



Article

Corporate Social Responsibility and Marketing: A Bibliometric and Visualization Analysis of the Literature between the Years 1994 and 2020

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Abstract: Several studies explored the effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on marketing. However, bibliometric research that organizes this production is scarce. Thus, this study aims to provide a bibliometric view of marketing-related CSR research, identifying this field's state-of-the-art literature. Two thousand and forty-two articles were collected through the Web of Science (WoS) platform. Data were analyzed using VOSviewer software to map the data graphically. The results show that: (a) the literature on CSR in the marketing area is growing; (b) five articles alone accounted for 9940 citations, and there are several prolific authors; (c) the prominent journals identified in this research published 42.16% of the total; (d) The “Journal of Business Ethics” is the leader in the number of publications, followed by “Sustainability,” which has shown strong growth in recent years, and; (e) The US is the leading country, according to the number of articles and citations. The keyword trending network analysis revealed that CSR is becoming a strategic marketing approach for companies. This study offers an insight into the state-of-the-art and trends identification in CSR and marketing.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility; marketing; bibliometric analysis



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1. Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been studied and put into practice in organizations and has become an essential subject in the literature from a strategic perspective [1].

Studies show that companies' positive consumer evaluations and behaviors start from the customers' perception of seeing CSR initiatives [2,3]. With this, organizations take practical steps towards these social responsibility activities to understand their relevance in the business environment [4].

Given the relevance of CSR activities and their effects on stakeholders, marketers see this topic as a vital source for implementing marketing strategies and improving companies' performance in a holistic way [5].

Some studies have investigated the impact of CSR on consumer satisfaction [6] and improving brand reputation performance [7] and its implications on satisfactory consumer ratings [8].

From a wide search, bibliometric studies were found that related CSR with communication (e.g., [9,10]) and marketing with socially responsible brand communication [11]. Ji

et al.'s [9] study assesses how CSR communication research has developed over the past four decades and the results demonstrate that CSR communication is a maturing area of research. The study by Nadanyiova et al. [11] related marketing with socially responsible brand communication and demonstrated that the area has a growth trend in publications, especially in the last 10 years. From the few results found, it is possible to affirm that bibliometric studies relating CSR and marketing are scarce.

However, bibliometric studies regarding CSR publications related to marketing are still scarce. A bibliometric analysis is fundamental for a sustainable evolution of a research field. Moreover, uncovering the research directions will allow researchers to redirect their focus into the most promising directions, uncover research gaps and determine a research roadmap [12,13]. The analysis of CRS research's development process over time to identify the prominent authors, publications, top journals, and intellectual ties remain poorly studied [9].

Studies that organize and analyze CSR's scientific production related to marketing may review the progression of knowledge construction and the prospects for theoretical development in this field. Thus, it is necessary to develop more studies that use bibliometric indicators.

Thus, this study aims to provide a bibliometric view of CSR research related to marketing, identifying state-of-the-art in this research field. This means identifying trends and other relevant indicators by surveying the articles published on the WoS platform, with subsequent data treatment through the VOSviewer analysis and visualization software. The content analysis of recent publications intends to identify gaps and research opportunities in CSR related to marketing.

This article has the following structure: the second section contains the literature review and addresses bibliometric studies, CSR, and marketing; the third section presents the methodology; then, in the fourth section, the results of the analyzes in WoS and VOSviewer are presented; the fifth section presents the discussion of the results obtained; finally, the sixth section presents the conclusions of this study.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Bibliometric Methods

The volume of scientific research has increased substantially in recent years, making it difficult for researchers to keep up with relevant publications in their field [14]. This fact requires the use of bibliometric methods that can handle this wealth of data, filter important works by estimating their impact, and discover the underlying structure of a field [14] being able to summarize available knowledge about a research area [15]. Bibliometric analysis is an alternative for reviewing scientific production, as well as meta-analysis and systematic literature review [16].

The use of bibliometric analysis is perceived as an important and necessary method to start a scientific study, as its contribution generates complete literature results in a specific research field [17]. Thus, it is a precise technique that analyzes the literature and information mining, giving scholars the opportunity to learn more about the development of a particular area through the main bibliometric indicators [18]. Bibliometric analysis techniques fall into two categories: (a) performance analysis and (b) scientific mapping. In essence, a performance analysis is responsible for the contributions of research constituents, while scientific mapping focuses on the relationships between research constituents [16].

This methodology summarizes the bibliometric and intellectual structure of a field, analyzing the social and structural relationships between the different constituents of the research [16]. For this, it establishes connections between the various topics covered demonstrated through graphical visualization maps, important in the treatment of data from multidisciplinary fields [11], and can provide a substantial amount of information and discoveries within a field of study through a rigorous volume of data such as trends in researches, countries, and authors that publish the most and the most recurrent words, among other data [19–21].

Bibliometric methods offer a different perspective on a field, with the possibility of analyzing any type of study as long as there are connections between the analyzed studies [14]. Thus, this approach has been increasingly used in studies in recent years (e.g., [20–25]).

2.2. Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR studies have evolved over the years. The first time that the term “Corporate Social Responsibility” was used was in 1926, about organizations that were happy to help the community while benefiting from the fruit of their work [26]. In 1953, Howard R. Bowen became known for formalizing CSR’s terminologies and objectives [27]. Bowen stated that these companies should fulfill their economic, social, and legal obligations [27].

Keith Davis proposed in 1960 that Social Responsibility (SR) concerns the decisions and actions of companies taken for reasons—even if partially—that go beyond the company’s economic interest [28]. In that same sense, McWilliams and Siegel [29] approach CSR as actions that seem to promote some social good, beyond the firms’ interests and what is required by law.

In 1979, Carroll [30] introduced the CSR’s first classifications, making them economical, ethical, legal, and philanthropic. Another similar classification addresses that CSR can be organized into three categories: stakeholders, society, and the environment. That said, organizations have since given more attention to environmental care practices [31].

CSR has been well-evaluated and introduced in the management field due to the potential these activities can bring to organizations. CSR is currently gaining momentum as organizations are increasingly seeking to integrate all practices and activities that concern the SR theme [32].

After the financial crisis of 2008, publicly traded companies questioned and reflected on CSR actions and their beneficial impact on the organization [33]. When you look at CSR and its efficiency, you soon realize that when you work on solving society’s problems, you get, as a consequence, greater profits for the company, showing more sustainable positions in the business environment [34].

CSR was conceptualized as corporate social performance, being strongly related to stakeholders’ theory [35]. It can also be conceptualized as the degree to which organizations exercise economic, ethical, legal, and philanthropic responsibilities towards stakeholders [36]. The adoption of these activities has been drawing managers’ attention as they understand that these actions bring many advantages to organizations [37]. Some studies have already suggested the importance of SR practices in organizations, as they perceive that customers support socially responsible companies [38–40]. Companies’ efforts are seen as acts of zeal and kindness evident to all interested parties, not just for the group destined to receive such benefits [41]. However, when it comes to philanthropic actions, consumers must perceive that such acts developed by the company are part of their values so that they do not confuse the idea that the company has these attitudes to obtain returns arising from this practice [42].

However, considering that consumers are increasingly informed, it is essential to emphasize that they know the impact that SR practices can have on their lives, and with this awareness, they want to see the adherence and defense of socially responsible activities by organizations [43].

Thus, it is possible to affirm that CSR has never been more current. Consumers aspire to see responsible behavior in companies. They wish that organizational concerns can go far beyond profitability and show a fair, honest, and transparent approach towards all their stakeholders and that these corporate practices are sustainable, both inside and outside the company [44].

2.3. Corporate Social Responsibility and Marketing

CSR practices are strategies that companies adopt since they positively affect consumers, leading to a competitive advantage [44]. For example, tourist destination brands

have been using SR measures, and as a result, they become more attractive and have greater chances for tourists to revisit the place [45].

Some researchers admitted that CSR is part of building the brand and has a strong influence on perceived quality, brand loyalty and customer, and brand relationships [46].

Companies that continuously put socially responsible activities into practice must also communicate such behaviors to the desired audience. Thus, the risk of these activities not being perceived and, consequently, the company not achieving the benefits arising from these conducts is mitigated [44].

Responsible conduct efforts in organizations can bring very satisfactory and desired results for any company. These effects take place in an advantageous range, such as a favorable reputation of the company, through customers who intend to revisit and repurchase the brand, consumers who strive to speak well about the brand on social media and in person, customers who recommend the brand to third parties, as well as the willingness to pay for a higher-priced product [47–49].

