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When Companies Cross the Line – The Impact of Corporate Social Irresponsibility on Employees' Organizational Commitment

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Abstract: Corporate Social Irresponsibility (CSI), an evolving area of research, has historically been understood by its relation to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The existing body of research is predominantly concerned with the financial toll it has on the organization; however, the effect it has on internal employees' commitment remains underexplored. This paper focuses on establishing empirical evidence of the relationship between CSI and an employee's organizational commitment, guided by the research question: How does exposure to corporate social irresponsibility affect employees' organizational commitment? The research question was answered through a quantitative between-group vignette experimental design, where the treatment group was presented with a CSI stimulus and the control group grounded the work by documenting the employers' baseline. The data was gathered from 400 respondents using purposive sampling, with screening criteria including full-time employment and being based in Europe. The findings suggest that CSI has a negative influence on affective, normative, and continuance commitment, while job satisfaction has an amplifying moderating effect on affective, and normative commitment. This paper provides practitioners with insights on how CSI negatively affects the employee's commitment towards their own organization, and nudges decision makers to consider the involvement of all stakeholders, instead of pre-emptively deciding on an outcome that only increases shareholder value.

Keywords: Corporate Social Irresponsibility (CSI), Organizational Commitment, Misconduct, Organizational Behavior, Stakeholder Theory, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Deonance Theory

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Definitions of Key Terms

Key Term	Definition
Corporate Social Irresponsibility (CSI)	An organizational behavior is regarded as CSI if it were to violate moral standards, cause harm, be intentionally pursued (Hericher and Bridoux, 2023), and involve non-complicit victims (Lange & Washburn, 2012).
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is understood as how companies account for their economic, social, and environmental impact, often striving to maximize positive outcomes whilst minimizing harm. It is about fulfilling society's broader expectations (Lin-Hi & Müller, 2013).
Organizational Commitment	A psychological state that characterises the employee's relationship with the organization and has implications for the decision to continue membership in the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997). It is defined with its three dimensions: Affective, Normative, and Continuance Commitment
Affective Commitment (AC)	Affective Commitment represents the emotional Commitment, referring to the employee's emotional attachment, identification, and involvement in the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997).
Normative Commitment (NC)	Normative Commitment represents the obligatory Commitment, a sense of obligation to remain with the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997).
Continuance Commitment (CC)	An employee's commitment to their employer based on calculative factors, such as job market conditions or salary (Meyer and Allen, 1997).
Job Satisfaction (JS)	A pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke 1976).
Turnover Intention	An employee's conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave the organization (Ahmad Saufi et al., 2023)

1. Introduction

A business entity's choices, actions, and behavior in today's market are shaped by two competing logics. On the one hand lies the traditional view, introduced by Friedman's seminal article (1970), that an organization's behavior should reflect the interests of its shareholders. On the other lies the more contemporary concept of stakeholder theory, which emphasizes that organizations must address the interests of internal and external stakeholders (Mahajan et al., 2023) and consider these stakeholders as essential to the organization's success (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Literature describes these two competing logics as tension within an organization (Clark et al., 2016). However, when the pursuit of shareholder interest crosses the line and begins to harm stakeholder well-being, they engage in corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) (Armstrong, 1977). Taking the tensions between stakeholder and shareholder perspectives into consideration, as well as the increasing competition amongst firms, tighter social and environmental regulations (Jönsson, 2022), and the rising expectations from stakeholders of how an organization should conduct itself (McDonald et al., 2022), firms justifiably engage in such activities that stain the company's broader reputation.

Among the emerging forms of such CSI events, issues related to data privacy have become particularly prominent. Increasing adoption of data technologies and digital automation has caused the ethical management of personal data to become a growing expectation among stakeholders (van der Merwe & Al Achkar, 2022). As a result, corporate failures to protect data privacy are increasingly viewed as scandalous acts of CSI. These acts originate from all parts of the world, benefiting shareholders and/or other high-profile individuals at the expense of others. For example, in 2018, Facebook Inc. sold 87 million US Facebook profiles without the users' consent to a Cambridge Analytica campaign for President Donald Trump, resulting in a trained algorithm that allowed the consulting firm to "predict with great specificity the hopes and fears of particular users, and subsequently what kinds of political messages would most likely persuade each user" (Meyerson, 2018). In 2020, Zoom Communications Inc. was accused of a similar CSI event concerning its security and privacy practices, including "misleading encryption claims, unnecessary data disclosure to Facebook and LinkedIn, possible remote control and attack through Zoom's macOS installer, and leaked Zoom usernames and passwords for sale on the dark web" (Chen & Zou, 2023).

1.1 Purpose

Many of these real-world cases often garner a great deal of media attention, influencing certain consumer perceptions of a brand. Much of the academic literature in the realm of Corporate Social Irresponsibility (CSI) either adopts the consumer's lens (Grappi et al., 2013) or explores the financial performance of an organization after a Corporate Social Irresponsibility (CSI) event (Campbell, 2007). A few foundational research publications accounting for the internal stakeholders' perspective in the event of CSI empirically document employees' emotions and reactions (Hericher and Bridoux, 2023); however, the susceptibility of employees' commitment levels in times of CSI is heavily underexplored. This naturally raises the question:

RQ: *How does exposure to Corporate Social Irresponsibility affect employees' organizational commitment?*

In an attempt to answer this question, this paper aims to study the causal relationship between corporate social irresponsibility and the impact it has on employees' organizational commitment, through an experimental study. The contributions of this paper can be seen in two respects. In practice, studying an employee's organizational commitment is crucial to the organization itself, so it can be aware of how its decisions affect an employee's commitment to their company and their outcomes. With this knowledge, high-profile stakeholders will consider the effects of a corporate decision on all stakeholders instead of deciding on an outcome that pre-emptively benefits shareholders. On the theoretical side, this paper contributes to the existing gap in academic literature with empirical findings on employees' organizational commitment after a CSI-specific event. Considering that CSI is a relatively nascent to intermediate field, this paper aims to contribute novel findings that deepen our understanding of corporate social irresponsibility.

1.2 Delimitations

This study confines its scope to examining how corporate social irresponsibility influences employees' sense of commitment toward their organization. The study adopts a quantitative experiment that allows for the controlled manipulation of irresponsible corporate behavior while isolating participants' attitudinal responses. This design intentionally prioritizes internal validity and experimental control over external complexity, as it were with observatory studies, allowing for clearer interpretations of causal relationships. The study's primary focus is on CSI's effect on organizational commitment, with data privacy violation acting as the context, as it is an increasingly relevant form of CSI; however, the study will not extend to other critical domains, such as environmental or labor-related CSI, to reduce added noise from other variables that could come into play when analyzing a causal relationship. These deliberate boundaries ensure the research remains both manageable in scope and precise in its theoretical contribution.

1.3 Disposition

The rest of the thesis is structured as follows: We first explore the current status of the academic literature, ensuring that our study is grounded in research and builds on the previously identified gap. Second, we address the methodological approach, followed by the methods chapters that discuss our reasoning for the intended data collection process and how we aim to conduct the vignette experiment. We then present our empirical findings, followed by a discussion where we analyze our results. Finally, the thesis provides a conclusion, summarizing the paper’s analysis and implications.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Defining Corporate Social Irresponsibility (CSI)

In colloquial grounds, Corporate Social Irresponsibility (CSI) is often viewed as the lack of or the polar antonym of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Murphy and Schlegelmilch, 2013; Lin-Hi & Müller, 2013). Although it fleetingly enunciates what CSI actually is, the distinct inherent motives of CSR and CSI are not clearly portrayed (Lange & Washburn, 2012). Even if CSR happens to be elusive and lacking a generally accepted definition, it has definite motifs that are universally accepted as characteristics of CSR (Murphy & Schlegelmilch, 2013). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is understood as how companies account for their economic, social, and environmental impact, often striving to maximize positive outcomes whilst minimizing harm. It is about fulfilling society's broader expectations (Lin-Hi & Müller, 2013).

Corporate Social Irresponsibility (CSI) is represented by the behavior of the firm that neglects or exploits stakeholder groups, be it through unfair treatment of workers, manipulative marketing, neglectful exploitation of resources, or pollution (Lange & Washburn, 2012; Lin-Hi & Müller, 2013; Grappi et al., 2013). With a growing body of research on CSI, the definition of CSI is often embellished with time, partly due to introspection of the phenomenon in newer industrial settings and inferences from managerial concepts far and wide. Armstrong's (1977) seminal work on Social Irresponsibility provides a broad definition of CSI that happens to be inclusive of even the recent conceptual understanding: "A corporation's action/initiative is deemed as CSI if the organization were to knowingly choose harmful actions that benefit one part at the expense of the broader system" (Armstrong 1977). Some of the recent definitions are along the same lines: "A stakeholder's judgement that an organization's behavior violates moral standards, causes harm, and is intentional" (Bridoux et al, 2016).

Contrary to conventional interpretations of CSR and CSI, where prioritizing CSR eradicates a firm's CSI and a lack of CSR implies CSI, these competing realities can exist simultaneously in organizations, which invites one to further introspect the drivers and theories of CSI and CSR (Jones et al, 2009; Ireland, 2018). The way in which these concepts are defined invites us to resort to a binary, polar view of CSR and CSI (Lange & Washburn, 2012). Recent classifications of CSR and CSI are purely based on harm and moral violation (Hericher and Bridoux, 2023).

In the mid-20th century, researchers sought to answer fundamental questions on business, namely the very purpose of being in business. Two influential schools of thought emerged from this study, resulting in the Shareholder Theory subsequently the Stakeholder Theory. Shareholder theory views the sole purpose of any company is to increase profits within the law and benefit the shareholders. Socially responsible spending, discretionary allocations, were viewed to reduce shareholder wealth (Friedman, 1970). In the subsequent years, theories that challenged Shareholder Theory started to gain traction. The idea of businesses being entities that are accountable to employees, customers, communities, and the environment, not just the shareholders, consolidated the Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 2015).

CSI and CSR could be better understood with the Shareholder and Stakeholder Theory. CSI is rooted in the Shareholder Theory, organizations are narrowly focused on profit maximization at any cost. CSR is rooted in the Stakeholder Theory (Jones et al., 2009). The very initial work of CSR from 1953 aligns with the Stakeholder Theory, which argues that business leaders should make decisions aligned with society's values. Managerial obligations should focus on the wider community, not just the shareholders (Bowen, 1953). This classification of CSI and CSR can be mapped onto large-scale organizational decisions. CSR and CSI decisions can coexist within the same organization, and at times what is regarded as CSI in one geographical region might be a legal grey in another. Organizations often oscillate between responsible and irresponsible actions depending on incentives, leadership direction and external regulatory pressures on the environment (Ireland, 2018; Price and Sun, 2017).

Responsible business conduct is organized into four tiers in the foundational model of Carroll's CSR pyramid (Carroll, 1991). Organizations could simply adopt and track the tiers of the pyramid to measure where they lean on the responsibility front. The pyramid is layered with the following tiers – legal, ethical, economic and discretionary. The shortcoming of such a foundational model is that it is not dynamic enough to constantly shift the business landscape. Business priorities change with the market, policy regulations, competitors, and trends. (Jones et al., 2009). The tiers of Carol's Pyramid would be difficult to operationalize given the limited number of tiers, which would result in businesses simply associating doing-no-harm, as CSR.

Building on Carol's Pyramid, a linear continuum view of CSI and CSR, being on a linear scale is much more practical and amenable to dynamic conditions of the business landscape (Jones et al., 2009). The linear CSI-CSR scale proposed by Jones et al., (2009), could easily be adopted into a typical organization's KPI dashboard, providing the organization with an understanding of how CSR or CSI leaning their decisions are across numerous factions, be it regulatory compliance, internal stakeholder (employee) welfare or use of technology.

Table 1

*Multi-Layered Linear CSI-CSR Scales (*Jones et al., 2009*)*

Domain	CSI	CSR
Environment	Treat environmental harm as inevitable	Recognize damages and act to prevent / restore
People (Employees)	Exploits labor, prioritizes profits over welfare	Value employees, invest in safety and well being
Community (external stakeholders)	Minimizes consultation with local stakeholders	Seeks collaboration and positive social impact
Compliance	Meets only minimum legal standards	Strives to exceed legal obligations
Ethics	Peripheral concern viewed as optional	Core part of decision making
Technology	Prioritize speed and profit over safety	Test and monitor technologies for harm
Governance	Power centralized among managers / shareholder	Involves wider stakeholders in decision making
Sustainability	Focus solely on business survival	Pursues business, community and environmental balance
Profits	At any cost	Not at any cost

2.2 Incentive of CSR & The cost of CSI

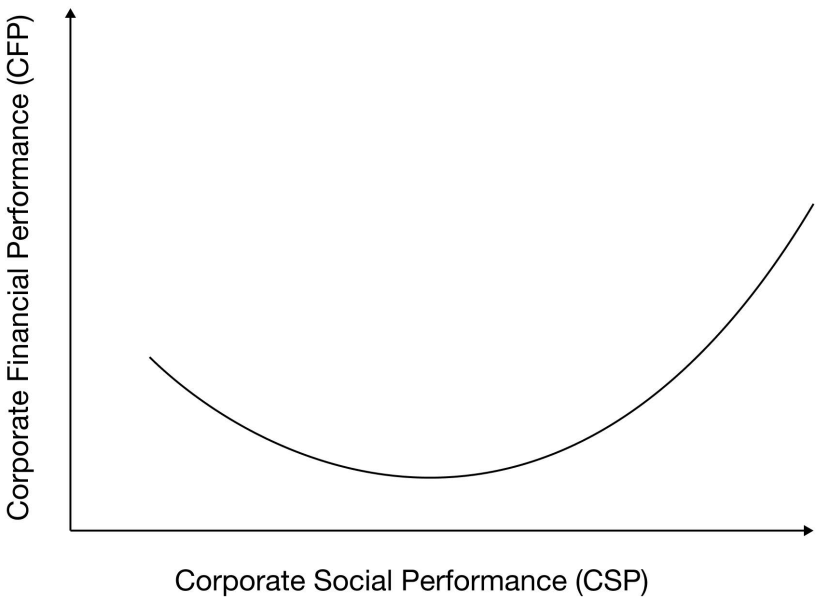
Jones et al. (2009) mentions that CSR is built on the Stakeholder Theory, where the organization is required to be accountable across its ecosystem of interactions, from customers, employees, suppliers, and the environment. The pursuit of CSR might seem to complicate the straightforward Profit Maximization pursuit, which would have resulted in higher shareholder value if not for playing right by every stakeholder (Campbell, 2007). Despite such a perceptive anomaly, organizations still increasingly pursue CSR initiatives (Barnett & Salomon, 2012). Why would organizations actively pursue CSR initiatives if there are obvious signs indicating that such behavior eats the profits and ultimately decreases the potential value to the shareholders? Barnett and Salomon (2012), as well as Campbell (2007) attempt to answer this very question.

