

A Bibliometric Study of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Global Trends and Future Directions (2010–2024)

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Article Info

Article history:

Received Feb, 2026

Revised Feb, 2026

Accepted Feb, 2026

Kata Kunci:

Tanggung Jawab Sosial
Perusahaan (CSR),
Keberlanjutan, Pembangunan
Berkelanjutan, ESG
(Lingkungan, Sosial, Tata
Kelola), Inovasi Hijau

Keywords:

Corporate Social Responsibility
(CSR), Sustainability, Sustainable
Development, ESG
(Environmental, Social,
Governance), Green Innovation

ABSTRAK

Studi ini menyajikan analisis bibliometrik tentang Tanggung Jawab Sosial Perusahaan (CSR), dengan fokus pada tren global dan arah penelitian CSR dari tahun 2010 hingga 2024. Dengan menggunakan teknik analisis ko-munculan dan jaringan, studi ini mengidentifikasi tema dan kata kunci utama terkait CSR, seperti keberlanjutan, pembangunan berkelanjutan, perlindungan lingkungan, dan ESG (Lingkungan, Sosial, dan Tata Kelola). Temuan penelitian menyoroti pentingnya inovasi hijau, ekonomi sirkular, dan perubahan iklim dalam penelitian CSR, bersamaan dengan metrik kinerja bisnis seperti kinerja perusahaan dan kinerja keuangan. Studi ini mengungkapkan integrasi CSR dengan praktik bisnis yang sedang berkembang, dengan penekanan pada peran yang semakin penting dari teori pemangku kepentingan, etika bisnis, dan proses pengambilan keputusan dalam membentuk strategi CSR. Penelitian ini menyarankan bahwa CSR berkembang melampaui asal-usul filantropisnya untuk menjadi pendorong kritis strategi bisnis dan pembangunan berkelanjutan. Hal ini mendorong eksplorasi lebih lanjut mengenai peran transformasi digital dan kecerdasan buatan dalam memajukan praktik CSR dan meningkatkan keberlanjutan korporat.

ABSTRACT

This study presents a bibliometric analysis of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), focusing on global trends and the future directions of CSR research from 2010 to 2024. Using co-occurrence and network analysis techniques, this study identifies key themes and keywords related to CSR, such as sustainability, sustainable development, environmental protection, and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance). The findings highlight the growing importance of green innovation, circular economy, and climate change in CSR research, alongside business performance metrics like firm performance and financial performance. The study reveals the integration of CSR with emerging business practices, emphasizing the increasing role of stakeholder theory, business ethics, and decision-making processes in shaping CSR strategies. The research suggests that CSR is evolving beyond its philanthropic origins to become a critical driver of business strategy and sustainable development. It calls for further exploration into the role of digital transformation and artificial intelligence in advancing CSR practices and enhancing corporate sustainability.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has evolved from a peripheral concept in management discourse to a central pillar of organizational strategy in the global business environment. Initially framed as a voluntary philanthropic endeavor, CSR now integrates economic, environmental, and social dimensions into the core operational philosophies of firms across industries (Hasu et al., 2025; Pedersen et al., 2018). Over the past decade, this evolution has accelerated due to globalization, stakeholder activism, and regulatory pressures that compel firms to extend their accountability beyond shareholders to a broader set of stakeholders including employees, communities, and the environment (Momtaz & Parra, 2025). These dynamics have enriched CSR from a compliance-based activity to a strategic imperative that influences corporate reputation, competitive advantage, and long-term sustainability (Lukman et al., 2020; Meiryani et al., 2023). As a result, the corpus of academic literature on CSR has expanded rapidly, encompassing interdisciplinary insights from business ethics, strategic management, environmental science, and social policy.

The proliferation of CSR research is closely tied to the increasing complexity of global challenges such as climate change, social inequality, and human rights issues, which demand an integrative approach to corporate governance. The adoption of frameworks like the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has provided both normative guidance and practical priorities for firms engaging in CSR activities, encouraging research that examines the alignment between corporate initiatives and global sustainability agendas. In parallel, the rise of digital reporting platforms and sustainability indices has transformed how CSR performance is measured, communicated, and benchmarked, further stimulating scholarly interest in measuring the effectiveness and impact of CSR strategies (Abdullah et al., 2024). These developments reflect a broader shift in academic inquiry from descriptive narratives of CSR practices toward analytical frameworks that seek to quantify social and environmental outcomes.

