

# Corporate Social Responsibility Disclosure and Marketing Intersection

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**Abstract.** Corporate Social Responsibility is linked to societal issues of organizations and has been a field of promising investigation, with potential society impacts. Marketing literature is of great value to understand Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities disclosure transcending communication objectives. To explore what literature has already investigated, the author reviewed articles pertaining to the intersection of CSR reporting and marketing *corpus* by means of a bibliometric review and a keyword network analysis. Thus, the aim of this article is to comprehend how marketing domain could foster CSR reporting literature to be fostered by analysing the current literature configuration. Attending to this objective, CSR reporting literature is able to take advantage from marketing aspects besides communication, such as value creation and market orientation, and marketing literature can advance its effort to incorporate societal concerns to its state of the art. Managerially this work could provide both subject to achieve synergistic results in CSR actions. The results showed low volume of publication and point to some research opportunities to further investigation. The limitations of the study are linked to the exploratory approach given, suggesting future scholars to adopt different methods to achieve other objectives such as exploring epistemological roots, variables relationships and conceptual differences.

**Keywords.** CSR Report, Social Disclosure, Marketing, Societal Marketing.

## 1. Introduction

Increasingly firms are adhering to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities and this area has been a fertile source of investigation [1]. CSR consists of corporate policies and practices upon business responsibility about the wider societal good, which are clearly articulated and communicated [2]. CSR is an organizational element capable to impact on social performance, improve firms' results and image value and starts positive attitudes from costumers [3], [4]. In this sphere, the way firms report those activities is a singular field of research. CSR report has the objective of communicate organizations' impact to broad society.

Given that, marketing literature could be helpful to comprehend how CSR report lead to its outcomes mainly because marketing area has strait link to crate, communicate and deliver value for organization's stakeholders and societal environment [5]. Value is not limited to monetary dimension resulting from transactions, but evolves

to what stakeholders and large society judges important and worthy [6].

Societal issues has already been in marketing literature radar for longtime [7]–[9]. However, scholars still call for more attention on marketing research's responsibility on how to assess societal impact [10], [11].

Regarding the exposed, an investigation through the intersection of CSR reporting and marketing is of great value. Doing that, scholars could explore the role of marketing to understand CSR disclosure beyond the communication function at the same time as deepening the incorporation of CSR concepts into marketing literature. In practice, managers could integrate areas in charge of both subjects to provide synergistic results. That means, improve even more the impact of this areas working separately.

## 2. Research Methods

To assess the aims of this article, the author called for a bibliometric review, based on keywords analysis.

## 2.1 Criteria to inclusion

A database was provided by a search in Scopus, one of the most relevant academic research repository. The search procedure comprised some steps with Boolean operators' logic. At all searches final publication staged articles published on journals were targeted. The steps and search results are present on table 1.

**Tab. 1** - Keyword search to database conception.

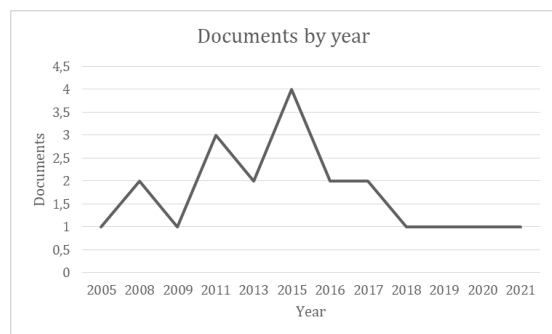
Keyword set	Boolean operator	Result
"CSR Report*"; "Marketing"	AND	17
"CSR Disclosure"; "Marketing"	AND	4

No articles overlap were found, giving a total of 21 articles. Those articles were then submit to a bibliometric review, with the support Excel. Next, the keyword mapping was managed through VOSviewer application. This software was select due to its visual properties to analyse many aspect of reference database, such as co-occurrence, counting, co-citation, and others.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 Bibliometric review

The first aspect to be analysed is the year of articles' publications. Figure 1 presents the frequencies of publication by year. The year when the publications, which comprise the topics intersection, was 2015, with 4 articles. In 2006, 2007, 2010, 2012 and 2014 no research was published according this review's criteria.



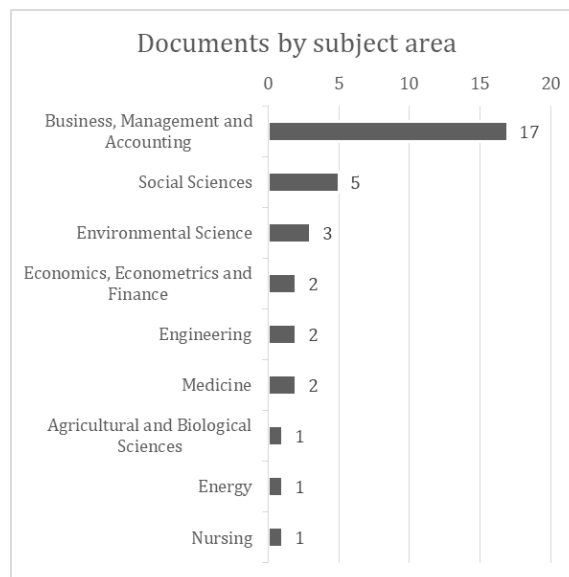
**Fig. 1** - Documents by year.