Aside from creating a robust value chain connecting multiple actors, organizations have an intrinsic categorization of socially responsible and irresponsible behavior. Every organization has a Minimum Behavior Threshold according to (Campbell, 2007), above which actions are regarded as socially responsible and below which are regarded as Irresponsible. This threshold or baseline is the bare minimum for many responsible organizations: do no (intentional) harm and rectify any harm when brought to attention (Campbell, 2007).

Barnett and Salomon (2012) investigate the nature of the relationship between Company Social Performance and Company Financial Performance, in an attempt to answer the question: Does it pay to be socially responsible? The nature of the relationship is dependent on how well the organization capitalizes on its socially responsible efforts. Barnett and Salomon (2012) introduce the concept of Stakeholder Influence Capacity, which is the organization's skill at recognizing and leveraging opportunities to build strong stakeholder relationships through social responsibility and eventually turning those relationships into financial gains. Stakeholder Influence Capacity is built by consistently engaging in Socially Responsible actions.

Figure 1

(Simplified) CFP CSP Curve (Barnett and Salomon, 2012)



Note. The axes are simplified to better facilitate understanding the correlation. Barnett & Salomon (2012), originally the plot was between Net Income and Net KLD

(Kinder–Lydenberg–Domini) Database score. KLD database is a CSR indicator of public firms.

Barnett and Salomon (2012) map out the relationship between CSR initiatives (Corporate Social Performance) and Financial Performance (CFP). In the study, the relationship was curvilinear, a U-shaped curve. This empirically validates that CSR is a strategic investment; it might not necessarily pay immediately, as organizations would want to accumulate their Stakeholder Influence Capacity, and beyond a tipping point, CSR starts to pay off and benefit the financial performance.

Flammer (2013) collated three decades of stock market metrics of publicly listed companies in the US (1980-2009), to study how rewarding or how demeriting CSR efforts were in the eyes of shareholders. Flammer (2013) was primarily concerned with eco-friendly and eco-harmful initiatives, but could be extrapolated as the generic trend for CSR. From the data, it was evident that Eco-friendly initiatives raised the stock price, and eco-harmful initiatives decreased the stock price. When the data was split and analyzed, the rewards for responsible environmental initiatives were much stronger in the 1980s, and by the early 2000s, rewards were relatively nominal, but irresponsible environmental behaviors had a harsher reaction (Flammer, 2013). This suggests that society and markets increasingly start to assume environmental responsibility, to be the baseline, not an extraordinary virtue. Organizations with low-CSR scores witnessed a steep rise in stock price, as they marched towards more responsible behavior compared to similar efforts from organizations with high-CSR scores. High-CSR organizations also indicated an Insurance Effect; punishments were relatively smaller for irresponsible behavior. CSR provides both a strategic and reputational value to the organization (Flammer, 2013).

Eccles et al. (2014) conducted a comparative study of High Sustainability Firms, organizations that voluntarily adopt environmental and social policies and embed those within their business model, and Low Sustainability Firms, organizations that operated under the conventional profit-maximization model without formal sustainability commitments. Eccles et al.'s (2014) work could be inferred as a comparative study of CSR and CSI. High-sustainability firms differ in governance, stakeholder engagement, time horizon, measurement and disclosure practices, and financial performance. High-sustainability firms assign formal responsibility for Sustainability to their boards of directors and have a dedicated sustainability committee. They have a comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Practice which fosters trust and long-term relationships, reducing transaction costs and building Competitive Advantage (Eccles et al., 2014). Decisions on sustainability at high sustainability firms are more long-term oriented. Long-term views align with the slow-building nature of stakeholder relationships and sustainable value creation. High sustainability firms significantly outperform low sustainability firms in the stock market values. The outperformance was strongly noted when the nature of the business was B2C (Eccles et al., 2014).

The implications of CSI have been primarily explored in the following contexts of financial performance (Eccles et al., 2014; Price and Sun, 2017; Wei et al., 2017), and customer sentiments (Grappi et al., 2013; Xie et al., 2015), as it has direct managerial relevance. There have been a handful of studies focused on employee perception of CSI (Hericher and Bridoux, 2023; Yue et al., 2024), through their emotional and behavioral reactions; these works have predominantly been foundational, as they apply and validate customer-centric theories, such as Deonance Theory, to employees in the event of CSI. Exploring how employee loyalty changes in the event of CSI is something that the literature lacks. This thesis primarily attempts to answer the very same question.

RQ*: How does exposure to Corporate Social Irresponsibility affect employees' organizational commitment?*

Apart from having a toll on Financial Performance and Reputation (Flammer, 2013), CSI does have a jarring implication on internal stakeholders, employees. Hericher and Bridoux (2023) particularly investigated employees' emotional and behavioral responses to the company's irresponsible actions. According to Hericher and Bridoux (2023), employees are deeply affected when their employers act immorally, even more so than when the firm simply lacks CSR initiatives. Irresponsible actions provoke stronger emotional and moral reactions in employees, which instigate them to act. Employees respond to corporate social irresponsibility not as rational economic agents, but as moral beings. They arise from a moral sense that certain actions should not be done at any cost, because they violate fundamental moral duties. When organizations intentionally harm others and violate moral standards, employees experience moral anger, sympathy, and guilt, which then compels them to either punish the firm or compensate its victims (Hericher & Bridoux, 2023).

This reveals the fundamental nature of business; businesses are not just economic entities but moral communities, and violation of moral norms ripples through the stakeholder ecosystem

(Hericher & Bridoux, 2023). Yue et al. (2024) explored employees' reactions when their organizations behaved irresponsibly towards external stakeholders, while simultaneously treating employees very responsibly. This combination of Internal CSR and external CSI did not sit right with the employees. Internal CSR raises the expectation for moral behavior. When an organization treats employees well and behaves responsibly externally, it backfires; doing good inside cannot offset doing harm outside; hypocritical perception triggers moral backlash and whistleblowing (Yue et al., 2024). Yue et al. (2024) reiterate that employees are moral agents, not mere beneficiaries of organizational benefits.

Recognizing the incentive of CSR and the cost of CSI, reveals how easily well-intentioned CSR efforts can be overshadowed by irresponsible actions, creating a disconnect that employees may feel, and which ultimately shape how they view their relationship with the organization.

2.3 CSI Frameworks and its Related Concepts

Corporate social irresponsibility is often positioned amidst related concepts such as Misconduct or Misbehavior, partly because of the choice of media houses to synonymously use these related but distinct concepts when addressing CSI. Hericher and Bridoux (2023) distinguish CSI from its related concepts by redefining CSI by drawing theoretical grounding from Deonance Theory, which explains how people form moral judgements and respond emotionally and behaviorally when an actor intentionally violates moral norms and harms others (Folger, 2001).

This redefinition by Hericher and Bridoux (2023) resolves the inconsistency that prior literature has had when defining CSI. Connecting CSI to moral psychology makes this definition subjective, not just confined to regulatory non-compliance, but about the perception of stakeholders. According to Hericher and Bridoux (2023), “an organizational behavior is regarded as CSI if it were to violate moral standards, cause harm, and be intentionally pursued”. This very definition of CSI helps us distinguish the related concepts. Hericher and Bridoux (2023) mention a few of these, namely, Misconduct, Wrongdoing, Misbehavior, and Unethical Behavior. Misconduct is an action with transgression, involving illegal Behavior by an organization, with clear objective indicators. Misconducts are not considered to be CSI, because it is primarily associated with violations of laws and regulations, without the harm dimension. Neville et al. (2019) suggest that although Misconduct might lack the harm dimension, it is intentional.

According to Hericher and Bridoux (2023), wrongdoing is along the lines of Misconduct, being associated with illegality and public disapproval, but the harm and intentional dimension are not emphasized. Misconduct is purely objective, whereas wrongdoing might not only include transgression of law, but also acting against tacit social norms. Misbehavior is the action of an organizational member within the organization that violates organizational norms, rules, or conduct. Hericher and Bridoux (2023) also underscore the existence of transgression of organizational norms, without the harm or intentionality. Unethical Behavior is also confined to actions of organizational members, where the Behavior is seen as a definite moral/ethical violation. Unethical Behavior is about moral wrongness, violation of ethical standards, not organizational rules. This too lacks the harm and intentionality dimension (Hericher & Bridoux, 2023). It needs to be reiterated that Hericher and Bridoux's (2023) framework describing CSI is subjective, with perceptions on harm, intention, and moral violation.

Table 2

CSI and Related Concepts (Hericher & Bridoux, 2023)

Concept	Actor	Transgression	Intention	Harm
CSI	Organization	Yes	Yes	Yes
Misconduct	Organization	Yes (violation of law)	Yes	No
Wrongdoing	Organization	Yes (Public Disapproval)	No	No
Misbehavior	Organizational Member	Yes (Organizational Norms)	No	No
Unethical Behavior	Organizational Member	Yes (Ethical Standards)	No	No

Lange and Washburn (2012), present an objective framework of CSI rooted in Attribution Theory, a social psychology framework about how people ascertain blame for events. They name three attributes that are crucial to label a firm's behavior as socially irresponsible. Effect Undesirability is the first of the three attributes, where the action has a negative, threatening, and morally offensive outlook. Corporate Culpability is the second attribute, inquiring if the organization caused or is morally responsible for the harm. Affected Party Non-Complicit is the third attribute, which inquires if victims were completely non-complicit in the implication that had transpired. These three combined create an objective framework of CSI (Lange & Washburn, 2012). Lange and Washburn (2012) also mention that reputation, framing, and bias play a role in the CSI having outrage. Conceptualizing CSI by distinguishing it from its related concepts provides a foundation for understanding how employees may interpret and evaluate such actions.

2.4 CSI: Stakeholder vs Shareholder Tensions

Ireland (2018) advocates that corporate social irresponsibility is not necessarily an outcome of managerial greed or the prominence of Shareholder value ideology, but is structurally intertwined. The way in which organizations are constituted makes irresponsible behavior both possible and predictable. It is essential to revisit the definitions of the often interchangeably used terms Shareholder and Stakeholder. A Shareholder is a person, company, or organization that owns a minimum of one share in a company's stock or mutual fund, making them a partial owner. Shareholders typically receive declared dividends if the company does well and succeeds (Brealey, 2011). A Stakeholder is an individual or group with an interest or concern in the company's operations, performance, offering, or success (Freeman, 2015).

The role of organizations could be encapsulated as facilitating the existence and sustenance of the breadth of their value chain and responsibly delivering their unique value proposition at various stages of the value chain to distinct stakeholders. Shareholders oftentimes are not tied to this responsibility, but rather are stakeholders themselves, who benefit from the value that the organization creates (Ireland, 2018). Ireland (2018) refers to the contradictory prioritization within organizations. Organizations are often seen as entities owned by the shareholders, and shareholders are entitled to the organization itself. This is a misnomer. Organizations are separate legal entities, and the assets owned by the organization are entitled to the organization, not the shareholders. Shareholders have the right to the profits, not the organization. With this, Shareholders are shielded from the liabilities of the organization. For example, shareholders could demand to maximize their returns, without bearing the moral and financial responsibilities associated with such a pursuit.

As legal frameworks have evolved to accommodate Rentier Shareholders, an investor who seeks returns rather than involvement, irresponsibility becomes structurally encouraged, oftentimes prioritized. A responsible action for the organization might not always maximize shareholder returns. Firms must consider restructuring to serve the societal purposes rather than profit-maximization (Ireland, 2018). The competing logics of shareholder and stakeholder perspectives shape how organizational decisions are justified and perceived, offering an understanding into why certain actions may be interpreted by employees as irresponsible.

2.5 Ethical Climate, Moral Violation, and Employee Reactions

While prior research establishes that CSI can generate negative employee outcomes, these effects do not occur in a vacuum. Instead, employees interpret irresponsible behavior through the organization's broader ethical context, including their own perceptions of fairness, moral values, and implied obligations. CSI therefore functions as a moral violation that can undermine the ethical climate and contradict employees' sense of identification with the organization. To understand how and why CSI events translate into changes in commitment and job attitudes, it is necessary to review the literature on ethical climate, moral transgression, and employee reactions.

Ethical climate refers to the shared perceptions within an organization specifically "what is correct behavior and how ethical issues should be handled" (Teresi et al., 2019). It reflects an organization's norms around the topic of acceptable conduct, including how it treats stakeholders. Research has consistently shown that ethical climate is associated with key employee attitudes and behaviors. Schwepker's (2001) findings, for example, suggest that ethical climate in sales organizations is positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Similarly, another study shows that more positive ethical climates are linked to higher commitment and satisfaction, in academic organizations (Moore, 2012).

Recent research also emphasizes the role of ethical climate in shaping reactions to negative or morally wrong behavior. Ethical climates that emphasize self-interest have been associated with more cynical attitudes toward the organization, and an increased likelihood of difficulty to "build affective bonds and pride in the organization" (Wnuk et al., 2025). When employees perceive that the organization violates ethical norms, through unfair procedures, harmful practices, or irresponsible behavior towards stakeholders, it can generate moral emotions such as anger, sympathy, and guilt, while inversely lowering employees' sense of pride (Hericher & Bridoux, 2023).