Bibliometric analysis, which applies quantitative methods to literature data (e.g., publications, citations, authorship), has become an essential tool for synthesizing research trends in rapidly expanding fields like CSR (Donthu et al., 2021). Through visualization and mapping of scientific knowledge, bibliometrics provides insights into the intellectual structure of a research domain, identifying influential authors, core journals, key topics, and evolving thematic clusters. This approach not only maps the historical growth of a field but also reveals emerging trajectories that signal future directions. In the context of CSR, bibliometric studies have the potential to consolidate dispersed research streams, highlight interdisciplinary linkages, and reveal underexplored areas that warrant further investigation. For instance, bibliometric analyses can uncover how themes such as corporate governance, sustainability reporting, and stakeholder engagement have intersected and diverged over time, offering a macroscopic view of scholarly evolution.

Despite the recognized value of bibliometric methods, existing literature reviews on CSR have often been qualitative in nature, relying on narrative synthesis or thematic categorization. While these reviews have contributed rich contextual understanding, they are frequently limited by subjective interpretation and inconsistent coverage of the expanding literature base. In contrast, a systematic bibliometric assessment provides empirical rigor, enabling researchers to assess growth patterns, citation networks, and collaborative structures within the CSR research ecosystem. Moreover, the period from 2010 to 2024 encompasses significant transformations in both CSR practice and scholarship, driven by technological innovations (e.g., big data analytics), shifts in investor expectations (e.g., ESG integration), and global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic that foregrounded corporate roles in societal resilience (World Economic Forum, 2020). These contextual shifts further underscore the need for a comprehensive bibliometric review that captures the dynamism of CSR research during this influential period.

The globalization of economic activity has also diversified CSR research geographically, with increasing contributions from emerging economies in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. This

geographical diffusion challenges earlier assumptions that CSR is predominantly a Western paradigm and opens new avenues for comparative analysis across cultural and institutional contexts. For example, scholarship has explored how state regulations, national cultures, and socio-economic conditions shape CSR orientations and outcomes, leading to nuanced understandings of CSR's varied manifestations (Gilberthorpe & Banks, 2012; Mahmood et al., 2021). Bibliometric mapping can illuminate these geographic trends by identifying publication patterns, international collaborations, and region-specific thematic emphases, thereby enriching the global narrative of CSR scholarship.

Despite the exponential growth of CSR literature, the field continues to face challenges related to conceptual fragmentation, inconsistent terminology, and uneven thematic focus across disciplines. While some studies emphasize ethical and normative dimensions of CSR, others prioritize strategic or performance-based perspectives, creating divergent conceptual pathways that complicate cumulative knowledge building (RAYANI, 2021). Additionally, existing literature reviews often fail to capture the quantitative structure of the research domain, leaving gaps in understanding about how CSR scholarship has evolved, which topics have gained prominence, and where research convergence or divergence occurs. This fragmentation is exacerbated by the interdisciplinary nature of CSR, which spans business management, environmental science, and social policy, making it difficult to synthesize insights without a systematic, data-driven approach. As CSR research continues to expand, there is an urgent need for a comprehensive bibliometric analysis that not only charts historical trends but also identifies emerging topics, influential contributors, and future research opportunities that align with evolving societal demands. This study aims to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of CSR research published between 2010 and 2024 to identify global trends, thematic developments, and future research directions.

2. METHOD

This study employs a bibliometric research design to systematically analyze the development of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) scholarship from 2010 to 2024. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative method used to evaluate academic literature through statistical examination of publication patterns, citation structures, and collaborative networks (Donthu et al., 2021). The method enables the identification of influential authors, institutions, countries, journals, and thematic clusters within a defined research domain. The dataset for this study was retrieved from a reputable international academic database known for its comprehensive indexing of peer-reviewed journals. The search strategy used the keywords "Corporate Social Responsibility" OR "CSR" within titles, abstracts, and keywords, limited to publications between 2010 and 2024. Only articles and review papers published in English were included to ensure consistency and comparability. After removing duplicates and non-relevant records, the final dataset was exported in compatible formats for bibliometric processing.