In this sense, it is emphasized that, in a highly competitive world, it is essential to work on practices to strengthen the brand and make it sustainable to achieve success and solidity in the market [37]. To build strong brands, it is vital to observe customers' perceptions of a brand. For consumers, it is not enough to get the right products or services from a particular store. They want to see other values associated with the brand. Moreover, those same customers tend to engage with a brand when they positively associate it [50].

Hereupon, Balmer [5,51] defined the term "corporate marketing," which refers to incorporating concepts at the business level that have emerged since the 1950s. Studies on "cause-related marketing" can be found in the literature, showing the relationship between CSR and corporate marketing used as a communication channel to build and consolidate its reputation and increase customer loyalty [52].

CSR can increase stakeholder support towards the company [53]. However, organizations have been questioned and criticized for using CSR only as a marketing strategy to promote the brand, achieve a good reputation, and increase profits [54–56]. As an example, one can cite the attitudes of cigarette companies, which match organizations' actions, which spend more resources on corporate marketing campaigns than cooperate to benefit society with philanthropic efforts [57]. In that same sense, Frankental [58] explains that CSR may end up being used merely as a marketing strategy for the promotion of a brand, with a speech carefully ready to display to stakeholders.

Several researchers have worked on the relationship between CSR and marketing variables. Rodrigues et al. [45] investigated the perceptions of tourists in CSR activities and their effect on the creation of CSR image and the influence on brand love. Sun et al. [59] found that CSR activities can increase consumer loyalty. Other studies investigated the CSR's impact on the consumer, through its commitment and perception of value [60]; the effect of philanthropic corporate social responsibility on the consumer's attitude and consequently on word of mouth and the willingness to pay more [61]; CSR's direct relationship with the desire to pay a price premium [62]; the relationship of CSR in word of mouth [63]; CSR's influence on word of mouth and purchase repetition, with the brand credibility as a mediator [47]; the direct and positive relationship between CSR and Loyalty [64]; the influence of customer perceptions of CSR on brand equity [37,65]. There are also studies on CSR's relationship with purchase intention, perceived quality, brand image, and brand attitude [44,66].

As mentioned above, many studies have linked Marketing to CSR over the years. However, there is a lack of bibliometric studies that organize this field of research.

3. Methodology

3.1. Journal Selection

This study is based on a bibliometric review on CSR in marketing and follows the systematic literature reviews proposed by Tranfield et al. [67], based on three major steps: planning, conducting, and disseminating results.

Bibliometric revision offers an overview and knowledge of the state-of-the-art of the researched topic from what is published [68]. This methodology is essential as it provides a categorized view of the documents published in each research area based on objective criteria for analyzing and classifying publications [22]. The data collection was made from the main collection of the Web of Science database from Clarivate Analytics on 17 October 2020.

The research was carried out using the terms $TS = (\text{Corporate Social Responsibility OR CSR}) \text{ AND } TS = (\text{Brand OR Marketing})$, with the following Boolean operators: allotted time—1900–2020; document types—article, early access, and review; indexes—SCI-Expanded, SSCI, and ESCI. To filter the results, the following categories were selected: Business; Ethics; Green and Sustainable Science and Technology; Management; Economics; Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism; Environmental Studies; Environmental Sciences, and; Communication. A total of 2042 documents were found, which comprehend the corpus to conduct this research.

3.2. Data Analysis

Software is vital to scientific research; it assists scientists in identifying research questions, analyzing data, visualizing results, and disseminating knowledge [69]. There are several tools that can be used for bibliometric analysis: VOSviewer [70], CiteSpace [71], SciMAT [72], CitNetExplorer [73], BibExcel [74] e Sci2Tool [75]. The study by Pan et al. [69] compared some visualization software, highlighting that VOSviewer has been the most used in bibliometric analysis in recent years, also the fastest growing. In addition, VOSviewer has been used successfully in several projects and the VOSviewer functionality is especially useful for displaying large bibliometric maps in an easy-to-interpret form [70]. The use of the VOSviewer software, in turn, provides the possibility to present the data in a graphical way, through category maps [22]. Thus, this study uses VOSviewer for graphical data visualization.

Data were analyzed through VOSviewer similarity visualization software in which the maps and networks responsible for graphically illustrating the results were created. VOSviewer has been widely used in previous bibliometric mapping studies [76–78], with exciting results. This graphic representation contributes to knowing what is being researched, mapping trends, clusters, and relevancies.

The study conducted the following analyzes: publications by year; publications by category; journal analysis (from the synthesis of productivity of the journals and the publication volume per journal); keywords analysis; geographical analysis (based on the number of publications in co-authorship by country); analysis of publications by organization; citations analysis (based on the volume of citations per article, citation network per journal, citation network by authors, and co-citation network per journal), and; authors' analysis (based on publications by author and bibliographic coupling of authors). The result obtained from these analyses allows us to determine the state of development and trends regarding journals, articles, authors, institutions, countries, and keywords within the scope of CSR in marketing.

4. Results

4.1. Publications by Year and by Category

The first known article published relating the theme of CSR with marketing dates from 1994 and was published in the Journal of Business Ethics with the title “Predicting Corporate Social Responsiveness—A model drawn from 3 perspectives” (Figure 1). This article already raises CSR's possibility of bringing other impacts, not only financial, such as market share.

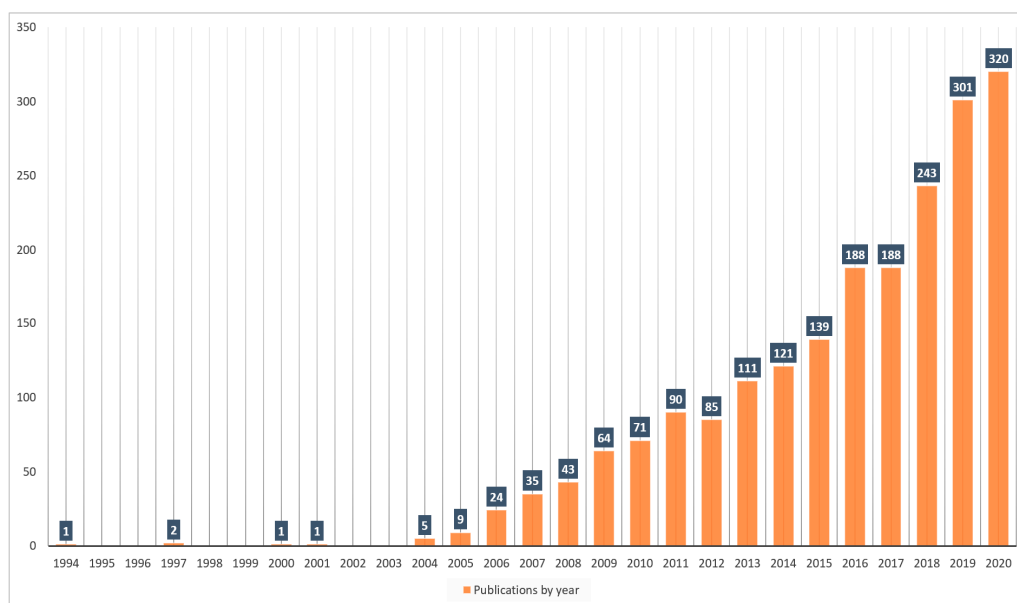


Figure 1. Publications by year (1994–2020).

The second article, published in the Journal of Marketing in 1997 with the title “The company and the product: Corporate associations and consumer product responses,” associates CSR with Marketing more closely. Figure 1 shows the publications over the years from the first article known in the field (1994) until October 2020, when the data collection for this research was carried out.

After a tenuous interest in the topic between 1994 and 2003, in 2004, five articles were published. Since then, there has been a growing interest in the topic. Although the data collection was in October 2020, this was the year with the most published papers, confirming the subject’s ever-increasing interest.

After evaluating the growth of publications over the years, a more careful analysis will be presented to know the relevance of CSR’s research field and marketing in some specific points.

The 2042 articles are subdivided into nine WoS categories (Table 1). “Business” is the most represented category, with 1181 framed articles equivalent to 57.835% of the sample total. The second-largest category is “Management,” with 742 articles, followed by the “Environmental Studies” category with 338 articles.

Table 1. Number of publications by category (1994–2020).