Within the CSI domain, such violations can be seen as a breakdown in the ethical climate and in employees' expectations that the organization will "do the right thing". This suggests that

CSI may undermine organizational commitment partly through its impact on perceived ethical climate, thereby weakening employees' emotional attachment and sense of obligation to the organization.

2.6 Organizational Commitment

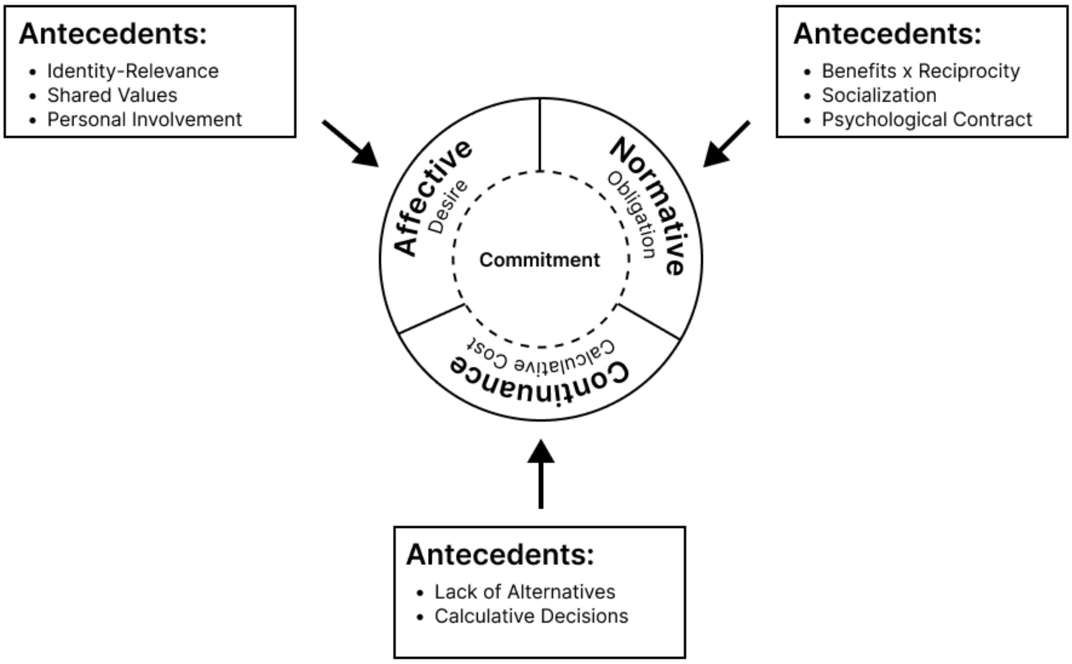
Employees' commitment to their organization is multi-faceted with emotional, obligatory, and rational dimensions to it. Prior literature interchangeably used terms like loyalty, attachment, and identification, which individually only partially addressed Organizational Commitment, lacking a coherent, comprehensive definition. (Meyer and Allen, 1991) set the record straight with their Three-Component Model, which captures different psychological layers of an employee's attachment to their organization. Organizational Commitment is defined as, "*A psychological state that characterises the employee's relationship with the organization and has implications for the decision to continue membership in the organization*." People remain with an organization for three reasons: their inherent emotional choice to stay, their obligation to stay, and their calculative rationale to stay. (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Affective Commitment represents the emotional Commitment, referring to the employee's emotional attachment, identification, and involvement in the organization. Employees with high affective commitment stay because they genuinely believe in the organization's goals and values. Affective Commitment is primarily developed through satisfying work experiences. Its antecedents include shared values, involvement, and self-identification with the organization (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Fair treatment and support, fostering shared values and trust, recognition, and being competent increase affective Commitment. When an employee's expectations are met and their basic needs are satisfied, their emotional tie to the organization strengthens. Affective Commitment is considered to be the most crucial form of Commitment, which is positively related to job performance and Organizational Citizenship, going above and beyond the job duties (Meyer and Allen, 1991; Meyer et al., 1993).

Normative Commitment represents the obligatory Commitment, a sense of obligation to remain with the organization. Employees feel they should stay because it is the right thing to do. Normative Commitment develops when an employee has "a set of norms concerning appropriate conduct (i.e., through socialization), and/or is the recipient of benefits and experiences a need to reciprocate" (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Higher normative commitment results in increased loyalty, tenure stability, and compliance (Meyer and Allen, 1991; Meyer et al., 1993).

Figure 2

(Simplified) General model of commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001)



Note. The figure is slightly adapted and simplified from Meyer & Herscovitch (2001), original General Model of Commitment, to ease readability.

Continuance Commitment is based on the cost of leaving the organization. Employees stay not because they want to, but because leaving would be too costly, financially, socially, or professionally, hence the decision is purely calculative (Meyer & Herscovitch). Unlike affective commitment, this form of commitment is expected to be either unrelated or even negatively related to behaviors like performance and citizenship (Meyer and Allen, 1991; Meyer et al., 1993).

Overall, organizational commitment as referred to by Meyer and Allen's (1997) work, are three separate constructs that are related but not causal antecedents of one another. Thus, organizational commitment, refers to the umbrella term that includes affective, normative, and continuance commitment. This interpretation is vital, as it sets the stage for how organizational commitment is to be treated within this paper, while exploring the research gap. Figure 2 encapsulates this construct, and helps visualize the dynamics of the commitment dimensions, and their antecedents.

2.7 Job Satisfaction: Theory and Function in Organizations

Job satisfaction is one of the most widely studied attitudes in organizational behavior and is generally defined as a positive evaluative reaction to one's job. Locke (1976), famously described job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (p.1304), highlighting that it reflects cognitive evaluations and affective responses to work. Job satisfaction can be viewed either in its entirety also known as Job in General (Ironson et al., 1989) or with regard to particular facets, also known as the Job Descriptive Index, such as pay, supervision, or the nature of the work itself (Stanton et al., 2002).

Theory emphasizes that job satisfaction emerges from the interaction of job characteristics, and affective experiences at work. Specifically, Affective Events Theory (AET) states that workplace events trigger emotional reactions, which consequently influence job satisfaction and behaviors such as performance, commitment, and well-being (Ashokababu, 2022). Additionally, the Job-Demands-Resources model conceptualizes job satisfaction as part of a broader well-being system, which explains that low job resource, such as autonomy, feedback, and task significance, and certain high job demands lead to job strain, while low job demands, together with high job resource, foster motivation and positive work attitudes, leading to greater job satisfaction (Bakker & Evangelia Demerouti, 2007; Claes et al., 2023).

Job satisfaction, thus serves two important roles in organizations. First, it is an outcome of working conditions, fairness perceptions, and psychological contract experiences. For instance, psychological contract breach has been shown to be strongly related to job satisfaction and affective commitment across multiple samples (Bal et al., 2008). And second, job satisfaction functions as a key lens through which employees interpret organizational events. Employees who experience greater satisfaction tend to respond more favorably to organizational practices, whereas low satisfaction is associated with a greater likelihood of intentions to leave the organization (Coomber & K. Louise Barriball, 2006). In this thesis, job satisfaction is therefore conceptualized not only as an important employee attitude but also a potential condition in the relationship between corporate social irresponsibility and organizational commitment.

2.8 Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention

Finally, this literature review also explores the outcomes of organizational commitment. Turnover intention refers to an employee's desire or intent to leave the organization (Ahmad Saufi et al., 2023). Research has shown that organizational commitment, especially its affective and normative dimensions, is a strong predictor of turnover intention, and actual turnover behavior. Tett and Meyer's (1993) meta-analysis found that variables such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment are negatively related to turnover intentions. More recent studies confirm the robustness of this relationship. Guzeller and Celiker's (2020) work on tourism employees showed a moderate negative correlation between organizational commitment and turnover intention, indicating that individuals who feel more emotionally committed to their organization are less inclined to consider leaving. Sihombing and Maharatih (2019), found that higher organizational commitment reduces turnover intentions and supports retention of employees within the hospitality, education and healthcare sector. Finally the most recent study by Ayari & AlHamaqi (2024), confirmed that there are strong correlations between the three commitment dimensions and turnover intention within the oil and gas industry, however, normative commitment contrary to other studies contributed the most to turnover intention amongst the three commitment dimensions.

These findings are particularly relevant for this paper, as they imply that any factor that reduces affective, normative, or continuance commitment, can indirectly increase employees' willingness to leave. If irresponsible corporate behavior erodes employees' trust and identification, this should translate not only into lower commitment of the affective and normative dimensions but also into higher turnover intentions and reduced loyalty. By situating CSI within this commitment-turnover framework, the study can later draw on managerial implications about how changes in commitment following CSI exposure may affect retention of employees.

Despite growing interest in corporate social irresponsibility, prior research offers limited insight into how employees interpret and react to CSI events. Existing literature predominantly analyzes CSR and its effects on employees or CSI's effects on shareholder value, therefore the relationship between corporate social irresponsibility and organizational commitment remains theoretically underdeveloped. Overall, the literature lacks an understanding of how CSI relates to affective, normative, and continuance commitment, and under what conditions these relationships may vary.

3. Theoretical Framework

This chapter outlines the theoretical foundation of the relationships between corporate social irresponsibility and organizational commitment, as well as the moderating role of job satisfaction. Building on the concepts discussed in the literature review, this framework integrates insights from social psychology and organizational behavior to explain how employees react to corporate social irresponsibility. It also defines the variables of interest and showcases the conceptual relationships guiding the study.

3.1 Corporate Social Irresponsibility and Organizational Commitment

Corporate social irresponsibility refers to organizational actions that violate widely held moral, legal, or social norms and harm stakeholders. At a more detailed level, Hericher and Bridoux (2023) draw on Deonance Theory to argue that employees respond to perceived moral violations with strong moral emotions and compensatory or punishing behaviors toward the organization. These reactions are likely to affect employees' evaluations of their relationship with the organization, including their commitment to the organization. Therefore, the present study operationalizes CSI by adopting Hericher and Bridoux's (2023) moral-psychological scale of CSI and Lange and Washburn's (2012) attribution-based framework.

From a psychological contract perspective, CSI events constitute severe violations of implicit promises regarding fairness and responsible conduct. For example research by Bal et al. (2008) shows that psychological contract breach is negatively associated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Additionally, Topa et al (2008) find that employees who perceive a psychological contract breach report reduced organizational trust and commitment, and a greater desire to leave the organization as well (Topa et al., 2008). Because many employees assume their employer will not engage in harmful or unethical practices toward stakeholders, corporate social irresponsibility can be viewed as a breach of this moral contract.

Additional mechanisms include, disruption of ethical climate, and identity threat. Ethical climate research shows that when employees perceive that the organization prioritizes self-interest over moral principles, they report lower job satisfaction, and lower organizational commitment (Schwepker, 2001). CSI events may signal that the organization's values are misaligned with employees' ethical standards, creating a value conflict and undermining identification with the firm. This, likely leads to reduced affective and normative commitment, as employees may feel the organization no longer deserves their loyalty (Teresi et al., 2019). Continuance commitment, on the other hand, is based on calculative decisions of staying at a company, and may be less sensitive to moral or value-based violations. Employees may remain because of financial, career, or labor-market considerations even when their emotional and moral bonds are weakened (Tett & Meyer, 1993).

All together, these mechanisms support the view that CSI functions as a morally and psychologically disruptive event that threatens employees' perceived ethical climate, and psychological contract. Therefore, based on the theory presented, exposure to CSI is hypothesized to decrease affective commitment and normative commitment, and to produce no significant change in continuance commitment (for a formal list of hypotheses, see section 3.5 Hypotheses Development & Conceptual Model).

3.2 The Moderating Role of Job Satisfaction

To explain why the impact of CSI on organizational commitment may vary between employees, our study conceptualizes job satisfaction as a moderating variable. Affective Events Theory explicitly links work events, affective reactions, and job satisfaction, viewing satisfaction as an evaluative judgement that integrates affective experiences over time (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Employees with high pre-existing satisfaction are likely to hold more positive evaluations of their job and employer, which can act as a cognitive and affective filter through which new events, such as CSI, are interpreted. On the other hand, employees with low satisfaction may interpret the same event more negatively and integrate it into an already unfavorable narrative about the organization (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Multiple studies support the notion that job satisfaction can moderate the effect of negative experiences on attitudes and well-being (Allan et al., 2018; Chen et al, 2019; Licandro et al., 2025). These studies support the theoretical view that job satisfaction can serve as a moderator, shaping how employees respond to both positive and negative organizational events. Hence, we expect job satisfaction to moderate the influence of CSI on affective and normative commitment, and to explore its potential moderating effect on continuance commitment.

While there is a growing body of evidence that job satisfaction can buffer the impact of various organizational experiences, research is not consistent about the direction of that moderation. Some studies find apparent buffering effects; for instance, Chen et al. (2019) and

Allan et al. (2018) found that job satisfaction acts as a protective resource that mitigates adverse outcomes. Whereas the literature on psychological contract breach leads us to assume that high job satisfaction could also intensify adverse reactions, because it raises expectations of one's employers and makes the contrast between "what should be" and "what is" more salient, resulting in a more negative outcome. For example, Bal et al. (2008) found that when perceived organizational support is high, employees may feel more betrayed by a contract breach because of their stronger relational investment and expectations.

All together, these findings indicate that the moderating role of job satisfaction is plausible but not theoretically one-directional. In short, satisfaction can buffer adverse effects, but there are also indications that moderation effects can be complex, amplifying, or absent under certain conditions. In the context of this study, it is theoretically justified to examine job satisfaction as a moderator, while treating the strength and direction as exploratory.

3.3 Hypotheses Development & Conceptual Model

Drawing on the theoretical reasoning above, the following hypotheses are proposed. Corporate social irresponsibility is expected to decrease employees' affective and normative commitment, while not significantly changing continuance commitment, by violating moral and psychological expectations within the employment relationship. However, this effect is moderated by employees' pre-existing levels of job satisfaction, which may amplify or lower the impact of CSI on commitment. Below you may find a formal list of hypotheses, guiding the study.