The analysis was conducted using bibliometric software tools commonly applied in science mapping studies, such as VOSviewer (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Van Eck & Waltman, 2014). These tools enable visualization of co-authorship networks, co-citation relationships, bibliographic coupling, and keyword co-occurrence patterns. Science mapping techniques were applied to examine the intellectual structure of CSR research by identifying clusters of frequently co-cited authors and journals, which reflect foundational theoretical influences in the field. Additionally, keyword co-occurrence analysis was performed to detect dominant research themes and emerging topics over time. The temporal evolution of keywords was examined to highlight shifts in scholarly attention, particularly in relation to sustainability, ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance), stakeholder theory, and digital transformation. To ensure methodological rigor, the study followed established bibliometric procedures, including data cleaning, normalization of author names and institutional affiliations, and validation of keyword consistency (Zupic & Čater, 2015). Network visualization maps were generated to interpret collaborative patterns and thematic concentrations. The interpretation of clusters was based on frequency strength, link intensity, and thematic relevance within the CSR domain.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Co-Authorship Analysis



Figure 1. Author Visualization
Source: Data Analysis

Figure 1 shows a co-authorship network based on publications related to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The nodes represent authors, with their size indicating the number of publications they have co-authored in the dataset. The colors indicate different clusters of authors who have worked together more frequently, showing distinct research groups or themes within CSR. The red cluster, for example, shows a set of authors like Liu Yang and Hussainey K. who are closely connected, while the green cluster represents another group, with authors like Karaman Abdullah S. and Kuzey Cemil, suggesting a focus on a different area within CSR research. The link between these nodes shows collaboration across various research topics, with some authors being highly central, indicated by their larger nodes. This network reveals how these authors contribute to the broader field of CSR through collaborative efforts.

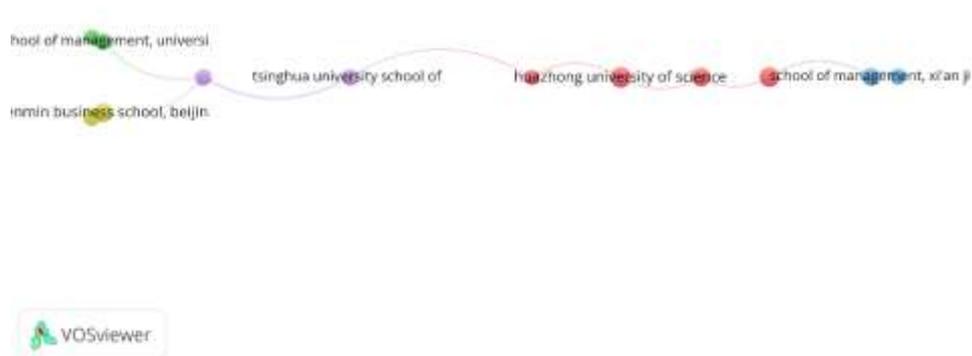


Figure 2. Visualisasi Institusi
Sumber: Data Diolah

Figure 2 represents the co-authorship network of various universities in China, specifically focusing on management-related research. The nodes in the network represent different universities, with their size reflecting their level of involvement in the research. The colors of the nodes indicate different clusters, suggesting groups of universities that are frequently collaborating with each other. For example, the green cluster indicates universities like the School of Management, Universiti, and Renmin Business School in Beijing, while the red cluster shows a group with institutions like Huazhong University of Science and Technology and the School of Management, Xi'an Jiaotong University. The connections between the universities indicate collaborative relationships, with thicker links showing stronger collaborations. This network highlights the interconnectedness of Chinese universities in the field of management research and their areas of joint focus.