Web of Science Categories	Number	% of 2042
Business	1181	57.835
Management	742	36.337
Environmental Studies	338	16.552
Ethics	264	12.929
Economics	193	9.452
Environmental Sciences	180	8.815
Green Sustainable Science Technology	180	8.815
Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism	113	5.534
Communication	23	3.314

It is necessary to consider that the same article can be associated with one or more categories, and, for this reason, the absolute frequencies presented in Table 1 in the column “number” total more than 2042, as well as the relative frequencies presented in the column “% of 2042” total more than 100%.

4.2. Journal Analysis

The 2042 articles analysis showed us that they were published in 400 different journals (Table 2). It is interesting to note that only four journals (1% of the total), together, are responsible for the publication of 606 articles, which is equivalent to 29.68% of the entire publications.

Table 2. Summary of productivity of journals (1994–2020).

Production Volume by Journal	Number of Journals	% of 400 Journals	% of 2042 Articles
Over 100 Published Articles	4	1.0	29.671
21 to 100 Published Articles	7	1.75	10.802
11 to 20 Published Articles	14	3.5	9.861
6 to 10 Published Articles	45	11.25	16.651
1 to 5 Published Articles	330	82.5	33.011
Total	400	100	100

This research field is quite rich and can be published in many different journals. However, 330 journals (82.5%) published only one to five articles from the entire sample, which indicates that these journals are specific to this research field.

Through the analysis of Figure 2 and Table 3, it is possible to know the journals and each one's publication volume. Figure 2 shows the very transversal character of this research subject, showing the richness of the content and how it is possible to publish it in different fields of different branches.

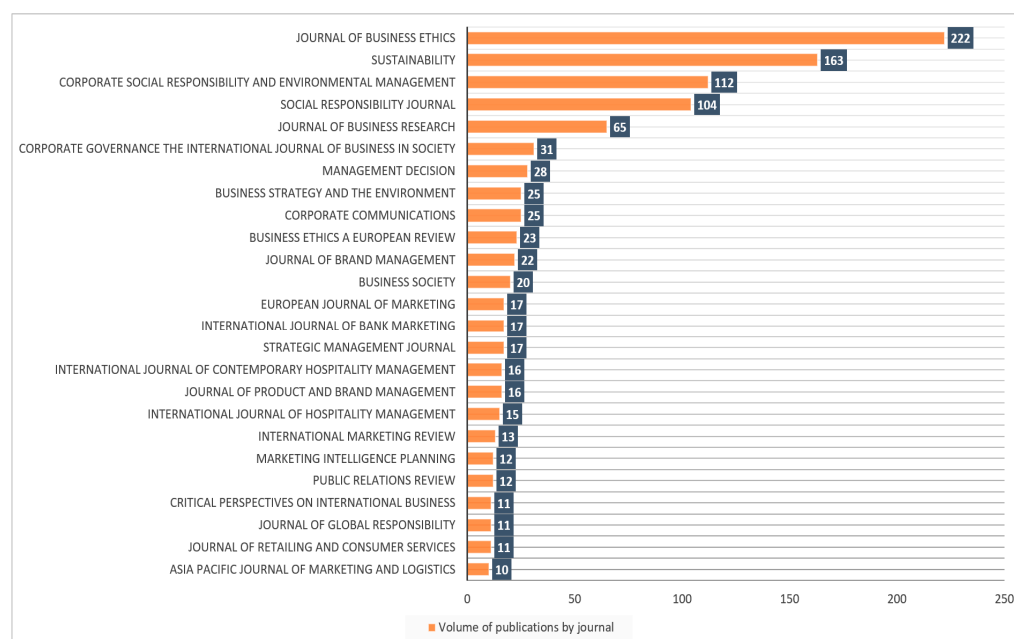


Figure 2. Volume of publications by journal (1994–2020).

Table 3 offers a summary of the most prolific journals in the researched field, where it is possible to analyze the “top 10” formed by 13 journals. The “Journal of Business Ethics” is the leader in the number of publications with 222 articles, corresponding to 10.872% of the entire sample, followed by “Sustainability” with 163 articles (7.982%) and “Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management” with 112 articles, equivalent to 5.485% of the total sample.

The three most prolific journals are responsible for publishing 497 articles together, or 24.339% of the sample of 2042 documents. This analysis helps us to know the reference journals in this research field and to understand their importance.

Table 3. Top 10 publications by journal (1994–2020).

R	Publication by Journal	Articles	% of 2042	Impact Factor *	Best Quartile
1	Journal of Business Ethics	222	10.872	6.430	Q1
2	Sustainability	163	7.982	3.251	Q2
3	Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	112	5.485	8.741	Q1
4	Social Responsibility Journal	104	5.093	**	Q2
5	Journal of Business Research	65	3.183	7.550	Q1
6	Corporate Governance the International Journal of Business in Society	31	1.518	**	Q2
7	Management Decision	28	1.371	4.957	Q2
8	Business Strategy and the Environment	25	1.224	10.302	Q1
8	Corporate Communications	25	1.224	**	Q3
9	Business Ethics a European Review	23	1.126	6.967	Q1
9	Journal of Brand Management	23	1.126	3.500	Q3
10	Business & Society	20	0.979	7.389	Q1
10	International Journal of Bank Marketing	20	0.979	4.412	Q2

* The Journal Impact Factor (JIF) is a journal-level metric calculated from data indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection. ** 1ST electronic JCR year: 2020—For the purposes of calculating JIF, a JCR year considers the publications of that journal in the two prior years.

4.3. Keyword Analysis

The keywords' analysis helps us know the research field and the most recurrent occurrence topics within the CSR associated with Marketing.

From the 2042 articles, 6119 keywords were identified. Of these, 4316 (70.534%) keywords appeared only once in the articles. Another 655 keywords or 10.704% occurred in five or more articles. In at least 20 articles, 152 keywords are listed, equivalent to 2.484% of 6119 keywords. Only 35 keywords appear in at least 100 articles, or 0.572%; and only nine words occur more than 200 times, equivalent to 0.147%.

The keywords that occur more than 200 times are "Corporate Social Responsibility", "CSR", "Corporate Social-Responsibility", "Performance", "Impact", "Financial Performance", "Management", "Governance" and "Sustainability". "Corporate Social Responsibility" is the main word used to identify the research field among the articles analyzed with 991 occurrences, followed by "CSR" with 693 and "Corporate Social-Responsibility" with 496 occurrences. The three keywords in question are nothing more than variations on referring to the same concept.

The map shown in Figure 1 was generated by 152 keywords, selected from a minimum of 20 occurrences. On this map, the words are organized into three clusters. The first cluster (red) includes CSR studies in the context of organizations and financial performance, while the second (green) concerns marketing variables, such as, for example, brand image and brand equity. The third cluster (blue) examines CSR in the context of the global economy and distribution channels. The top keyword for each cluster is: "Corporate Social Responsibility" (red cluster); "Corporate Social-Responsibility" (green cluster), and; "CSR" (blue cluster).

4.4. Geographical Analysis

Based on the published articles, the authors' country of affiliation shows that this research topic is widespread worldwide since 95 different countries are represented.

Table 4 shows the "top 15" countries with the highest production in this field, representing 97.241% of all production. Occupying the first position is the United States of America, with 417 published papers, equivalent to 20.421% of the total, followed by China, with 215 published articles, representing 10.529% of the total, and by England and Spain, tied in third place, with 197 published articles, which is equivalent to 9.647% of the total.

Table 4. Top 15 publications in co-authorship by country (1994–2020).

R	Co-Authorship by Countries	Number	% of 2042
1	United States of America	417	20.421
2	China	215	10.529
3	England	197	9.647
3	Spain	197	9.647
4	Australia	145	7.101
5	South Korea	129	6.317
6	France	97	4.750
7	Canada	95	4.652
8	India	87	4.261
9	Italy	83	4.065
10	Germany	78	3.820
11	Taiwan	60	2.983
12	Netherlands	59	2.289
13	Poland	51	2.498
14	Malaysia	45	2.204
15	Brazil	42	2.057

Figure 2 shows the co-authorship network between countries. The node size in each country indicates the volume of publication, and the lines and distances between the nodes indicate co-authorship in the articles. Figure 2 was generated with 61 countries that had a minimum of five articles published in this field.

When analyzing the generated map, it is possible to notice that the United States of America, China, England, and Spain are in evidence. This happens because they are the countries that most publish.