3.5.1 Main Effects

H1: *Exposure to corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) decreases employees' affective commitment toward their organization*.

H2: *Exposure to CSI decreases employees' normative commitment toward their organization.*

H3: *Exposure to CSI does not decrease employees' continuance commitment toward their organization.*

3.5.2 Moderation Effects

H4a: *Job satisfaction moderates the relationship between CSI and affective commitment.*

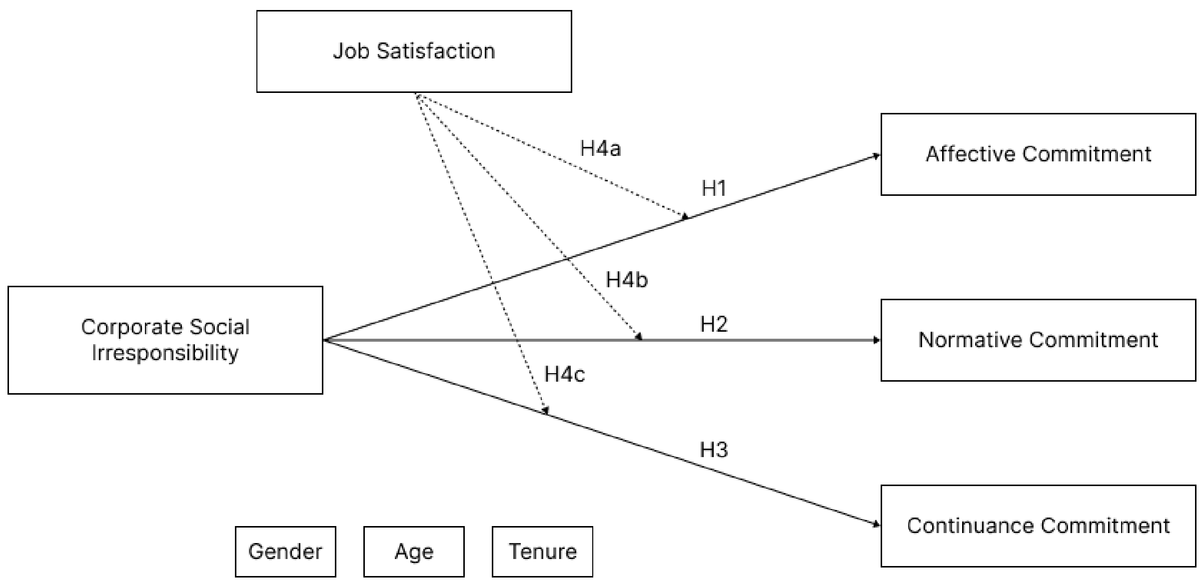
H4b: *Job satisfaction moderates the relationship between CSI and normative commitment.*

H4c: *Job satisfaction does not moderate the relationship between CSI and continuance commitment.*

These hypotheses align with the conceptual model presented in Figure 3 and form the basis of the empirical analyses described in the following chapters. Lastly, most studies find a weak / insignificant relationship between demographic variables and organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer & Allen, 1993), however, this study would like to include these demographic variables, specifically, age, tenure, and gender, as they might contribute to differing perceptions of CSI, by treating them as controls.

Figure 3

Conceptual model of the study



Note. The conceptual model illustrates the relationships between corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) and the three components of organizational commitment (affective, normative, and continuance). Job satisfaction is hypothesized to moderate each of these relationships (H4a–H4c).

Table 3

Summary of Research Question & Hypotheses

	Description
RQ	How does exposure to Corporate Social Irresponsibility affect employees' organizational commitment?
H1	Exposure to corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) decreases employees' affective commitment.
H2	Exposure to corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) decreases employees' normative commitment.
H3	Exposure to corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) does not significantly affect employees' continuance commitment.
H4a	Job satisfaction moderates the relationship between CSI and affective commitment.
H4b	Job satisfaction moderates the relationship between CSI and normative commitment.
H4c	Job satisfaction does not moderate the relationship between CSI and continuance commitment.

4. Methodological Approach

4.1 Overview

This chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted towards studying the research question: How does exposure to Corporate Social Irresponsibility affect employees' organizational commitment? The aim is to explain what methodological approach the study applies, and why this approach is the most appropriate to answer the research question.

4.2 Methodological Orientation

The study adopts a quantitative experimental approach, grounded in positivist research, that assumes social phenomena can be observed objectively and measured systematically, allowing researchers to identify and test relationships between variables (Phoenix et al., 2012). Since the purpose of the thesis is to examine a causal relationship, a quantitative approach allows for measurable, replicable, and statistical evidence (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2022). Hence, this study follows a deductive approach, in which hypotheses are formed by existing theoretical frameworks.

4.3 Rationale for a Quantitative Approach

A quantitative study is well-suited for this research for three main reasons. First, the study's central aim is to identify whether a CSI event causes a change in affective, normative, and continuance organization commitment levels. Quantitative experiments, in particular, are capable of establishing causal relationships by manipulating one variable and observing its effect on another (Bell, Brymann & Harley, 2022). Second, the constructs of CSI and organizational commitment have been operationalized by validated scales (Hericher & Bridoux, 2023; Meyer & Allen, 1993). Thus, a quantitative approach enables consistency, internal validity, and reliability, ensuring that findings are grounded in established metrics rather than subjective qualitative interpretations. Third, quantitative data can be replicated and statistically analyzed across samples, allowing for the identification of generalizable patterns, through further research (Bell, Brymann & Harley, 2022). This makes the approach appropriate for studying how general perceptions of CSI may influence employee commitment in the longer term.

4.4 Experimental Strategy and Relevance

This study employs an experimental design, involving random assignment to a treated and a control group. The treated group is exposed to a scenario describing a hypothetical CSI event within their organization. Details regarding the experimental procedure and pre-test validation are provided in Chapter 5. This method seemed the most appropriate for studying attitudinal responses, because it allows participants to evaluate scenarios that would otherwise be impractical to reproduce in a real setting. The use of a vignette first allows participants to stay anonymous and ensure accurate responses without any pressure from their employers, second it provides ethical feasibility, by not exposing participants to real harm while still being able to form authentic judgements about corporate behavior, and third it enhances ecological realism, as the scenario that the treated group is exposed to mirror real-world issues and are contextually based at their corresponding organization.

4.5 Contextual Justification: Data Privacy Violation as a Form of CSI

This study focuses on data privacy violations as the specific domain of corporate social irresponsibility, because ethical data management has become one of the most critical challenges for organizations today (van der Merwe & Al Achkar, 2022). Recent cases, as exemplified in the introduction of this paper, illustrate how breaches of data ethics can erode societal trust. By situating CSI within this context, the study captures a contemporary issue that is applicable to all industries while focusing on the underexplored intersection between CSI and organizational commitment. However, the aim of the experiment is not to emphasize the specific effects of data privacy issues, as the study design does not measure any specific constructs of this domain. Instead the focus of the study uses validated CSI scales to measure CSI's effects on employees' organizational commitment.

5. Methods

5.1 Research Design

As outlined in the previous chapters, this study adopts a quantitative experimental design to test the proposed hypotheses, establish measurable results, and identify generalizable patterns. Participants were randomly assigned to either a control or treatment group to minimize demographic biases. The purpose of the experiment is to test the conceptual model, which describes the relationship between exposure to corporate social irresponsibility and employees' affective, normative, and continuance commitment toward their organization (refer Ch 3. *Theoretical Framework* for the conceptual model).

The treatment involved presenting participants with a hypothetical CSI scenario, specifically a case of intentional data privacy violation, which served as the independent variable manipulation. Participants in the treatment group were instructed to imagine that this event occurred at their own organization. In contrast, participants in the control group were asked to reflect on their organization's normal, day-to-day activities and their typical experiences at work. CSI vignettes investigating the variance in employee perceptions, usually instruct their respondents to think of themselves as employees in a hypothetical organization (Grappi et al., 2013; Hericher and Bridoux, 2023). The treatment group is presented with the misconduct while the control group is presented with a scenario that reflects responsible conduct. Such between-group design would not be representative of reality, as respondents have no prior contextual awareness of the industry or day-to-day working conditions.

Our experimental design draws inspiration from prior fundamental studies, but modifies the bi-stimuli design to gather responses grounded in reality. Hence reflecting on one's actual employer, increases ecological validity, offering a realistic baseline for comparison when assessing changes in affective, normative, and continuance commitment levels between the two groups. To ensure that the CSI scenario was perceived as intended before conducting the main experiment, a pre-test was carried out using the same experimental structure as the main study. However, instead of measuring organizational commitment, the pre-test serves to be a simple manipulation check to validate the effectiveness and clarity of the hypothetical CSI scenario. This design enables a direct assessment of whether exposure to CSI influences employees' commitment levels and whether this relationship is moderated by job satisfaction, as outlined in the study's hypotheses.

5.2 Sampling and Data Collection

Our sampling and data collection procedures can be divided into 2 phases. First we conducted a small pre-test to validate our hypothetical CSI scenario, and in the second phase we conducted our main experiment that aims to test our hypotheses.

5.2.1 Main Experiment

The outcome of our study aims to generalize to industries and employees based in Europe, to remove unnecessary noise, such as different working cultures across the globe. To accomplish this, we took a sample size of n = 400 from Prolific, an online platform with a pool of roughly 200 000 research participants, who were screened for full-time employment status, and living within the UK or other European countries that according to the EF English Proficiency Index, have very high, or bilingual english competencies (EF English Proficiency Index, 2025), as our scenario relied on good English proficiency. This constitutes non-probability purposive sampling. We aimed at n = 400 respondents to ensure adequate power for between group comparisons, and to test for moderation, while allowing respondent exclusions due to failed attention checks. Finally, participants received monetary compensation in line with Prolific's requirements. Although this sampling limits population generalizability, it offers efficient access to a diverse working sampling appropriate for experimental causal inference.

Respondents were required to fill out the online survey through Qualtrics, a cloud based survey creation tool, and were made aware about consent conditions, and their anonymity throughout the study. For the main experiment participants were given a maximum time of 6 minutes to fill out the survey, and were fairly incentivized based on Prolific's hourly rate recommendations. Upon accessing the Qualtrics survey participants were randomized to control or treatment groups, with the condition of even distribution. The intent of randomizing participants is to control for demographic variables that potentially might introduce added noise when analyzing the causal relationship.

All participants were first introduced to the project, with minimal information provided about the study's specific purpose to avoid performance bias. They then answered a few standard screening questions to ensure eligibility. Participants in the control group were asked to reflect on the day-to-day activities and their general experience within their current organization, while those in the treatment group read a hypothetical CSI scenario describing an incident that occurred within their own organization. Afterward, all participants completed the main questionnaire followed by demographic questions. Finally, participants submitted their responses through Qualtrics and were redirected to Prolific, where they confirmed their submission for administrative purposes.

5.2.2 Pre Test

To ensure that the CSI scenario worked as intended before conducting the main experiment, a pre-test, using the same experimental structure as the main study, was carried out on a small sample size (n = 40), through Prolific, inline with Perneger et al.'s (2014) minimum requirement of 30 participants for a questionnaire pre test. However, instead of measuring organizational commitment, the pre-test focused solely on a manipulation check to validate the effectiveness and clarity of the hypothetical CSI scenario using the same CSI manipulation check scale as in the main experiment. (see section 5.4 *Measurements*).

The pretest follows an identical data collection procedure to the main experiment. Participants were made aware that by filling out the survey, they consented to their participation in our study and that their responses were anonymous. Participants were given a maximum time of 4 minutes to fill out the survey, in order to provide fair incentives based on hourly rates. Participants were randomized to control or treatment groups, making up 20 participants in the control group and 20 participants in the treatment group. Participants in the control group received the same survey instructions and standardized questions as in the treatment group. To keep the pre-test brief, no demographic information was collected.

5.3 Measurements

The survey consisted of standardized scales and adapted items designed to measure corporate social irresponsibility, organizational commitment (affective, normative, and continuance commitment), and job satisfaction, along with demographic questions. All measures were rated on a seven-point likert-scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree, unless otherwise noted. Participants in the treatment condition were presented with a vignette describing a data privacy violation by their employer, while those in the control condition responded to the same items based on their everyday experience with their organization.

5.4.1 CSI Vignette

The CSI vignette that was exposed to the treatment group, was created inline with Lange and Washburn's (2012) conceptualization of corporate social irresponsibility. The scenario presented was as follows:

> *"Recently, your company has been facing pressure to find new sources of revenue. About a year ago, your employer introduced a new data management system designed to "better understand customer needs." You and your colleagues were told that this initiative aimed to improve customer service and create more personalized experiences. Customers were notified about this change and were made aware that their data is private and safe with your company.*
>
> *However, it was recently revealed that your company has been selling detailed customer information — including names, address lines, purchase histories, and contact details — to external marketing firms. Your employer justified this action as a "strategic opportunity" to generate additional income and strengthen partnerships with external marketing firms."*

5.4.2 Corporate Social Irresponsibility Manipulation Check

To assess whether participants viewed the scenario as corporate social irresponsibility: Harm and Moral Violation. These items were also included in the pretest, as a manipulation check for CSI. Additionally these items serve as the basis for the independent variable. These items were adapted from Hericher and Bridoux (2023), CSI scale based on deonance theory. However, the volition scale of Hericher and Bridoux (2023) was intentionally left out, as participants in the control group had no contextual evidence of intentional behavior. To address this the hypothetical CSI scenario explicitly mentions that the organization's actions were intentional. The measures are paraphrased so that they are symmetrical for control and treatment groups. Higher scores represent stronger recognition of irresponsibility and moral violation. Having four measures is ideal for internal reliability and being mindful of respondent fatigue. Selection of the corresponding 4 measures from the list was based on higher loading values and relevance to data privacy CSI.

Harm (4 items) (Hericher and Bridoux, 2023)

(1) "My employer's actions inflicts harm on others."
(2) "My employer's actions hurts others."
(3) "My employer's actions causes harm to others."
(4) "My employer's actions are detrimental to others".