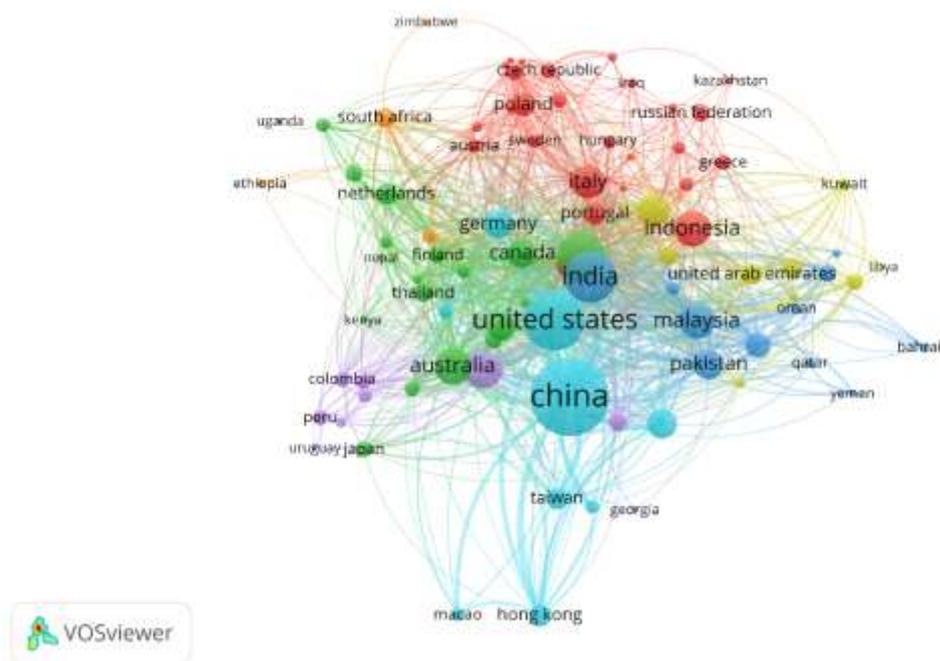


Figure 3. Country Level Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 3 displays a global co-authorship network based on research collaborations among different countries. The nodes represent countries, with their size corresponding to the number of collaborations in the dataset. The colors of the nodes reflect different clusters, showing groups of countries that are more closely connected in terms of research collaboration. For instance, China, the United States, and India form a central cluster, indicating strong international collaborations in their research fields, particularly in CSR or related disciplines. Other countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Pakistan are grouped together in the Southeast Asian cluster, while European countries like Italy, Germany, and the United Kingdom form their own network. This network shows that research collaboration in CSR is highly international, with extensive cross-border ties between countries across continents. The links between the nodes demonstrate how these countries share common research interests and contribute to global CSR knowledge.

Citation Analysis

Table 1. Top Cited Literature

Citations	Authors and Year	Title
3,138	(Bocken et al., 2014)	A literature and practice review to develop sustainable business model archetypes
3,081	(Aguinis & Glavas, 2012)	What We Know and Don't Know About Corporate Social Responsibility: A Review and Research Agenda

The yellow cluster revolves around financial and business-related aspects, including firm performance, financial performance, and business ethics. Keywords like corporate reputation and stakeholder theory are linked to the business side of CSR, showing that companies are increasingly expected to perform responsibly while maintaining profitability. The connections in this cluster highlight how CSR initiatives are tied to business outcomes such as reputation management and ethical decision-making, reflecting the integration of CSR into business strategies. The blue cluster contains keywords related to ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) performance, such as esg performance, decision making, and digital transformation. These terms demonstrate the evolving nature of CSR, where companies are evaluated not just on their financial results but also on their environmental and social impacts. The rising significance of digital transformation suggests that technology is playing a critical role in shaping CSR strategies, from data-driven decision-making to the application of AI and digital tools for sustainability.

The red cluster focuses on topics like carbon emission, green innovation, and environmental policy, indicating the importance of addressing environmental issues through innovative technologies and policies. The connection between supply chains and green innovation points to the growing role of sustainable supply chain practices. This cluster emphasizes how CSR is driving innovation in terms of products, services, and organizational strategies to address pressing environmental challenges. These clusters together highlight that CSR is a multi-dimensional field with significant overlap between business performance, sustainability, and environmental responsibility.