Regarding the lines that indicate cooperation and partnership between countries, it is possible to notice that the United States of America, England, and China are at the center of the map because they are three poles with many connections to other countries.

The United States of America and China together account for 31% of all publications, representing two great potentials in this field of research. The six countries that publish the most are jointly responsible for 63.3% of all publications in this field. As can be seen, research is concentrated in a few countries. However, although the two countries—USA and China—are the world’s greatest powers in research, it is possible to affirm that the results do not always follow this same trend. For example, the study by Cavalcante et al. [22], which carried out a bibliometric analysis of the field of sustainability in tourism marketing, demonstrated that Spain stands out with the largest number of publications in this area, followed by the USA, with China appearing only in sixth position.

4.5. Analysis of Publications by Organization

Table 5 presents the ten universities that published the most in the research field of this study. First, there is Cantabria University and Salamanca University, with 21 publications (1.028%), followed by Griffith University with 18 publications (0.881%), and Valencia University with 17 publications (0.833%).

Spanish universities have stood out in the publications by organization ranking, occupying the top positions. With regard to the prominence of Spanish universities, although Spain is much smaller than China or the United States in the number of universities, Spain has concentrated a large volume of research and publications in this field in a reduced number of universities, increasing the individual impact of each of its universities, elevating them to the top of the ranking of publications by organization. Although the United States and China publish more, these publications are more dispersed among the different universities, reducing the individual impact of each of their organizations.

Table 5. Top 10 publications by organization (1994–2020).

R	Organizations	Number	% of 2042
1	University of Cantabria	21	1.028
1	University of Salamanca	21	1.028
2	Griffith University	18	0.881
3	University of Valencia	17	0.833
4	Copenhagen Business School	16	0.784
5	Hong Kong Polytechnic University	15	0.735
5	Yonsei University	15	0.735
6	Kyung Hee University	14	0.686
7	Bucharest University of Economics Studies	13	0.637
7	Pennsylvania State University	13	0.637
7	Sun Yat-sen University	13	0.637
8	University of Amsterdam	12	0.588
8	University of Nottingham	12	0.588
8	University of Wollongong	12	0.588
9	Hanyang University	11	0.539
9	Huazhong University of Science and Technology	11	0.539
9	Taylor’s University	11	0.539
9	University of Zaragoza	11	0.539
10	Deakin University	10	0.490
10	Prince Sultan University	10	0.490

Unlike what was previously analyzed regarding publications by journal, category, and country, in the case of universities, it is not possible to point out one that is mainly responsible for the authorship of the articles (Table 5) as the data is very pulverized. This information goes according to expectations since the number of universities is too vast worldwide and, therefore, it is expected that publications are not restricted to a small number of institutions.

Figure 3 shows the cooperation network between universities. In the presented network, it is possible to identify the “University of Cantabria”, the “University of Salamanca”, and the “Griffith University” represented in larger nodes. Still, as mentioned earlier, it is noted that the size difference between the nodes is relatively small.

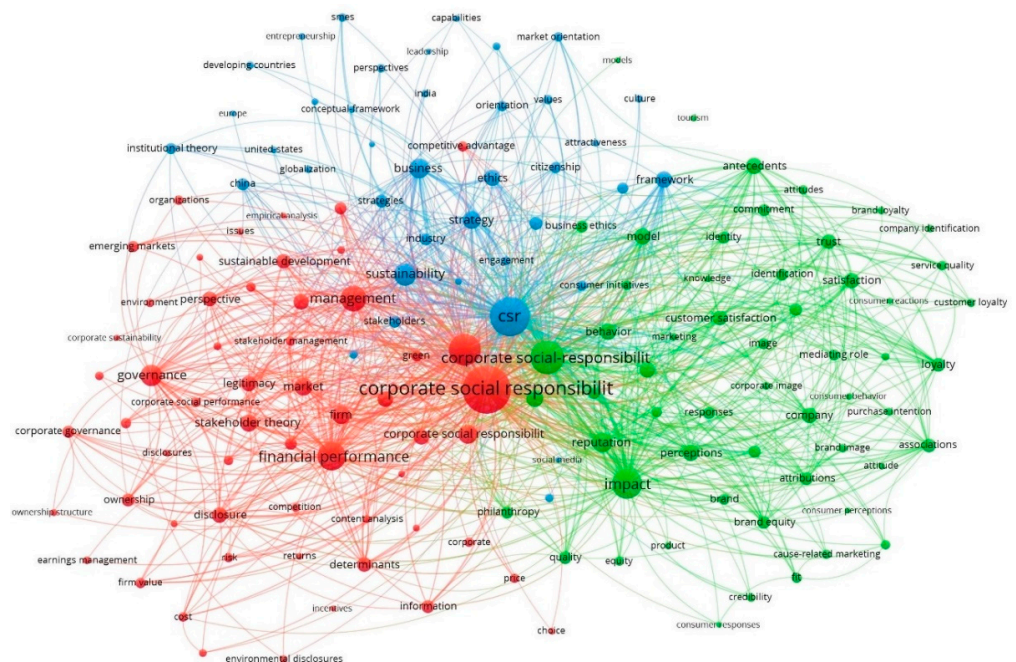


Figure 3. Keyword trends (1994–2020).

The lines that connect the nodes correspond to co-authorships between universities, and it is noticed that this practice is quite common among universities in the same country and international cooperation.

4.6. Analysis of Citations

When one wants to know the impact of authors, articles, and journals, the articles' citation analysis is considered the most used method, as it identifies the essential works in the investigated field [77].

Table 6 presents the most cited articles in this research field. The article by Porter and Kramer [79], from 2006, entitled "Strategy and Society", has the highest number of citations, equivalent to 3107 until the time of data collection.

Table 6. Citations by articles.

Title	Authors	Year	Source Title	Impact Factor *	Best Quartile	Citations	Average Citations by Year
Strategy and society	Porter, M.E.; Kramer, M.R.	2006	Harvard Business Review	6.870	Q1	3107	207.13
Corporate social responsibility: A theory of the firm perspective	McWilliams, A.; Siegel, D.	2001	Academy of Management Review	12.638	Q1	2584	129.2
The company and the product: Corporate associations and consumer product responses	Brown, T.J.; Dacin, P.A.	1997	Journal of Marketing	9.462	Q1	1683	70.13
Corporate social responsibility and financial performance: Correlation or misspecification?	McWilliams, A.; Siegel, D.	2000	Strategic Management Journal	8.641	Q1	1385	65.95
The Business Case for Corporate Social Responsibility: A Review of Concepts, Research and Practice	Carroll, A.B.; Shabana, K.M.	2010	International Journal of Management Reviews	13.419	Q1	1181	107.36
Corporate social responsibility, customer satisfaction, and market value	Luo, X.; Bhattacharya, C.B.	2006	Journal of Marketing	9.462	Q1	1172	78.13
Toward a political conception of corporate responsibility: Business and society seen from a Habermasian perspective	Scherer, A.G.; Palazzo, G.	2007	Academy of Management Review	12.638	Q1	755	53.93
The impact of perceived corporate social responsibility on consumer behavior	Becker-Olsen, K.L.; Cudmore, B.A.; Hill, R.P.	2006	Journal of Business Research	7.550	Q1	755	50.33
Corporate social responsibility and marketing: An integrative framework	Maignan, I.; Ferrell, O.C.	2004	Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	9.418	Q1	699	41.12
Building corporate associations: Consumer attributions for corporate socially responsible programs	Ellen, P.S.; Webb, D.J.; Mohr, L.A.	2006	Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	9.418	Q1	578	38.53

* The Journal Impact Factor (JIF) is a journal-level metric calculated from data indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection.

Knowing the reference articles in a research field is of paramount importance when investigating a particular subject. Therefore, in an adequate investigation of CSR in Marketing, it is expected that the articles identified in Table 6 are referenced.

Still having the analysis of citations as a focus, Figure 4 presents the journal citation network created from the 30 journals with a minimum number of 10 occurrences, while Figure 5 highlights the relevance of organizations in terms of publication volume.

The network created grouped the 30 prominent journals in four clusters (Figure 6). "Journal of Business Ethics" is represented by the most significant node, with a total of 11,737 citations and a total link strength of 1147. In second place is "Sustainability," with 785 citations and a total link strength of 502. The "Journal of Business Research" is in third place, with 3495 citations and a total link strength of 463.