Moral Violation (4 items) (Hericher and Bridoux, 2023)

(1) "My employer's actions are unethical"
(2) "My employer's behavior is immoral"
(3) "What my employer does is morally wrong"
(4) "What my employer does is wrong"

5.4.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was measured using five items reflecting the general evaluation of one's job (JIG), and were used in the pretest as well. The items were adapted from Quinn, Staines, and McCullough (1974), which were evaluated in McGehee and Tullar (1979). These measures are regarded as the standardized Job in General (JIG) scale.

Job Satisfaction (5 items)

(1) "All in all, I am very satisfied with my job"
(2) "I often leave work feeling I have done something worthwhile"
(3) "Knowing what I know now, I would still choose to take this job"
(4) "If a good friend were considering a job like mine with my company, I would recommend it"
(5) "If I were free to choose any job, I would still prefer this one"

The JIG measures were preferred over the Job Descriptive Index measures as they reflect a simplified representation of overall job satisfaction. Five items were selected from McGehee and Tullar's (1979) work because the final item was deemed as contextually irrelevant. This construct served as the moderating variable in the analyses.

5.4.3 Organizational Commitment

Employee commitment towards their organization was measured using twelve items drawn from Meyer and Allen's (1993) Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment, covering Affective, Normative, and Continuance Commitment. Twelve measures were carefully selected from the fifteen items, based on contextual relevance and higher loading values. Some measures which were originally reverse coded, had to be neutralized as they were not symmetrical for the experimental groups.

Affective Commitment

(1) "My employer has a great deal of personal meaning to me"

(2) "I feel a strong sense of 'belonging' to my employer"

(3) "I feel 'emotionally attached' to my employer"

(4) "I really feel as if my employer's problems are my own"

Normative Commitment

(1) "My employer deserves my loyalty"

(2) "I feel obligated to remain with my employer"

(3) "I would feel guilty if I left my employer"

(4) "I owe a great deal to my organization"

Continuance Commitment

(1) "Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my employer now"

(2) "It would be very hard for me to leave my employer right now, even if I wanted to"

(3) "I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving my employer"

(4) "Staying with my employer is a matter of necessity as much as desire"

5.4.4 Additional Items

Attention checks were included midway and towards the end of the questionnaire to check for false responses.

Attention check (2 items)

(1) "Please select the number six from the options below."

(2) "What is the survey about?"

Lastly demographic questions were included for exploratory inferences that could be made, treating demographics as control variables.

Demographics (3 items)

(1) "How long have you been working for your employer?"
(2) "How old are you?"
(3) "What is your gender?"

5.4.5 Scale Reliability and Scoring

For each construct, mean scores were computed across the corresponding items. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's α, with values of $\alpha \geq 0.73$ considered acceptable. Higher mean scores represent stronger perceptions of irresponsibility, higher satisfaction, or stronger organizational commitment, respectively in both treatment and control groups.

5.4 Data Analysis

All analyses were conducted using JASP (Version 0.95.3), an open-source statistical program, employing a combination of Mann-Whitney U tests, Bayesian Mann-Whitney U tests, and linear regression analyses to test the study's six hypotheses. Additionally, Jamovi was used to illustrate the moderation of job satisfaction through simple slopes. Before analysis, the dataset was screened for missing values, outliers, and normality of distributions. Participants who failed attention checks or provided incomplete responses were excluded from the final dataset. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and Spearman's correlation coefficient) were computed for all variables to provide an overview of the data structure.

5.5.1 Effect Hypothesis 1 - 3

To test the direct effects of exposure to a corporate social irresponsible event on affective (AC), and normative (NC), Mann-Whitney U tests were first performed. Given that H3 is a null hypothesis, a Bayesian Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to observe if continuance commitment remained unchanged. The hypotheses tested for this approach are reiterated below:

H1: *Exposure to corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) decreases employees' affective commitment toward their organization.*

H2: *Exposure to CSI decreases employees' normative commitment toward their organization.*

H3: *Exposure to CSI does not decrease employees' continuance commitment toward their organization.*

5.5.2 Moderation Hypotheses H4a - H4c

To examine whether job satisfaction moderated the effects of CSI on organizational commitment, a series of linear regression analyses was conducted using hierarchical linear regression in JASP, and were then visualized through simple slopes with Jamovi. Separate models were estimated for each dependent variable (AC, NC, CC). First, the control variables (age, tenure, gender) were entered to give us a baseline model, and see how much of the different commitment types is explained just by demographics. Then the main effects of CSI and job satisfaction were added to show how much additional variance in commitment is explained by the main variables. Finally, the interaction term (CSI x Job Satisfaction) was introduced to test for moderation and determine whether the interaction significantly improves the model's predictive power.

The interaction term was computed using mean-centered variables to reduce multicolinearity (Shieh, 2011). A significant interaction would indicate that the strength or direction of the relationship between CSI and the organizational commitment dimensions depends on job satisfaction. Significant interactions were further explored using simple-slopes to visualize the moderating effect.

The specific hypotheses tested were:

H4a: *Job satisfaction moderates the relationship between CSI and affective commitment.*

H4b: *Job satisfaction moderates the relationship between CSI and normative commitment.*

H4c: *Job satisfaction does not moderate the relationship between CSI and continuance commitment.*

5.5.3 Significance, Effect Size, and Robustness

All analyses were tested for significance level with Cronbach's α. Rank-biserial correlations (r_{rb}) were reported for Mann-Whitney U tests, and standardized β coefficients, R^2, and ΔR^2 change, and Cohen's f^2 effect sizes were reported for final regression models to determine the moderation effect’s direction and strength. Before running the tests, all analyses were checked for basic statistical assumptions using JASP. Assumptions of normality were examined both visually, and through Shapiro Wilk’s p values. The absence of multicollinearity was mitigated by centering scale values for regression models, and examined following Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) < 5. Finally, assumptions of homoscedasticity were checked by visually inspecting residual patterns. Hierarchical regression models were estimated both with and without control variables to verify the stability of the main effects.

5.5. Ethical Considerations

The study adheres to established ethical principles for research involving human participants. Prior to participation, all respondents were aware of the study’s purpose, and how their data was being handled. Informed consent was given when participants submitted their survey forms. Participants were informed that their responses were anonymous, confidential, and will only be used for academic purposes. Additionally, data that was accidentally gathered such as geolocational positioning were scrapped entirely. No personal identifiers such as names, and contact details were collected. Participants were fairly incentivized, according to Prolific’s incentivization program that is based on UK wage regulations.

5.6. Limitations of Method

While the chosen experimental design allows for strong internal validity through controlled manipulation of corporate social irresponsibility, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study employs a vignette-based experiment, which, although effective for isolating causal relationships, may limit ecological realism. Participants' responses in the treatment group are based on a hypothetical scenario rather than actual workplace experiences, which may not fully capture the complexity of real organizational environments.

Second, the sample was recruited from an online platform, that doesn’t account for even distribution amongst geographical location which may limit generalizability to broader employee populations. Despite screening for employment status, differences in cultural background or work context may influence how participants interpret the CSI scenario. Third, the manipulation check only included the Harm & Moral Violation items from Hericher and Bridoux (2023), even though their CSI scale also included an Item measuring the organization’s intention. However, this was purposefully omitted as intention questions were not feasible within the control group. Additionally, randomization between control and treatment groups mitigates these concerns by distributing potential biases evenly across conditions. Finally, although the experimental design allows for causal inference regarding the effects of the CSI manipulation, the results capture reactions at a single point in time. Future research could adopt longitudinal designs to explore whether these effects persist over time.

6. Empirical Findings

This chapter presents the empirical findings of the study. We first briefly introduce pre-test findings that tested the effectiveness of the manipulation. We then present the findings of the main experiment, presenting the descriptive statistics, and reliability assessments, followed by a manipulation check to validate the effectiveness of the experimental vignette. Non parametric group comparisons using Mann-Whitney U tests are then presented to assess differences between the control and treatment conditions. Next, correlations are reported to show relationships between the study variables. Finally, hierarchical regression analyses are conducted to examine the moderating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between corporate social irresponsibility (labeled as 'Irresponsibility Index'), and the three dimensions of organizational commitment: affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Statistical and regression analysis were conducted using JASP and Jamovi to illustrate simple slopes for the final regression models.

6.1 Pre-Test Findings

Both perceived corporate social irresponsibility and job satisfaction presented non-normal distributions upon visually examining distribution frequencies and calculating the Shapiro-Wilk p value between-groups. Hence, nonparametric Mann-Whitney U tests were used to analyze the effectiveness of the manipulation, and confirm pre-existing job satisfaction attitudes between control and treatment groups towards participant's employers.

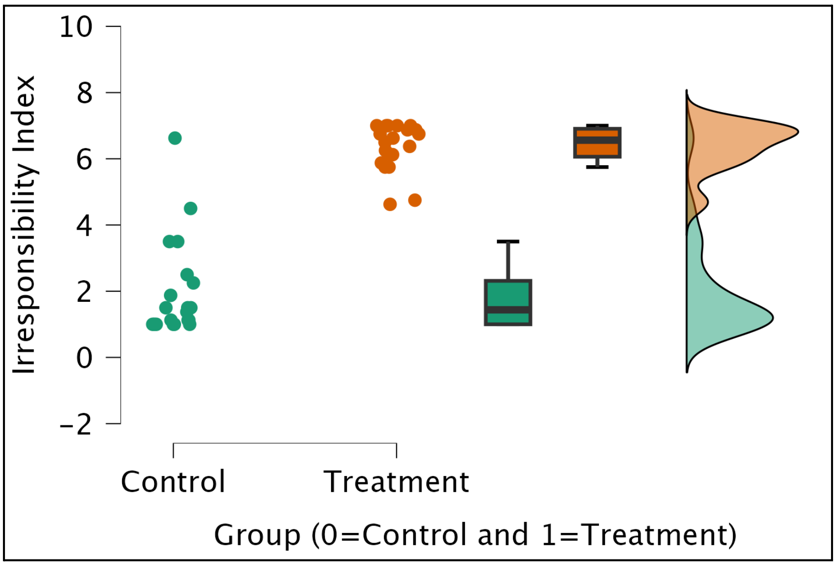
Reliability analyses indicated great internal consistency for the irresponsibility measure that is composed of the harm and moral violation scales, with $\alpha = 0.991$ and 0.993 respectively. The measures of harm and moral violation were consolidated into a singular measure, Irresponsibility Index, to juxtapose the employee perception of the stimuli for the experimental groups. The Mann–Whitney U test revealed that the Irresponsibility Index was significantly higher in the treatment group ($Mdn = 6.56$, $IQR = 0.84$) than in the control group ($Mdn = 1.44$, $IQR = 1.31$), $U = 10.50$, $p < 0.001$, $r_{rb} = 0.95$, confirming the effectiveness of the manipulation.

As visualized in Figure 4, the distributions are clearly separated, with the treatment condition concentrated at high irresponsibility levels and the control condition clustered at the lower end of the scale.

The job satisfaction scale also demonstrated high reliability ($\alpha = 0.90$). The Mann-Whitney U test showed no significant difference in baseline job satisfaction (p = 0.72) between the control (*Mdn* = 4.00, *IQR* = 1.60) and treatment group (*Mdn* = 4.10, *IQR* = 1.50), suggesting comparable pre-existing attitudes. Since only participants in the treatment condition rated the scenario's severity, a within-group descriptive analysis was conducted, which showcased that on average the scenario was perceived as highly severe (*M* = 6.00, *SD* = 0.795).

Figure 4

Pre-test Manipulation Check



Note. The raincloud plot includes individual data points, boxplots showing medians and interquartile ranges, and half-violin densities representing the underlying distribution.

Collectively, these results confirm that the vignette in the treatment group successfully induced perceptions of corporate irresponsibility, validating its use in the main experiment. (Refer Appendix A for detailed pre-test results)

6.2 Demographics

A total of 400 individuals completed the main experiment (Control: 201; Treatment: 199). The sample included 240 males (60.0%), 158 females (39.5%), and 2 participants who selected "other" (0.5%). Age ranged from 18 to 71 years, with the largest groups found in the 18–29 (n = 95) and 30-39 (n = 123) bands, followed by those aged 40-49 (n = 74) and 50-59 (n = 81). A smaller number of participants were between 60 and 69 years old (n = 23), and only two participants were 70 or older. Tenure showed a similarly wide spread, with many participants reporting early-career levels of work experience. Table 4 provides a full overview of the demographic distributions.

Table 4

Demographic distributions

Characteristic	n	% of sample
Gender		
Male	240	60.00%
Female	158	39.50%
Other	2	0.50%
Age		
18–29	95	23.90%
30–39	123	30.80%
40–49	74	18.50%
50–59	81	20.30%
60–69	23	5.80%
70+	2	0.50%
Tenure (years)		
0–2	88	22.10%
3–5	109	27.40%
6–10	93	23.40%
11+	108	27.00%

Note. Percentages are based on valid responses. One participant entered an invalid age ('2'), which was treated as missing for the purpose of age-band calculations. Two participants had missing tenure values.

A descriptive analysis of participants' reported employers revealed substantial variation in the types of organizations represented in the sample. Table 5 reports the distributions for categorized industries. The majority of responses (30%) fell into an "Unspecified" category, largely consisting of ambiguous or anonymized names that could not be reliably assigned to an industry. This outcome can primarily be due to respondents frequently refraining from disclosing identifiable workplace information for privacy reasons. Among the classifiable portion of the sample, the largest groups were employed in the public sector (11.3%), retail & consumer goods (8.0%), healthcare & social services (7.5%), manufacturing/industrial (7.3%), education (7.0%), and technology & IT (7.0%), followed by smaller proportions working in transport & logistics, professional services, finance/banking/insurance, hospitality & leisure, media & creative, construction, and other services.

