographics and structural diversity are both important predictors of corporate environmental sustainability initiatives (Kassinis G, 2016). What are the key characteristics of a company that determine the size and scope of the CSR activities it undertakes? From the resource-based perspective, Macaulay CD. (2018) find that centrality enhances corporate social performance. At the same time, according to the stakeholder theory, it was found that the presence of more outside directors positively moderates the relationship between female directors and corporate social performance (Macaulay CD, 2018).

### 3.3. Changing Research Hotspots of Corporate Social Responsibility

On the basis of the keyword co-occurrence analysis, click burstiness on the CiteSpace control panel again, set the  $\gamma$  value to 0.9, and get 28 mutated keywords, and visualize them to obtain a keyword burst map (shown as Figure 3).

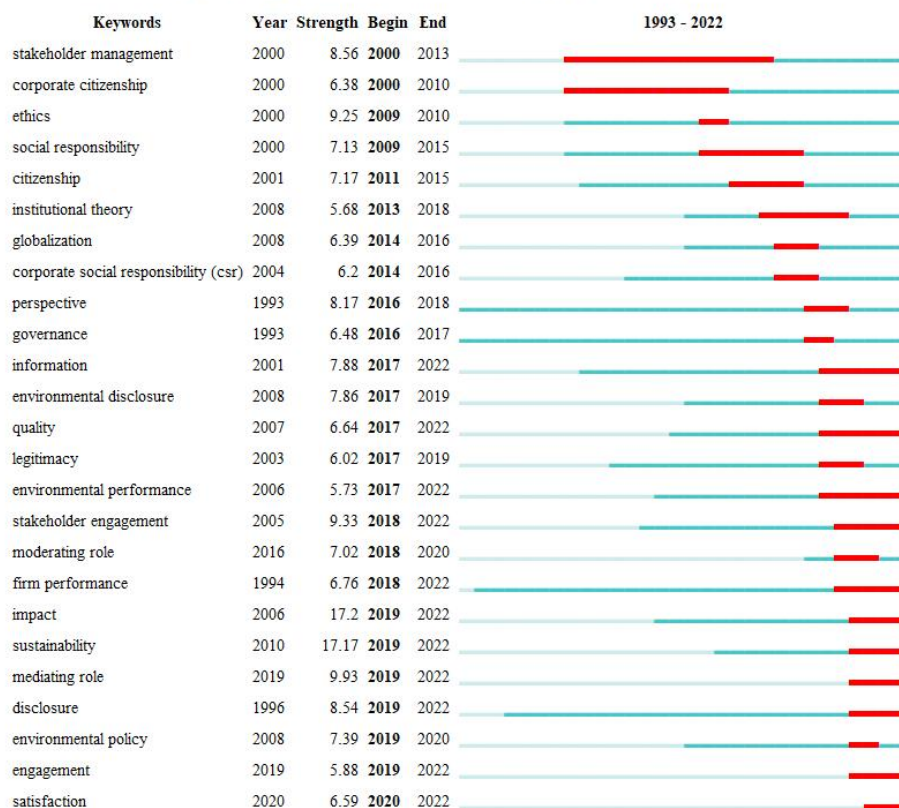


Figure 3. Top 25 Keywords with the Strongest Citation bursts on CSR

Figure 3, we can easily draw the following conclusions: (1) Related to CSR, the two keywords of stakeholder management and corporate citizenship have the longest duration. (2) From the point of view most closely related to CSR, sustainability, impact, mediating role are the top three

keywords. This shows that, from the previous literature, there is a certain relationship between CSR and sustainability, impact, and mediating role. (3) From the perspective of research trends, in the next few years, in terms of CSR topics, researchers will likely continue to focus on information,

environmental performance, firm performance, impact, sustainability, mediating role, engagement, satisfaction.

## 4. Conclusion

Corporate social responsibility is a hot topic of research in recent years. Based on nearly 30 years of research literature on corporate social responsibility, the literature on corporate social responsibility will continue to grow rapidly. In the fields of corporate performance, environmental protection, employee satisfaction, corporate sustainable development and corporate governance, it will be a research hotspot in this field.

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