This kind of analysis identifies networks of interconnections [80] and can be done with a focus on published articles, journals, or authors [77]. Figure 7 shows the authors' co-citation network, which is created when two authors are cited by a third. For this analysis, only the most mentioned authors were considered, with at least 30 occurrences.

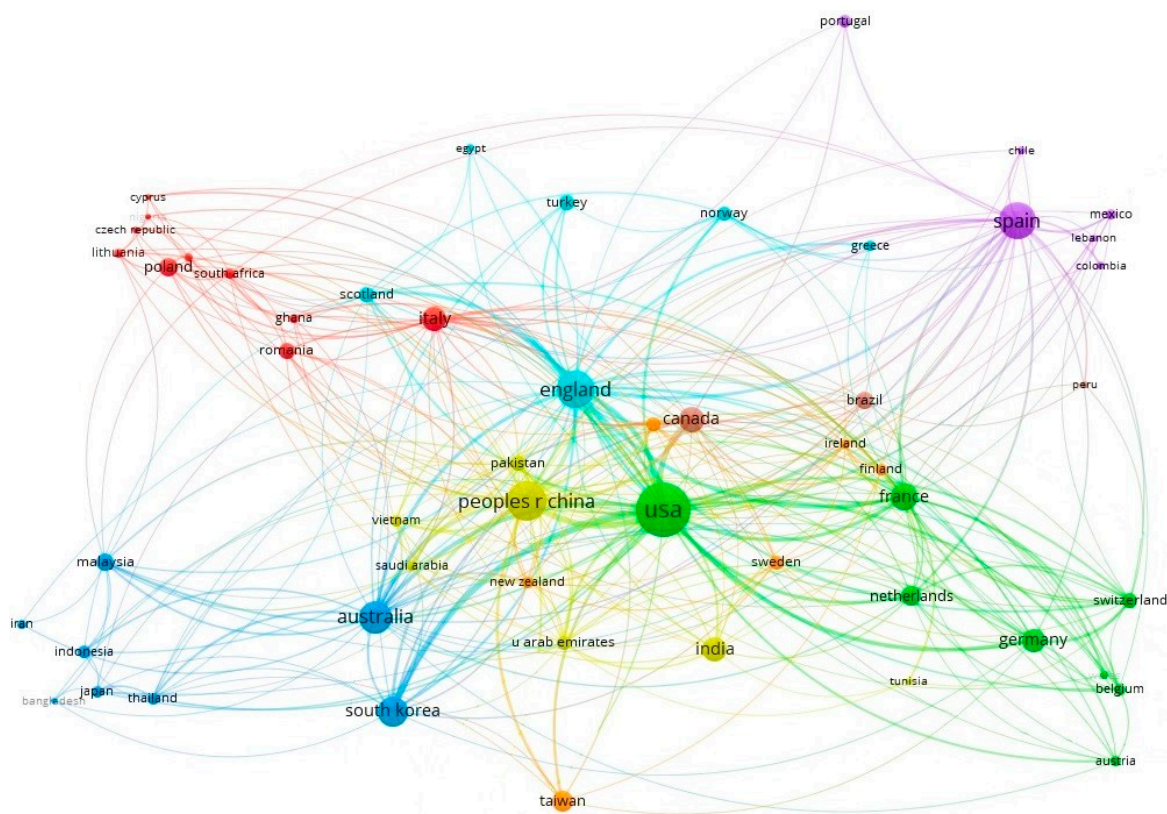


Figure 4. Co-authorship by country.

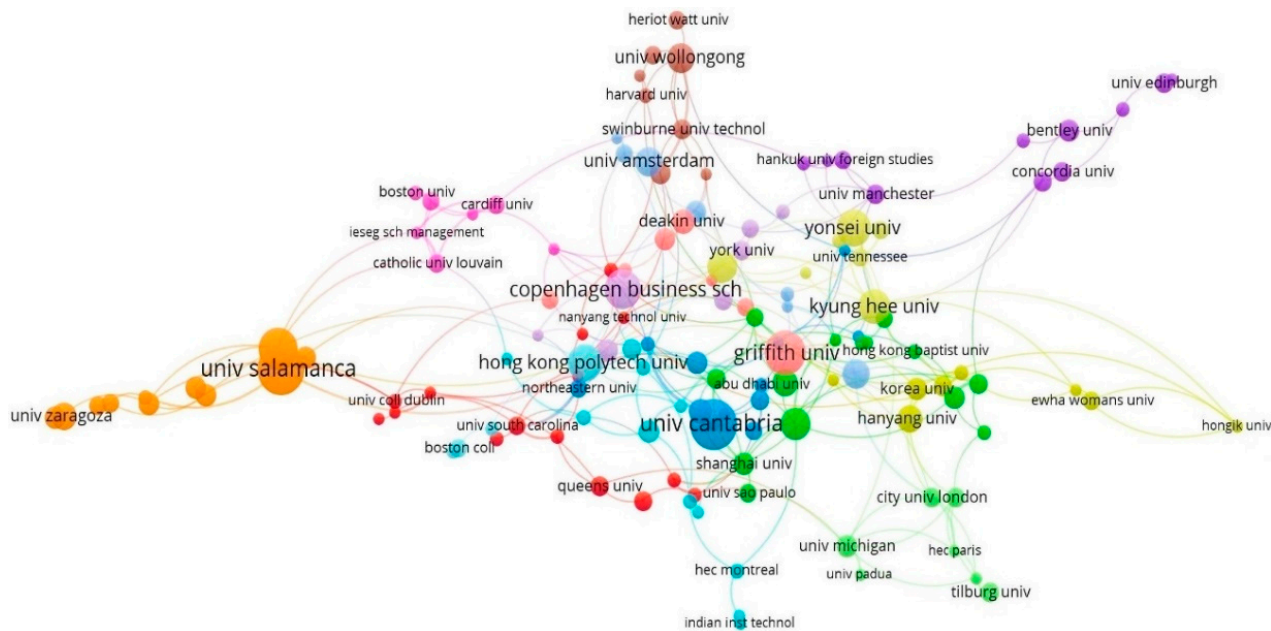


Figure 5. Publication volume—relevance of organizations.

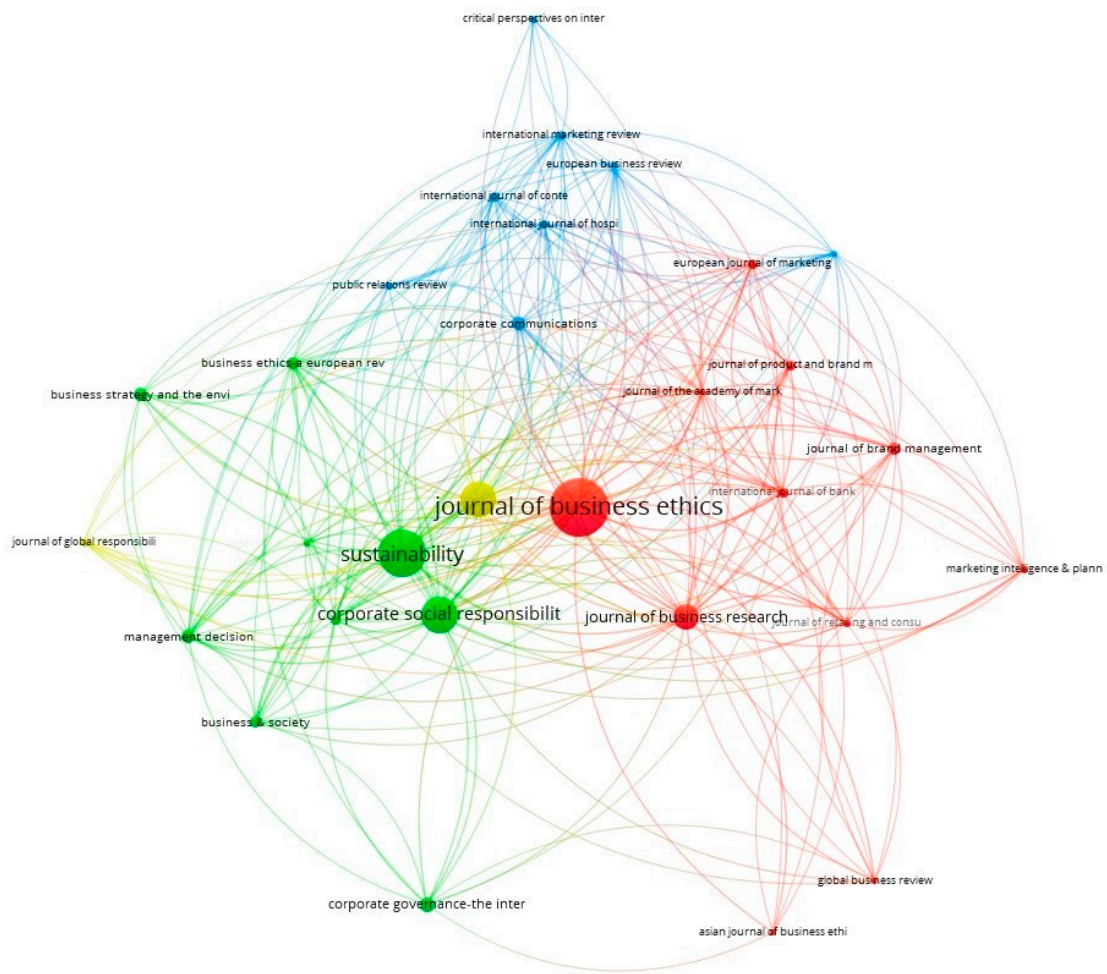


Figure 6. Journal citation network.