Table 5

Assigned Industry Distributions

Industry	n	% of sample
Unspecified / Prefer Not to Say	120	30.00%
Public Sector / Government	45	11.30%
Retail & Consumer Goods	32	8.00%
Healthcare & Social Services	30	7.50%
Manufacturing / Industrial	29	7.30%
Education	28	7.00%
Technology / IT	28	7.00%
Transport & Logistics	18	4.50%
Professional Services	17	4.30%
Finance / Banking / Insurance	17	4.30%
Hospitality / Leisure	15	3.80%
Media / Creative	9	2.30%
Construction	5	1.30%
Other Services	7	1.80%

Note. Industry categories are based on participants' reported employers. Unspecified (60.9%) reflects ambiguous or anonymized entries. Industry information was used for descriptive purposes only.

This distribution indicates that, despite a high degree of non-identifiable employer entries, the identifiable subset of participants spans a broad set of professional backgrounds. Consequently, the sample does not appear to be dominated by any single occupational domain, supporting the generalizability of the experimental findings across a diverse set of organizations.

6.2 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability

Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics and internal consistency values (Cronbach's alpha) for all study variables. Mean scores, standard deviations, medians, and interquartile ranges are provided along with reliability estimates for each scale.

All scales demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from $\alpha = 0.78$ to $\alpha = 0.91$. Frequency distributions and the Shapiro–Wilk tests indicated that between-group, all variables violated the assumption of normality ($p < 0.001$ for all, see Appendix B), which justified the use of nonparametric tests (Mann–Whitney U and Spearman's rho) in subsequent analyses.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	Mdn	IQR	Cronbach's α
Irresponsibility Index	4.04	2.33	4.75	4.50	0.91
AC	3.26	1.53	3.00	2.25	0.89
NC	3.24	1.42	3.00	2.25	0.86
CC	4.15	1.35	4.25	2.00	0.78
JS	4.78	1.51	5.00	2.00	0.88

Note. Descriptive statistics and reliability estimates are reported for the full sample.

6.3 Manipulation Check

Similarly to the pre-test a manipulation check for the main experiment was conducted to ensure that the vignette successfully manipulated perceived irresponsibility. Table 7 reports the Mann–Whitney U results comparing perceived irresponsibility and job satisfaction between the control and treatment groups.

Table 7

Manipulation Check: Perceived Irresponsibility and Job Satisfaction

Variable	Control Mdn (IQR)	Treatment Mdn (IQR)	U	p	r_{rb}
Irresponsibility Index	1.63 (1.25)	6.13 (1.13)	342	< 0.001	0.98
JS	4.92 (1.80)	4.64 (2.10)	21956	0.09	-0.10

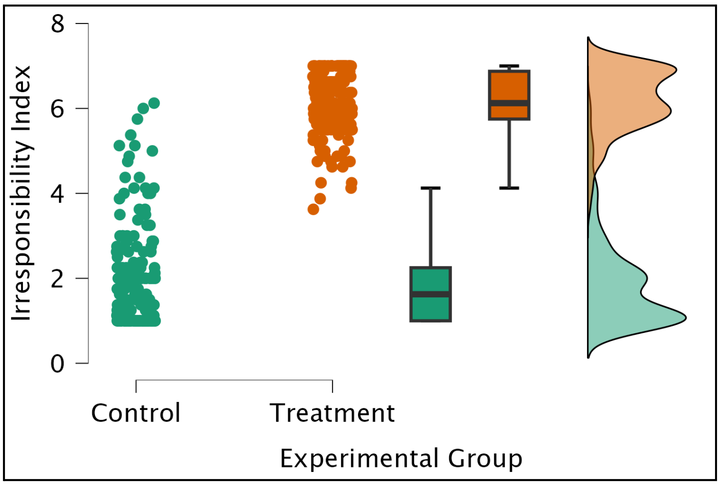
Note. Median (*Mdn*) and interquartile range (*IQR*) are reported. U = Mann-Whitney U statistic; r_{rb} = rank-biserial correlation.

As shown in Table 7, participants in the treatment condition reported significantly higher perceived irresponsibility (*Mdn* = 6.13, *IQR* = 1.13) than those in the control condition (*Mdn* = 1.63, *IQR* = 1.25), $U = 342$, $p < 0.001$, $r_{rb} = 0.98$. This indicates that the manipulation was highly effective. No significant difference between groups was observed for job satisfaction ($p = 0.090$), confirming that both groups began with equivalent baseline levels of satisfaction.

Figure 5 visually presents the large difference in perceived irresponsibility between conditions, which complements the statistical result and clearly demonstrates the success of the manipulation.

Figure 5

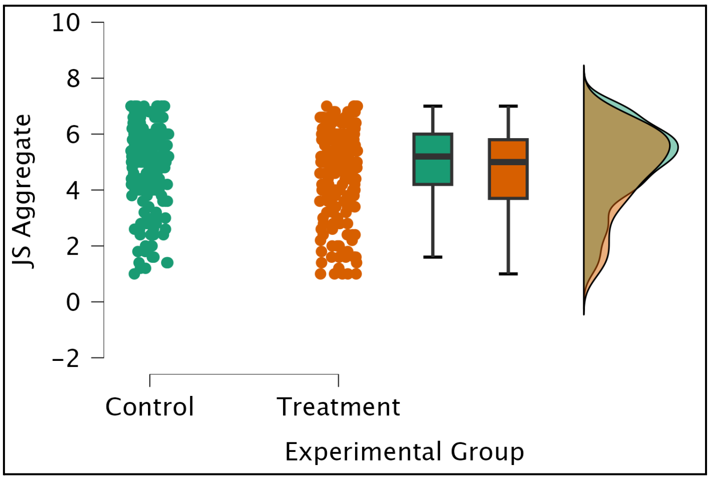
Irresponsibility Index Manipulation Check



Note. The raincloud plot includes individual data points, boxplots showing medians and interquartile ranges, and half-violin densities representing the underlying distribution.

Figure 6

Job Satisfaction Similarity Baseline



Note. The raincloud plot includes individual data points, boxplots showing medians and interquartile ranges, and half-violin densities representing the underlying distribution.

Figure 6 presents the similar distributions for job satisfaction between control and treatment groups, confirming similar pre-existing attitudes towards participant's employers.

6.4 H1 - H3: Between-Group Comparison of Commitment Dimensions

To examine whether exposure to corporate irresponsibility had an impact as hypothesized on affective and normative commitment, Mann–Whitney U tests were conducted comparing the treatment and control groups. Then a Bayesian Mann-Whitney U test was performed to examine the null effect on continuance commitment. However, the paper presents the findings of continuance commitment first for structural purposes.

Opposing the H3 hypothesis, the Bayesian Mann-Whitney U test provided strong evidence for a difference between control and treatment groups ($BF_{01} \approx 0.06$). Descriptively, the median for continuance commitment was lower in the CSI condition (Mdn = 4.25, IQR = 2.00) compared to the control condition (*Mdn* = 4.00 , *IQR* = 2.00). Given this evidence for a difference, a classical Mann-Whitney U test was performed to quantify the effect, which indicated that continuance commitment was significantly lower in the CSI condition ($U = 23455$, $p = 0.001$, $r_{rb} = -0.17$). This reflects a small effect size and indicates a significant decrease in continuance commitment, which together with the Bayesian results, rejects H3 (see Appendix B for Bayesian table).

Table 8

Mann-Whitney U Tests for Affective and Normative Commitment

Variable	Control (Mdn, IQR)	Treatment (Mdn, IQR)	U	p	r_{rb}
AC	3.50 (2.75)	2.75 (1.75)	25165	< 0.001	-0.26
NC	3.75 (2.25)	2.75 (1.75)	26782	< 0.001	-0.34
CC	4.25 (2.00)	4.00 (2.00)	23455	0.001	-0.17

Note. Values represent medians and interquartile ranges. Group differences were tested using Mann–Whitney U tests; r_{rb} denotes effect size. All p-values are two-tailed.

Participants exposed to the CSI scenario scored significantly lower on affective commitment ($U = 25165$, $p < 0.001$, $r_{rb} = -0.26$), supporting H1, and reflecting a small-to-medium effect size. Finally, participants also scored significantly lower on normative commitment ($U = 26782$, $p < 0.001$, $r = -0.34$), supporting H2, reflecting a medium effect size. Table 8 reports the results of the Mann-Whitney U tests on all employees' commitment dimensions including medians, interquartile ranges, and effect sizes (r_{rb}).

Across all three dimensions, the pattern was consistent: exposure to corporate irresponsibility was associated with lower organizational commitment relative to the control condition, although the magnitude of this reduction varied across commitment dimensions.

6.5 Relationships Among Study Variables

Spearman's correlation coefficients were computed to examine the relationships between perceived CSI, commitment dimensions, and job satisfaction. Table 9 displays the full correlation matrix.

Table 9

Spearman's Correlations Among Study Variables

Variable	Irresponsibility Index	AC	NC	CC	JS
Irresponsibility Index	–				
AC	-0.32***	–			
NC	-0.39***	0.84***	–		
CC	-0.16**	0.36***	0.41***	–	
JS	-0.13**	0.47***	0.44***	0.02	–

Note. Spearman's rho correlations are reported. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Perceived CSI correlated negatively with affective commitment (ρ = -0.32, p < 0.001), normative commitment (ρ = -0.39, p < 0.001), and continuance commitment (ρ = -0.16, p = 0.002). Among the three commitment dimensions, the correlations with affective and normative commitment were comparatively stronger than the correlation with continuance commitment. Job satisfaction correlated positively with affective commitment (ρ = 0.47) and normative commitment (ρ = 0.44), while showing no meaningful association with continuance commitment (ρ = 0.02). Overall, the correlation matrix provides a descriptive overview of the relationships between the study variables and clarifies the strength and direction of their bivariate associations before the moderation analyses.

6.6 H4a - H4b: Moderation Analysis via Hierarchical Regression

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to test whether job satisfaction moderates the relationship between perceived CSI and each dimension of organizational commitment. Control variables (age, gender, tenure) were entered in Model 1, CSI and job satisfaction in Model 2, and the interaction term (CSI × Job Satisfaction) in Model 3. The final models (Step 3) are reported below for each commitment dimension.

6.7.1 Affective Commitment

Table 10 presents the regression results predicting affective commitment

Table 10

Hierarchical Regression Predicting Affective Commitment

Predictor	β	t	p
Age	0.017	0.343	0.732
Gender (Female)	–	-2.346	0.019
Gender (Other)	–	1.624	0.105
Tenure	0.166	3.266	0.001
CSI (centered)	-0.221	-5.406	< 0.001
JS (centered)	0.485	11.872	< 0.001
CSI × JS (interaction)	-0.213	-5.258	< 0.001

Model summary: $R^2 = 0.382$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.044$, $f^2 = 0.071$, $N = 400$.

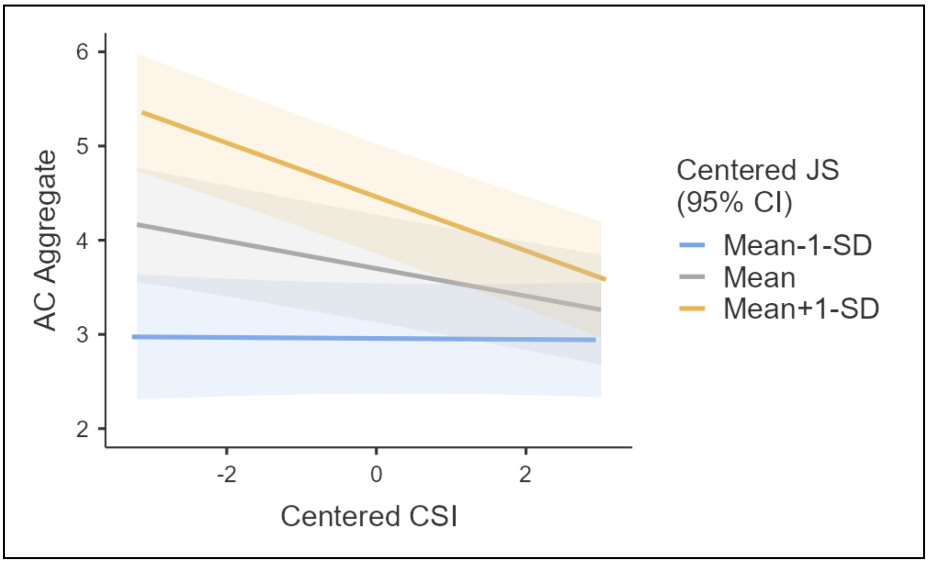
Note. β = standardized beta coefficient. CSI = Corporate Social Irresponsibility. CSI and Job Satisfaction were mean-centered before computing the interaction. Gender is dummy-coded with Male as a reference category.

Table 10 presents the results of the hierarchical regression predicting affective commitment. The final model explained 38% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.381$). Both CSI ($\beta = -0.221$, $p < 0.001$) and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.49$, $p < 0.001$) were significant predictors. Additionally tenure was also a significant predictor within the final regression model ($\beta = 0.166$, $p = 0.001$). Importantly, the interaction between CSI and job satisfaction was also significant ($\beta = -0.21$, $p < 0.001$), with a ΔR^2 of 0.044 and an associated effect size of $f^2 = 0.071$ (Refer Appendix B for R^2 Tables).

To aid interpretation of this interaction, a simple slopes plot is included, illustrating how the relationship between perceived CSI and affective commitment differs at higher versus lower levels of job satisfaction.

Figure 7

Simple slopes of the interaction between CSI and job satisfaction predicting affective commitment.



Note. Predicted values of affective commitment are shown at -1 SD, mean, and +1 SD levels of job satisfaction, with 95% confidence intervals.

To illustrate the significant interaction between CSI and job satisfaction, simple slopes were examined and plotted (Figure 7). The predicted values of affective commitment are shown at low (-1 SD), mean, and high (+1 SD) levels of job satisfaction. As displayed in Figure 7, the slopes vary in steepness across moderator levels. At high job satisfaction, affective commitment decreases more sharply as CSI increases, whereas at the mean level of job satisfaction the decline is more moderate. At low job satisfaction, the simple slope was shallow and nonsignificant, indicating minimal change in affective commitment across levels of CSI. These differences in slope visually reflect the significant CSI*Job Satisfaction interaction identified in the regression analysis. The significant interaction between CSI and job satisfaction indicates that H4a is supported.