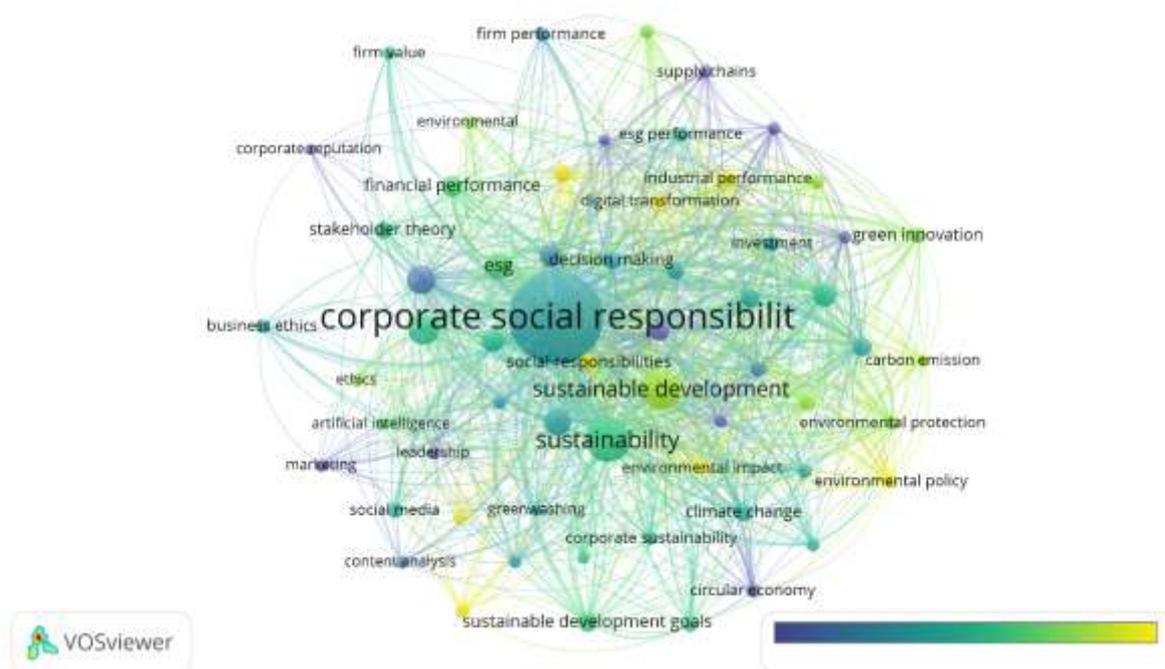


Figure 5. Overlay Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 5 showcases a co-occurrence network of keywords within Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), illustrating the extensive relationships between various concepts in the field. The central node labeled corporate social responsibility is the most prominent, with other nodes representing specific themes such as sustainability, sustainable development, green innovation, and climate change. The size and color intensity of the nodes indicate the frequency and strength of their occurrence within the dataset. Keywords that are frequently associated with CSR are closely connected in clusters, indicating strong research emphasis in those areas. The green and blue clusters represent environmental and sustainability themes, while yellow and purple clusters indicate business and economic performance-related aspects.

sustainable development. The prominence of these terms underlines the increasing alignment of corporate practices with long-term environmental, social, and economic objectives. This growing importance of sustainability reflects broader global shifts toward more responsible business practices, especially in the context of addressing environmental challenges like climate change and carbon emissions.

A key insight from the network is the strong relationship between CSR and environmental concerns, particularly around environmental protection, green innovation, and the circular economy. These themes are interconnected with CSR's role in driving green and innovative business solutions that reduce environmental impact. The increasing focus on ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) metrics further emphasizes how companies are now held accountable not only for their financial performance but also for their societal and environmental contributions. The growing emphasis on decision-making and stakeholder theory indicates that organizations are increasingly integrating stakeholder perspectives into their strategic decision-making processes, aligning corporate goals with societal needs.

The analysis also reveals that business ethics continues to be a central concern in CSR research, as seen in the prominence of keywords like corporate reputation, ethics, and social responsibilities. This highlights the increasing expectation for companies to operate transparently and responsibly, fostering trust with stakeholders. Interestingly, while the field acknowledges the importance of marketing and social media in CSR communication, these topics are less central compared to environmental and business performance-related terms, suggesting that while these areas are gaining attention, the primary focus remains on direct impact and sustainability outcomes. The inclusion of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence further suggests that future CSR research may explore how digital transformation can contribute to more sustainable business practices.

CSR is evolving as a multidisciplinary and dynamic field that goes beyond traditional philanthropy and corporate ethics. As businesses face increasing pressure to align with global sustainability goals, CSR is becoming an essential driver of organizational performance, innovation, and environmental stewardship. Future research should continue to explore the integration of digital transformation and artificial intelligence into CSR strategies, focusing on their potential to drive sustainable development and enhance the ESG performance of organizations. Moreover, understanding how CSR can foster long-term value creation by engaging with both local and global stakeholders remains an important area for exploration.

4. CONCLUSION

This bibliometric study of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) highlights the growing significance of sustainability and environmental impact in shaping contemporary CSR practices. The analysis reveals that CSR is increasingly intertwined with sustainable development, ESG metrics, and business ethics, reflecting a shift towards more responsible corporate behavior. The emphasis on environmental concerns, such as carbon emissions and the circular economy, demonstrates CSR's pivotal role in addressing global sustainability challenges. Moreover, the integration of stakeholder theory and ethical decision-making underscores the evolving expectations for companies to balance financial performance with social and environmental responsibility. As CSR continues to evolve, future research should further explore the role of emerging technologies, like artificial intelligence, in advancing sustainable business practices and enhancing ESG performance. This study underscores CSR's transformative potential in driving both business success and global sustainability.

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