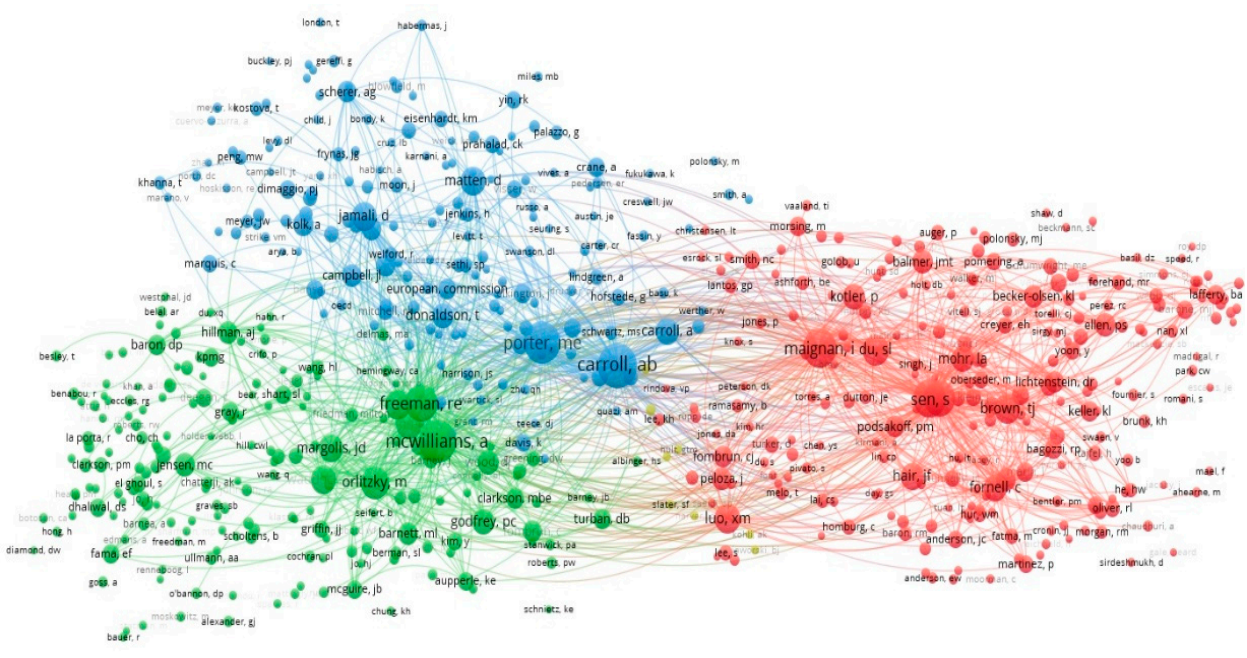


Figure 7. Journal citation network.

The map analysis shows us the presence of four well-defined clusters, even though there are exchange and cooperation between them. As observed, the authors are grouped and represented closer to those where the connection’s strength is more robust. By the size of the “node”, it is possible to identify the most cited authors. Archie B. Carroll leads the list with 900 citations, Abigail McWilliams with 808 citations, Isabelle Maignan with 660, Michael E. Porter with 669, and Sankar Sen with 620 citations. The five most-cited authors are related to the three main clusters: green, blue, and red. The yellow cluster is small, made up of eight authors who do not have many expressions regarding the number of citations.

Figure 8, in turn, shows the co-citation network between the journals, that is, the map created when two journals are cited by another together. Journals with a minimum number of 30 occurrences were considered.

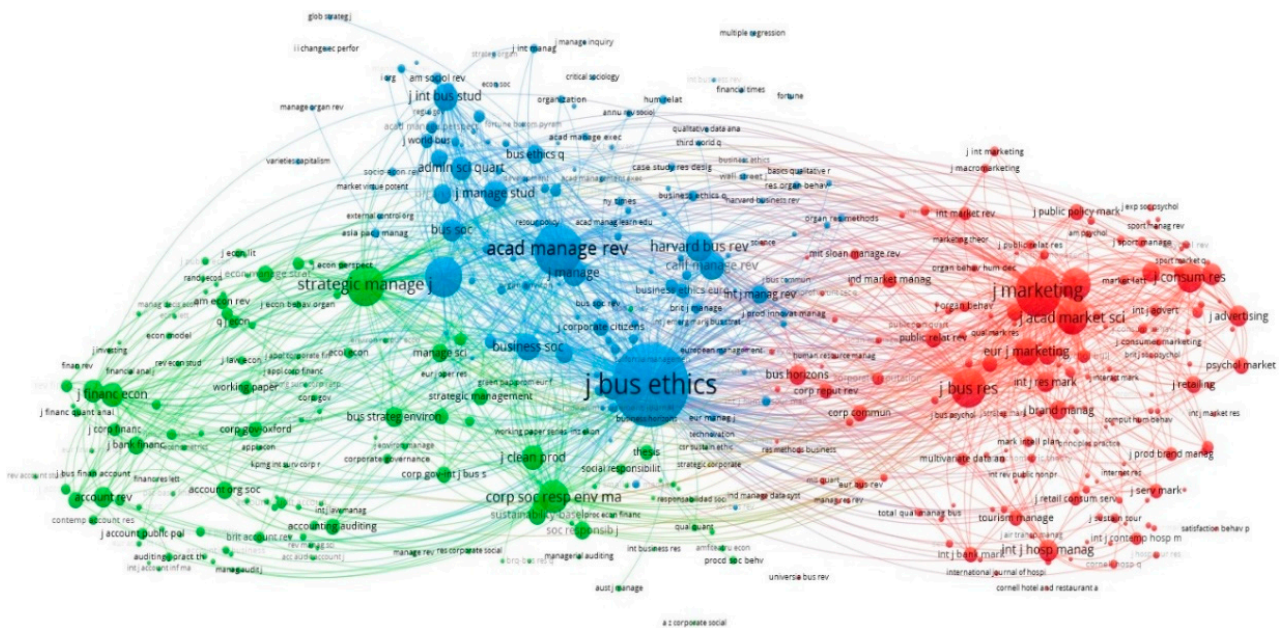


Figure 8. Journals co-citation network.

The network created shows the presence of three well-defined clusters. It is easy to identify the Journal of Business Ethics as a key journal for this co-citation network.

4.7. Authors’ Analysis

The last analysis presented by this study concerns the number of publications by author. Table 7 shows the ten most prolific authors in this research field.

Table 7. Top 10 publications per author.

R	Authors	Number	% of 2042
1	Perez, A.	17	0.833
2	Garcia-Sanchez, I.M.	13	0.637
3	Martinez-Ferrero, J.	11	0.539
4	Bhattacharya, C.B.	9	0.441
5	Del Bosque, I.R.	9	0.441
6	Kim, S.	9	0.441
7	Lee, S.	9	0.441
8	Kim, H.	8	0.392
9	Kolk, A.	8	0.392
10	Sen, S.	8	0.392

With the most published articles in this field, the author Andrea Perez, with 17 published documents, is a professor at the University of Cantabria. With 13 articles published, Isabel-Maria Garcia-Sanchez, a professor at the University of Salamanca, occupies the second position. The third most prolific author, with 11 published articles, is Jennifer Martinez-Ferrero, from the University of Salamanca.