6.7.2 Normative Commitment

Table 11 presents the regression results predicting normative commitment. Table 11 displays the regression results predicting normative commitment. The final model accounted for 35% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.350$). CSI (β = -0.30, $p < 0.001$) and job satisfaction (β = 0.44, $p < 0.001$) emerged as significant predictors. The interaction term was also significant (β = -0.17,

p < 0.001), contributing an additional 2.7% of explained variance ($\Delta R^2 = 0.027$) with an effect size of $f^2 = 0.042$.

Table 11

Hierarchical Regression Predicting Normative Commitment

Predictor	β	t	p
Age	-0.041	-0.79	0.43
Gender (Female)	–	-1.891	0.059
Gender (Other)	–	1.095	0.274
Tenure	0.091	1.746	0.082
CSI (centered)	-0.296	-7.073	< 0.001
JS (centered)	0.435	10.399	< 0.001
CSI × JS (interaction)	-0.168	-4.049	< 0.001

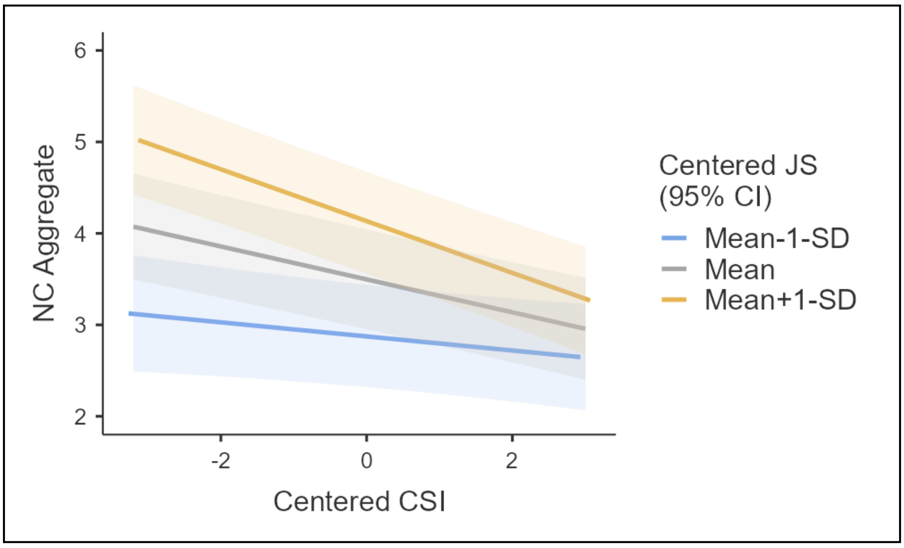
Model summary: $R^2 = 0.350$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.027$, $f^2 = 0.042$, N = 400.

Note. β = standardized beta coefficient. CSI = Corporate Social Irresponsibility. CSI and Job Satisfaction were mean-centered before computing the interaction. Gender is dummy-coded with Male as a reference category.

A simple slopes plot is presented below to visualize the interaction, showing how job satisfaction conditions the association between perceived CSI and normative commitment. Across all three levels of job satisfaction, normative commitment decreases as CSI increases. However, the downward slope is visibly steeper among employees with higher job satisfaction, moderately steep at mean levels of job satisfaction, and comparatively flatter among those reporting lower job satisfaction. Confidence intervals are shown around each line to illustrate the estimated precision of these slopes. The significant interaction term demonstrates support for H4b.

Figure 8

Simple slopes of the interaction between CSI and job satisfaction predicting normative commitment.



Note. Predicted values of normative commitment are shown at low -1 SD, mean, and +1 SD levels of job satisfaction, with 95% confidence intervals.

6.6.3 Continuance Commitment

Table 12 presents the regression results predicting continuance commitment.

Table 12

Hierarchical Regression Predicting Continuance Commitment

Predictor	β	t	p
Age	0.010	0.158	0.875
Gender (Female)	–	0.039	0.969
Gender (Other)	–	0.634	0.526
Tenure	0.091	1.952	0.052
CSI (centered)	-0.296	-3.251	0.001
JS (centered)	0.024	0.482	0.630
CSI × JS (interaction)	-0.021	-0.42	0.675

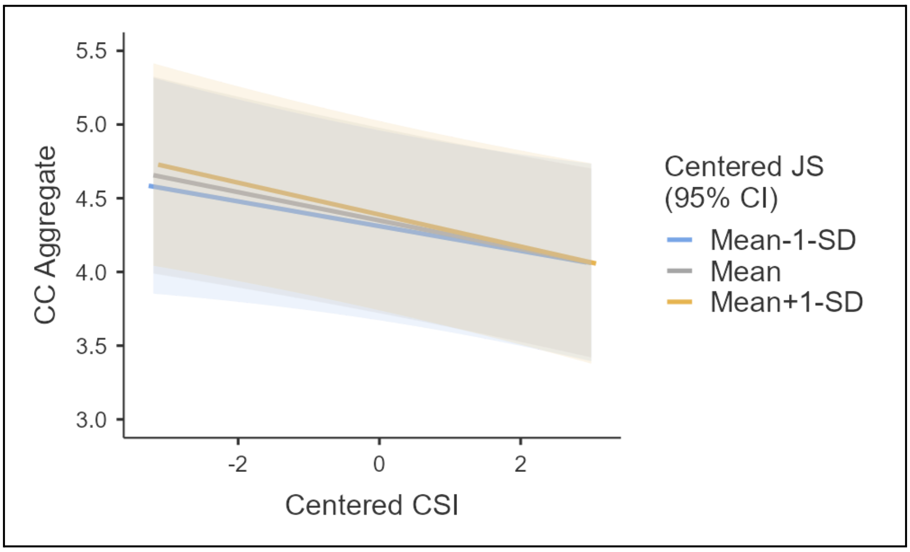
Model summary: $R^2 = 0.045$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.00$, $f^2 = 0.000$, N = 400.

Note. β = standardized beta coefficient. CSI = Corporate Social Irresponsibility. CSI and Job Satisfaction were mean-centered before computing the interaction. Gender is dummy-coded with Male as a reference category.

Table 12 summarizes the regression results for continuance commitment. The final model explained 4.5% of the variance (R^2 = 0.045). CSI had a small negative association with continuance commitment (β = -0.17, p = 0.001), while job satisfaction (β = 0.02, p = 0.630) and the interaction term (β = -0.02, p = 0.675) were not significant. The change in explained variance because of the interaction was effectively zero (ΔR^2 = 0.00; f^2 = 0.00). A simple slopes plot for continuance commitment is presented in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Simple slopes of the interaction between CSI and job satisfaction predicting continuance commitment.



Note. Predicted values of continuance commitment are shown at -1 SD, mean, and +1 SD levels of job satisfaction, with 95% confidence intervals.

Across all three levels of job satisfaction, continuance commitment shows a slight decline as CSI increases. The slopes for low, mean, and high job satisfaction are nearly parallel, indicating minimal variation in how CSI relates to continuance commitment across different levels of job satisfaction. Shaded confidence intervals are included around each line to illustrate the precision of the estimated slopes. Because the interaction term was not significant, H4c is supported.

To provide an overview of the empirical outcomes described in this chapter, Table 13 summarizes each hypothesis and whether it was supported by the empirical findings.

Table 13

Summary of Hypotheses and Empirical Support

Hypothesis	Description	Supported?
H1	Exposure to corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) decreases employees' affective commitment.	Yes
H2	Exposure to CSI decreases employees' normative commitment.	Yes
H3	Exposure to CSI does not significantly affect employees' continuance commitment.	No
H4a	Job satisfaction moderates the relationship between CSI and affective commitment.	Yes
H4b	Job satisfaction moderates the relationship between CSI and normative commitment.	Yes
H4c	Job satisfaction does not moderate the relationship between CSI and continuance commitment.	Yes

7. Discussion

7.1 CSI’s effect on organizational commitment

The study seeks to answer our research question, How does exposure to Corporate Social Irresponsibility affect employees’ organizational commitment? The findings suggest that corporate social irresponsibility negatively influences employee’s organizational commitment, in respect to all three constructs. However, these need to be interpreted with caution. Across all analyses, employees exposure to CSI reduces levels of affective and normative commitment moderately, and decreases continuance commitment comparatively less. Employees are affectively and normatively less committed when their organization acts socially irresponsible, because theoretical perspectives suggest that CSI represents a morally and psychologically disruptive event, threatening employees’ perceived ethical climate, and psychological contract. Even though these mechanisms were not directly measured, it offers a plausible explanation for the causal relationship.

However, contradictory to the established theory, exposure to corporate social irresponsibility also decreased employee’s commitment driven by perceived costs of leaving towards their organization (continuance commitment). Even though there is no theoretical evidence backing this observation, there are multiple logical discussions that can be held around this finding. Severe events such as the one measured in the study could change an employee’s perception of cost-benefit, making staying feel more costly than leaving, especially if their own organization committed an event perceived as severe, as described in the findings. This in turn makes employees feel less committed within the continuance dimension. Additionally, a majority of survey measures document respondents’ emotions and perceptions, these may contaminate the continuance commitment responses which are usually representation of objective reasoning. For example, a continuance commitment item that asks: “Right now, staying with my organization is as much a necessity as a desire”, may be interpreted as “I definitely do not desire to stay here”, by employees. These reasonings are partly supported by our empirical findings, as the continuance commitment scale displayed notably lower internal consistency compared to the affective and normative commitment scales. Such differences may indicate that respondents interpret continuance items with less coherence, especially under high stress situations. Overall, the exposure of corporate social irresponsibility and its effects on employees’ continuance commitment, should be treated as a finding that requires further exploration, through a more nuanced approach.

7.2 Job Satisfaction's Moderating Role

According to the regression models, the findings also suggest that job satisfaction plays a meaningful role in shaping these responses, particularly moderating the effect on affective and normative commitment, while showing no moderating effect on continuance commitment, as hypothesized. These findings are well aligned with recent research (Allan et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2019; Licandro et al., 2025), stating that job satisfaction can moderate the effect of negative experiences, especially on employees' emotional attachment and obligation with staying at a company. Additionally the direction of job satisfaction's moderation, shows that job satisfaction amplifies the negative effect of corporate social irresponsibility on affective and normative commitment.

The simple slopes analysis further suggests that CSI drops employees' affective and normative commitment the most when they are highly satisfied, whereas employees with low job satisfaction, remain having lower affective and normative commitment regardless of exposure to corporate social irresponsibility. These effects align with research on psychological contract breach (Bal et al., 2008), as employees may feel more betrayed by a breach because of higher expectations and stronger emotional investments prior to the CSI event. This also explains why job satisfaction does not moderate the relationship between CSI and employees' calculative attachment towards an organization (continuance commitment). Regardless of one's satisfaction with their job, the effect of CSI and continuance commitment remains constant across all employees, because one's expectations and relational investment are already low.

Finally, even though tenure's standardized beta findings were significant, the overall variance explained by this initial model (see Appendix B), was minimal, hence concluding that demographic variables do not play a significant role in shaping employees' organizational commitment when exposed to corporate social irresponsibility.

All together, these findings provide a clear answer to the paper's research question, by demonstrating how exposure to CSI decreases affective and normative commitment, while also decreasing continuance commitment, a finding that should be treated with caution as it diverges from theoretical explanations and requires further investigation. Finally job satisfaction amplifies the negative relationship for affective and normative commitment, while having no moderating effect on continuance commitment.

7.3 Theoretical Contributions

In terms of theoretical contributions, this paper advances theory in five distinct ways. First, as mentioned in the introduction the study addresses a causal demonstration of the effects of corporate social irresponsibility on organizational commitment dimensions. This contribution is integral to driving research forward within the space of CSI. Similar literature has been covered for CSI's counterpart, corporate social responsibility, however, instead of relying on transferable assumptions that could be made from that area of literature, our study provides the foundation based on empirical evidence for exploring the relationship between corporate social responsibility and organizational commitment. Mediating variables were intentionally omitted, while testing these relationships, as the purpose of this study was first to establish whether a direct relationship existed before examining specific mechanisms that might mediate it.

Second, our research extends the theory around organizational commitment, by elaborating on the consequences of a negative event towards the commitment dimensions. Even though our hypotheses were grounded in theory, our findings surrounding continuance commitment is especially notable as it rejects theoretical explanations within the experimental parameters of our study. This calls for further discussions around Meyer & Allen's continuance commitment scale, especially in relationship with a high-stress event. Third, our study contributes to existing job satisfaction literature, by reporting job satisfaction acting as an amplifier in a negative event for employees' affective and normative commitment. Job satisfaction's moderating role within the relationship between CSI and continuance commitment, is just as important to existing literature as it confirms that calculative decisions for staying at a company are not moderated by an employee's satisfaction with their job in the event of CSI.

Fourth, our study expands theoretical research through our methodological approach. Few studies adopt an experimental approach, in order to obtain data that has high ecological validity. However, the design of this study prioritized internal validity, and generalizability across Europe and several industries through a randomized experimental approach, offering insights on a greater generalizable population, rather than a specific industry or narrowed region as conducted in other research. Finally, our theoretical framework itself is a great contribution to driving CSI and organizational commitment research forward, as it brings together different concepts from several social psychological domains to present a unique perspective on the causal relationship between corporate social irresponsibility and organizational commitment dimensions. Overall these theoretical contributions, provide a clear gap in the literature providing insights that prior research had not empirically established.

7.4 Managerial Implications

Our empirical findings also have multiple managerial implications that need to be addressed. First, our findings suggest that corporate social irresponsibility immediately damages employees' organizational commitment. Employees' affective and normative commitment drop, and managers should understand that such misconduct has internal consequences across the entire organization. Employees lose trust, emotional attachment and the moral obligation to stay. Even though interpretations need to be done with caution our study also suggests that continuance commitment decreases, further emphasizing that pursuing actions that benefit shareholders at the expense of stakeholder wellbeing, has negative outcomes even for employees who normally stay for practicality reasons. Consequences of low organisational commitment, include higher turnover intention for employees, as outlined in the literature, meaning that higher managers must realize that corporate social irresponsibility destabilizes employee retention regardless of age, gender, and tenure at the company.