The second aspect to be reported is articles distribution by country or territory. United States and Australia were the countries which had the major volume of articles of the present search, with 5 and 2 documents, respectively. Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Germany, Ghana, India, Ireland, Lithuania, Portugal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain and United Kingdom

had indexed one document following this search criteria.

Regarding the author frequency, no author published more than one time.

Fourth, the subject area that publication was more frequent was Business, Management and Accounting (17 articles), followed by Social Sciences (5 articles) and Environmental Science (3 articles). Figure 2 present the distribution between



**Fig 2** - Documents by subject area.

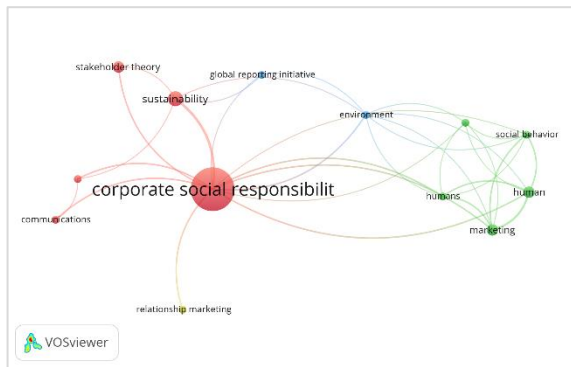
The three articles mostly cited were "The role of institutional and reputational factors in the voluntary adoption of corporate social responsibility reporting standards" [12], with 213 citations, "Do different industries report Corporate Social Responsibility differently? An investigation through the lens of stakeholder theory" [13], with 176 citations; and "Progress in Research on CSR and the Hotel Industry (2006-2015)" [14], with 91 citations.

The next topic presents the bibliometric review towards keywords co-occurrence.

### 3.2 Keywords bibliometric review

Through the analysis of keywords co-occurrence, it is possible to verify the relation between topics and keywords cluster configuration.

All keywords (from authors and from Index) with at least 2 co-occurrence were analysed by VOSviewer. Figure 3 shows the network result.



**Fig. 3** - Network Visualization of keywords co-occurrence.

Four clusters emerged from the analysis.

- Cluster 1: Communications, Corporate Social Responsibility, Internet, Stakeholder Theory and Sustainability.
- Cluster 2: Human, Humans, Marketing, Social Behavior and Social Responsibility.
- Cluster 3: Environment and Global Reporting Initiative.
- Cluster 4: Relationship Marketing.

The results' discussion is in the next section.

## 4. Discussion

Even though the review demonstrated the years with highest volume of research published in the intersection of CSR reporting and marketing was between 2013 and 2015, the intersection remains in discussion.

Author's country of origin, United States and Australia were the most frequent, suggesting those country are more interest in researching and publish about the theme.

Regarding the volume of publication no author centred research about the topics, however few works excel citation volume. The most cited work deals with adoption of CSR reporting patterns [12], indicating this subtopic had already been at scholars' spotlight. The second one explored the differences of CSR report contend [13], being another subtopic of relevance.

The subject areas more related to the sample of the revision are Business, Management and Accounting, followed by Social Sciences and Environmental Science. This indicate managerial and social sciences are more fruitful to the theme if compared with the others.

The keywords' network construction permits to pursue this article aim to comprehend how marketing domain could foster CSR reporting literature. The clusters configuration demonstrate communication and relationship marketing are the marketing subject, which are more deepen explored.

This highlights some research opportunities of how marketing domain could help CSR disclosure literature to develop. First, internal marketing could explore how CSR report could act as an employee motivator to direct their actions to CSR objectives. Second, Market orientation could be a source to investigate if the content of organization's CSR report is aligned to what the market is expecting of it. Third, understanding marketing's vision of competition by creating competitive advantage could nurture the employment of different formats of enhancing firms' value using CSR disclosure. The last, Societal marketing could raise investigation about incorporating social objectives to the organization to truly achieve social results, departing from greenwashing, which is using marketing to pretend the organisation is engaged in social and environmental issues.

## 5. Conclusion

The present study has the objective to explore the literature configuration to comprehend how marketing domain could help CSR disclosure literature to be fostered. Therefore, some limitations could be explored in next studies. First, the search could comprehend other articles database. Second, the review was made considering volumes and keywords co-occurrence. Future studies could follow systematic review to analyse other aspects such as concepts differences, epistemological approaches, variable relationships, and others.

Besides the low volume of publication, the intersection of CSR report and marketing has potential of investigation in different manners.

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