The coupling can be performed with articles, authors, institutions, and countries. Figure 9 shows the network of authors' bibliographic coupling, that is, when two authors cite, in their respective works, the same third author [77].

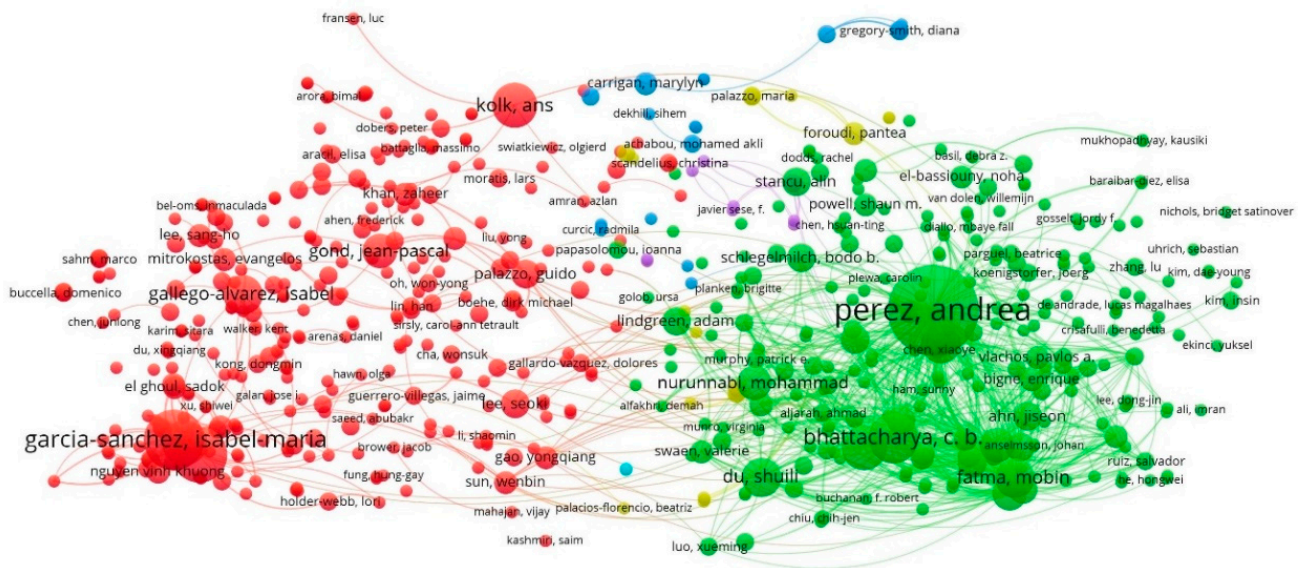


Figure 9. Bibliographic coupling of authors.

The authors are distributed on the map in five clusters. However, the prevalence of two of them, the green and the red, is evident. Andrea Perez is represented in the most significant node, which means being the author with the highest occurrence of this citation type. Second, it is possible to see the author Isabel-Maria Garcia-Sanchez. The lines indicating the bibliographic coupling of authors show the network of concomitant citations between them.

4.8. Identification of CSR Variables Related to Marketing

After an extensive study of the CSR and marketing literature, 17 papers were identified that relate variables from the two research fields. Table 8 presents 18 CSR variables used in these papers and the marketing variables to which they were related.

The importance of identifying a set of CSR variables that are related to a set of marketing variables can represent a starting point for future research, presenting what has already been studied and, consequently, new relationships that may be investigated. As demonstrated, of the 17 papers identified, only one is before 2010, with nine very recent studies from 2018 to 2020. This reinforces the emerging character of quantitative research that addresses the relationship between CSR and marketing, as perceived by the present study, to guide future investigations.

Table 8. CSR variables relationships with marketing variables.

CSR Variable	Definition	Reference	Marketing Variables That Were Related
CSR engagement	It is measured by five items, referring to society, donations, environment, and economy.	Fatma et al. [63]	Consumer–company identification; eWOM
General CSR expectations	It is measured by nine items, referring to consumers' perceptions of CSR practices in general.	Ferrell et al. [81]	Brand attitude
General business ethics expectations	It is measured by eight items, referring to consumers' perceptions of the principles of business ethics.	Ferrell et al. [81]	Brand attitude
CSR	It is measured by eight items, referring to general CSR initiatives, towards the local community, society, environment, employees, customers, non-profit organizations, and charities.	Hsu [65]	Corporate reputation; Customer satisfaction; Brand equity
CSR	It is measured by three items, referring to the benefits to society.	Iglesias et al. [82]	Co-creation; Customer trust; Customer loyalty
CSR performance	It is measured by three dimensions, namely: CSR to the environment; CSR to society; CSR to stakeholders.	Liu et al. [83]	Perceived brand quality; Brand preference
CSR	It is measured by three items, referring to CSR actions towards society.	Baena [84]	Brand love
Corporate social responsibility	It is measured by four dimensions: perceived philanthropic CSR; perceived ethical CSR; perceived legal CSR; perceived economic CSR.	Kang and Namkung [37]	Brand equity
CSR	It is measured by three dimensions: stakeholders, society, and environment.	Abu Zayyad et al. [47]	Brand credibility; Repeat Purchase; Word of mouth
Perceived corporate social responsibility	It is measured by three items, referring to consumers' perception of ethical and legal principles.	Choi and La [64]	Customer trust; Loyalty
Corporate social responsibility	It is measured by three dimensions: economic, ethical–legal, and philanthropic.	De Los Salmones et al. [85]	Overall valuation of service; Loyalty
CSR associations	It is measured by six items, referring to consumers' perceptions of CSR practices, in general.	Rivera et al. [66]	Brand attitude; Satisfaction
CSR	It is measured by four items, referring to consumers' perceptions of CSR activities.	Ramesh et al. [44]	Brand attitude; Brand image; Perceived quality; Purchase intention
Consumers' CSR—related activities in social media	It is measured by five items, referring to consumers who use social media to get involved in companies' CSR communication.	Chu and Chen [86]	Identification with the brand; Brand attitude; Purchase intention; eWOM intention
CSR	It is measured by four items, referring to the CSR practices of the products/brands.	Anselmsson et al. [62]	Price premium
CSR associations	It is measured by three items, referring to, the environment, society, and donations.	Martínez and del Bosque [87]	Customer identification with the company; Trust, Satisfaction; Loyalty
CSR	It is measured by three dimensions: community domain; environment domain, and customer domain.	Rodrigues et al. [45]	Brand love
Consumers' perceptions of CSR (CPCSR)	It is measured by seven dimensions: customer domain; employee domain, environmental domain; societal domain; community domain; shareholder domain; supplier domain.	Öberseder et al. [88]	Purchase intention; Company evaluation; Customer–company identification

5. Discussion

This research helps to understand the current state of CSR studies in marketing and is essential to investigate research gaps and determine future trends in this field of knowledge. This study also identifies the central countries and institutions regarding publication volume, specialized journals in the field. It helps define the topics covered based on the relevance of keywords and trends arising from the analysis of citations, co-citations, and bibliographic coupling.

It is possible to identify the displacement that studies in the CSR field present. Older studies dealt with the topic in question with a financial focus, relating CSR to finance and performance. Recent studies have looked at CSR as an opportunity to create a relationship with the consumer, with research that assesses CSR's impact on marketing, consumer behavior, and brand management.

The results obtained in this bibliometric analysis indicate a growing interest in CSR in the context of marketing. One of the reasons for this may be the increase in the company managers' interest in SR practices since public opinion and consumers have been increasingly pressuring organizations to adopt socially responsible behaviors. Thus, the adoption of CSR policies can represent an added value, as, as already pointed out by surveys, consumers positively evaluate corporate SR initiatives, which brings advantages to organizations. CSR has been increasingly used as a marketing strategy to promote a

brand with a discourse that is positively perceived by consumers while promoting actions on behalf of the collective.

This study analyzes the leading journals, authors, institutions, and keywords, showing that: (a) the literature on CSR in the field of marketing is growing; (b) five articles alone accounted for 9940 citations, and several prolific authors concentrate a significant portion of the research; (c) the main journals identified in this research published 42.16% of the 2042 articles included in this review; (d) the “Journal of Business Ethics” is the leader in the number of publications, followed by “Sustainability,” which has shown strong growth in recent years; (e) in terms of documents and citations, the United States of America is the leading country on this topic with 20.42% of publications; (f) according to a keyword trend network analysis, CSR is becoming a strategic marketing approach for companies. Given the social, environmental, and economic challenges that have intensified in recent years, with the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic, it is expected that studies involving CSR will continue to grow, as well as its association with the field of marketing and its effects on consumer behavior.

It is essential to highlight that, through the analysis of the most relevant articles identified. However, studies on CSR start on the clash between shareholders and other stakeholders [89]. Research shows that this view has been changing, as companies that invest in socially responsible actions can obtain solid and lasting competitive advantages [79,90,91].

SR practices in companies have been well evaluated and included in the management area due to the potential that these activities, when properly applied, can bring to organizations. The advancement of these actions facilitated their insertion in the strategic performance model [92–94]. Thus, due to the apparent benefits of CSR actions, its movement has been gaining strength, and organizations are increasingly seeking to integrate activities that concern the theme [32].

The results achieved indicate a clear trend with an increasing focus on consumer perception of CSR [81]. People are more concerned about the consequences of their actions and the products and services they consume [22]. This requires that with society’s growing concern about social problems, consumers need to be involved in pro-social and environmental [22,95,96]. Thus, society aims to see more social and environmental responsibility activities in associations, and with this, it expresses concerns on the part of companies to go beyond their economic sectors [97,98]. This is expressed by the growing number of articles published that addressed CSR emphasizing marketing and consumer perception [99–103].

It is important to highlight that the CSR approach can be a great ally to associations, helping them be more sustainable, and benefit several stakeholders through their socially responsible activities [92–94]. In this sense, the mention of stakeholders can also be perceived through their occurrence in the map of keywords trends. Thus, the benefits arising from CSR actions are many and, among them, the impact on the relationship between brand and customer stands out, which leads to a long-term competitive advantage, such as financial resources, which can have a sustainable positioning [91].

It was also noticed that CSR is strongly associated with corporate marketing actions [52]. Through the results obtained, several studies were identified that demonstrate the direct influence of CSR on company results (e.g., [4,30,34,48,63,65,78–82]).

In addition to the previous results, this research presents several other studies in which CSR and marketing variables are related to each other, namely: (1) research that exposes issues related to CSR and marketing, as a structure that should function from the integrated way [53]; (2) study that in this way a better understanding of the relationship between CSR and marketing [104]; (3) research on how CSR and internal marketing can drive organizational commitment and turnover intentions [105]; (4) Jahdi and Acikdilli [106] sought to understand if marketing communication channels play an important role within the organization, being able to assist and highlight socially responsible activities, transparency and image consistency, and; (5) study that examines the influence of the CSR variable on customer loyalty, with co-creation and customer trust as mediating variables [65].

Overall, the findings indicate a strong impact of CSR on marketing issues and its impact on consumer behavior, demonstrating that companies should strongly consider adhering to CSR practices or continuing to develop such activities for those that already do.

It is noteworthy that studies relating CSR and ethics with marketing variables are still underdeveloped (e.g., [32]) and may represent a promising research opportunity. That is, the results emphasize that the relationship between CSR and marketing variables continues with the development of new research [37,47,62–65,107], highlighting a company on the subject and the quest to understand more about it.

In addition to providing an overview of research and directions in the investigation of CSR in the field of marketing, this research intends to suggest an agenda for investigation in this area. Consequently, we sought to understand and propose, based on content analysis, the trend, and directions of research in this field.

For this, the contents of 29 articles were analyzed, chosen from the most relevant studies, published between the years 2015 and 2020, as suggested by the Web of Science Core Collection. Some articles from 2021 that can be consulted were also suggested. From the articles, five thematic lines were identified that offer research opportunities and gaps. Next, we will discuss each of these thematic lines:

Thematic line #1 comprises CSR and sustainability studies as correlated in the context of tourism and hotel marketing. Its effects on the behavior of tourists [108–110] and other stakeholders involved in the tourism process can be analyzed. Many studies only assessed the perception of tourists about the CSR actions of tourist companies and tourism destination management, without considering the perception of other stakeholders involved in the tourism sector, such as residents in the destination and tourism workers [45]. Thus, future studies may seek to make a holistic assessment of the various actors involved in tourism, seeking to understand whether CSR actions are properly perceived by all. Studies from 2021 continue to point to growth in this thematic line [22,111].

Thematic line #2 concerns CSR washing, greenwashing, and criticism of false CSR actions. This is a subject that started to grow significantly in 2006 and that presents more and more articles on this theme [112]. Studies show that, in the quest to become more competitive, companies have been led to adopt CSR washing and greenwashing practices [113]. However, often, such actions do not go unnoticed by consumers, conferring inauthenticity on brands [114]. When brands dissociate their CSR message from their purposes, values, and practices, they are embracing CSR washing [115]. Future research may investigate the real effects of CSR washing on consumer behavior and marketing strategy. Panel surveys can assess, over time, the marketing results of organizations that exhibit these CSR washing practices. Although it is not within the scope of bibliometric analysis, significant growth in the number of publications on this subject was noticed in the year 2021, indicating a real increase in interest in investigating this topic (e.g., [116–120]).

Thematic line #3 comprises CSR studies in marketing variables. A relevant and growing number of publications indicate that studies investigating the relationship of CSR actions on marketing variables are not yet exhausted and offer an important opportunity for future studies. The development and validation of new constructs, with different scales, present a fertile field in marketing research. Variables that measure the perception of CSR can be tested, for example, with marketing and branding variables, such as Brand Love [45,121,122], Brand Fidelity [123,124], Brand Personality [125], Brand Attitude [81], and Purchase Intention [86].

Thematic line #4 concerns the impacts of CSR and business ethics as distinct constructs. Further studies are needed on the relationship between CSR and business ethics, as different constructs, and their consequences, intersections, and complementarities, as pointed out by [81,126]. One can test, for example, the relationship and effect of CSR and business ethics, in parallel, on other marketing and branding variables, as discussed in thematic line #3 [127].

Thematic line #5 comprises the studies of CSR communication and the relationship with social media. Several studies point out that the way the organization communicates its

CSR actions presents interesting gaps, as found in the article by [128], which treats humor and irony as a communicative resource. Can marketing communication, as an important resource, enhance the impact of CSR actions? And can communication errors hinder CSR actions? Articles from 2021 continue to indicate the growth trend in this area [10,129].

The identified areas provide important clues about research opportunities that are in evidence and growing, representing potential fields and research contexts to be developed, as observed in the researched literature.

6. Conclusions

The present study contributes to the existing research by providing information on the state of the art and identifying the trends, gaps, and research opportunities through the selection and content analysis of the most recent and relevant articles published in this research field [22].

This research brings a series of contributions. First, it is possible to list the knowledge about the state of this research topic's art. With this study, it is possible to see the evolution of CSR research in the context of Marketing. The increase in publications over the years indicates how rich and exciting this research topic is for managers and academia and has an increasing relevance, with the potential to deepen research in specific fields.

Second, this study presents the main categories in which the articles are grouped. Knowledge of this information helps those interested in this field of research to seek understanding in specific categories. Likewise, it is possible to know the leading journals that publish in the field and are specialized in CSR studies and their relationship with Marketing.

Another contribution is the presentation of keywords through maps generated by the VOSviewer software, which suggest trends in research of CSR and, mainly, evidence the lack of studies on themes or fields that may yet be studied. Moreover, knowing the articles and authors most cited is essential for those who research in this field, contributing to a more relevant theoretical foundation for future work in this field.

Finally, a set of variables that have been worked on in the literature were identified, relating to CSR and Marketing, which contributes to identifying research gaps for future studies. Several current papers have sought to adopt CSR variables from the consumer's perspective, which expands and strengthens studies on the relationship between CSR and the marketing field. Some of these CSR variables have already been investigated with marketing variables, such as brand image and brand attitude, and may be investigated with other branding variables.

The study in question also has some limitations. As the data were collected in October 2020, the results collected and presented for this year are incomplete and do not represent the panorama for the entire year. The study also used only the WoS platform to survey the database, although other databases have been researched and considered.

For future research, it is suggested to use different databases to collect articles, considering that articles may not be duplicated. Still, for future research, it is recommended to investigate the relationship between CSR and specific variables in marketing, namely branding variables, which represents a promising field of investigation. Finally, future lines of research should include the analysis using different software to fix the limitations of VOSviewer.

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