Additionally, our findings also imply that shareholders, as well as human resource departments, have to acknowledge that so-called "good jobs" are not protected from corporate social irresponsibility. High job satisfaction does not buffer the effects of CSI, and instead amplifies them in employees' affective and normative commitments. Relying on high job satisfaction scores at an organization or other HR practices that are supposed to increase an employee's satisfaction does not shield firms from the negative consequences of corporate social irresponsibility. Hence, higher management should consider the effects of a corporate decision, instead of deciding on an outcome that pre-emptively benefits shareholders. All together, the consequences establish that the cost of CSI and the toll it has on employees, is detrimental to the organization.

After considering these tensions between shareholder and stakeholder perspectives, organizations should implement proactive governance practices to mitigate the impact of CSI on employees' organizational commitment. Such practices may include transparent communication with employees about the CSI incident and rapid corrective actions when possible. To reduce the likelihood of CSI occurring in the first place, organizations should strengthen ethical norms and establish accessible channels for reporting unethical behavior.

Finally, organizations would benefit from an internal CSI scorecard, inspired by the Multi-Layered Linear CSI-CSR scale proposed by Jones et al. (2009), that guides executives and senior management around their uncertainties. Organizations may adapt these scales to their context, ideally through a third-party, or a collaborative approach, helping decision-makers evaluate how CSI or CSR leaning their decisions are, when deciding across multiple dimensions of responsible conduct. It should be emphasised, however, that these recommendations are based on practical reasoning rather than empirical evidence.

Overall, the purpose of presenting these implications is to clarify that this study aims to contribute to healthier and more responsible workplaces. Our intention is not to provide companies with the tools to anticipate employee reactions while continuing to engage in irresponsible practices, but rather to strengthen leaders' understanding of the consequences their decisions may have on employees' commitment and well-being. By highlighting these outcomes, the study encourages organizations to avoid corporate social irresponsibility altogether, and take more ethically grounded decisions, siding with the perspective of stakeholder theory.

7.5 Limitations and Future Research Directions

While the study offers valuable insights into the effects of corporate social irresponsibility on organizational commitment, it is not without its limitations. These limitations provide avenues for future research to refine and extend our findings. First it is important to highlight that the experimental design prioritized internal reliability and validity. Given the findings of continuance commitment contradicting the hypothesis, it would benefit from further investigations by isolating continuance from affective and normative commitment.

Second, since the study was conducted anonymously, without any link to participants' employing organization, the findings may not fully replicate in a firm-specific environment. Employees responding within their organization might feel pressured to answer commitment items in a socially desirable way, potentially inflating scores. Although this limitation may initially suggest reduced external validity, it also highlights the value of our approach: anonymity allows participants to express their genuine reactions to CSI without fear of repercussions, offering insights that may be difficult to obtain in organizational contexts. Additionally, employees do not experience the work place in a vacuum. The study analyzed CSI's effects on employees' organizational commitment, isolated from relationships with colleagues. Potential effects of communal decision making across colleagues may affect how the incident is internalized by employees. For these reasons it may interest researchers to conduct a study within an organization-specific context to compare the results with the ones found in this paper.

Third, the experiment conducted only evaluates the reactions of employees at a specific point in time. The findings suggest that employees' affective, normative, and continuance commitment decrease immediately after exposure of CSI, however, the study does not address how this reaction develops over time. Future research may conduct longitudinal studies, to observe potential changes in the organizational commitment dimensions in the long term after CSI exposure, or how commitment changes after exposure towards multiple incidents of corporate social irresponsibility. Fourth the study only evaluated one form of CSI, and that is within the context of data privacy and its breach towards the organization's customers. Although the paper argues that the findings are broadly generalizable across different forms of CSI, future research would still benefit from examining additional types of CSI, including those directed specifically at internal stakeholders. Additionally, according to literature, varying regions across the world experience work differently (Wu et al., 2022; Fila & Wilson, 2018). Given that the study's sample size was collected from a European population, generalizability of the results are confined within European work culture. To generalize the results or understand the dynamics of CSI and its impact on organizational commitment in other parts of the world, it is recommended that future research aims to replicate this study in other regions.

It is also important to address the conceptual model and the treatment of the independent variables within this study. Organizational commitment as brought forth by Meyer and Allen (1991), is devised as a framework that argues for three distinct constructs making up an employee's commitment towards their organization. The study adopted a similar approach to measuring organizational commitment, because of its highly researched profile. However, given the high correlations between affective, normative, and continuance commitment, further research could explore the extent to which the commitment dimensions explain variance in one another. Additionally, future research could also explore the moderating effect of job satisfaction with the Job Descriptive Index instead of the Job in General scale. This could provide insight into which specific job satisfaction facets moderate the relationship between CSI and employees' organizational commitment. Finally, the inherent biases as authors of this paper. Even though the study is well argued for through literature and theory, any future research attempting to replicate the study, is valuable in itself, by providing further evidence of the findings in this study as well as contributing to research within the underexplored field of corporate social irresponsibility, and organization commitment.

8. Conclusion

The thesis examines how exposure to corporate social irresponsibility impacts employees' organizational commitment, a gap in prior research that had not been established, through causal evidence. Using a randomized experimental design, the results showed that CSI decreases an employee's affective and normative commitment, and unexpectedly, also minimally reduces continuance commitment. While the latter finding diverges from theory, it highlights the need to reconsider how calculative attachments function under morally charged and high-stress situations. Additionally, the study demonstrated that job satisfaction moderates employees' reactions to CSI, intensifying the decrease in affective and normative commitment, but showing no moderating effect on continuance commitment. This confirms the idea that employees who are more satisfied with their jobs experience lower emotional attachment and feel less obliged to stay at their company when exposed to corporate social irresponsibility, whereas the calculative ties appear less dependent on employees' initial satisfaction levels.

This study contributes to the growing body of research on CSI by establishing a direct causal link between CSI and the three commitment dimensions, providing a foundation for future research that could investigate and incorporate underlying mechanisms, such as psychological contract breach and ethical climate, replicate our study in a different context, or experimentally isolate continuance commitment to re-examine CSI's affect on this construct. Practically, CSI has immediate internal consequences for employees' organizational commitment. Rather than offering the tools for managing employee reactions, this study emphasizes the importance of avoiding irresponsible behavior entirely. Understanding how harmful CSI is for employees' commitment to the organization should encourage decision-makers to prioritize stakeholder well-being.

In conclusion, this thesis demonstrates corporate social irresponsibility's disruptive impact on employees' commitment and highlights the conditions under which these effects intensify. By combining empirical evidence with theoretical reflections, the thesis contributes to building a more comprehensive understanding of how corporate social irresponsibility erodes the foundations of employee-organization relationships and underscores the value of responsible, grounded managerial decision-making.

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10. Appendix

Appendix A - Pre-Test

Table A1. *Descriptive Statistics of Pre-Test Measures*

	Aggregate Harm		Aggregate Moral		Irresponsibility Index	
	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment
Valid	20	20	20	20	20	20
Mean	2.138	5.975	1.863	6.725	2	6.35
Std. Deviation	1.557	1.153	1.438	0.397	1.485	0.714
Shapiro-Wilk	0.767	0.822	0.666	0.697	0.719	0.838
P-value of Shapiro-Wilk	< .001	0.002	< .001	< .001	< .001	0.003
Minimum	1	3.25	1	6	1	4.625
Maximum	6.75	7	6.5	7	6.625	7

Table A2. *Cronbach's a: Internal Reliability of Measures*

			95% CI	
	Estimate	Std. Error	Lower	Upper
Harm	0.991	0.003	0.984	0.997
Moral Violation	0.993	0.01	0.974	1.013
Job Satisfaction	0.903	0.032	0.841	0.965

Table A3. *Non Parametric Mann Whitney U Test*

	U	df	p	Rank-Biserial Correlation	SE Rank-Biserial Correlation
Irresponsibility Index	10.5		< .001	0.948	0.183
JS Aggregate	193		0.43	0.035	0.183

Table A4. *Descriptive Statistics Severity & Job Satisfaction*

	Severity		Job Satisfaction	
	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment
Valid	0	20	20	20
Mean	NaN	6	4.51	4.45
Std. Deviation		0.795	1.486	1.575
Minimum		4	1.2	1
Maximum		7	6.6	6.6

Appendix B - Main Test

Table B1. *Cronbach's a: Internal Reliability of Measures*

			95% CI	
Variable	Estimate	Std. Error	Lower	Upper
Affective Commitment	0.889	0.011	0.867	0.911
Normative Commitment	0.861	0.013	0.836	0.887
Continuance Commitment	0.783	0.02	0.744	0.822
Job Satisfaction	0.924	0.007	0.91	0.938
Harm	0.985	0.002	0.981	0.989
Moral Violation	0.992	0.001	0.99	0.994

Table B2. *Descriptive Statistics: Dependent Variable*

	AC Aggregate		NC Aggregate		CC Aggregate	
	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment
Valid	201	199	201	199	201	199
Median	3.5	2.75	3.75	2.75	4.25	4
Mean	3.624	2.897	3.653	2.791	4.371	3.936
Std. Deviation	1.658	1.286	1.471	1.226	1.342	1.325
IQR	2.75	1.75	2.25	1.75	2	2
Shapiro-Wilk	0.961	0.961	0.978	0.962	0.981	0.985
P-value of Shapiro-Wilk	< .001	< .001	0.003	< .001	0.008	0.028
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1.25	1
Maximum	7	7	7	6.25	7	7

Table B3. *Descriptive Statistics: Independent Variable & Moderator*

	Irresponsibility Index		JS Aggregate		Severity	
	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment
Valid	201	199	201	199	0	199
Median	1.625	6.125	5.2	5		6
Mean	1.927	6.173	4.923	4.644	NaN	5.573
Std. Deviation	1.128	0.722	1.456	1.558		1.046
IQR	1.25	1.125	1.8	2.1		1
Shapiro-Wilk	0.797	0.914	0.94	0.937	NaN[a]	0.892
P-value of Shapiro-Wilk	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	NaN[a]	< .001
Minimum	1	3.625	1	1		2
Maximum	6.125	7	7	7		7

Table B4. *Non Parametric Mann Whitney U Test: Dependent Variable*

	U	df	p	Rank-Biserial Correlation	SE Rank-Biserial Correlation
AC Aggregate	25165		< .001	-0.258	0.058
NC Aggregate	26782		< .001	-0.339	0.058
CC Aggregate	23455		0.001	-0.173	0.058

Table B5. *Non Parametric Mann Whitney U Test: Moderator & Independent Variable*

	U	df	p	Rank-Biserial Correlation	SE Rank-Biserial Correlation
JS Aggregate	21955.5		0.955	-0.098	0.058
Irresponsibility Index	342		< .001	0.983	0.058

Table B6. *Bayesian Mann-Whitney U Tests for Continuance Commitment*

	BF_{01}	W	Rhat
CC Aggregate	0.062	23455	1

Note. Result based on data augmentation algorithm with 5 chains of 1000 iterations.

Table B7. *Coefficient of Determination: Affective Commitment*

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	RMSE
M_0	0	0	0	1.53
M_1	0.172	0.029	0.02	1.515
M_2	0.582	0.338	0.328	1.254
M_3	0.618	0.382	0.371	1.213

M1: Tenure, Age, Gender
M2: Tenure, Age, Gender, Mean Centered CSI, Mean Centered JS
M3: Tenure, Age, Gender, Mean Centered CSI, Mean Centered JS, JS × CSI Interaction

Table B8. *ANOVA Affective Commitment*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
M_1	Regression	26.65	4	6.662	2.892	0.022
	Residual	898.29	390	2.303		
	Total	924.94	394			
M_2	Regression	312.87	6	52.145	33.055	< .001
	Residual	612.07	388	1.578		
	Total	924.94	394			
M_3	Regression	353.48	7	50.498	34.198	< .001
	Residual	571.46	387	1.477		
	Total	924.94	394			

Table B9. *Beta Coefficients: Affective Commitment*

Model		Unstandardized	Standard Error	Standardized[a]	t	p	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance	VIF
M_0	(Intercept)	3.272	0.077		42.436	< .001		
M_1	(Intercept)	3.269	0.287		11.38	< .001		
	Tenure	0.036	0.012	0.188	2.957	0.003	0.784	1.275
	Age	-0.007	0.008	-0.055	-0.87	0.385	0.786	1.273
	$Gender^{Female}$	-0.07	0.157		-0.443	0.658	0.996	1.004
	$Gender^{Other}$	1.122	1.082		1.037	0.3		
M_2	(Intercept)	3.082	0.238		12.942	< .001		
	Tenure	0.03	0.01	0.158	2.996	0.003	0.782	1.279
	Age	7.867×10^{-4}	0.007	0.006	0.117	0.907	0.782	1.278
	$Gender^{Female}$	-0.256	0.131		-1.947	0.052	0.99	1.01
	$Gender^{Other}$	1.489	0.897		1.659	0.098		
	Centered IR	-0.168	0.028	-0.255	-6.099	< .001	0.986	1.014
	Centered JS	0.469	0.043	0.466	11.021	< .001	0.977	1.023
M_3	(Intercept)	2.999	0.231		12.987	< .001		
	Tenure	0.031	0.01	**0.163**	3.18	**0.002**	0.782	1.279
	Age	0.002	0.007	0.016	0.306	0.76	0.782	1.279
	$Gender^{Female}$	-0.3	0.127		-2.354	0.019	0.989	1.011
	$Gender^{Other}$	1.394	0.868		1.605	0.109		
	Centered IR	-0.144	0.027	**-0.219**	-5.326	**< .001**	0.972	1.029
	Centered JS	0.491	0.041	**0.488**	11.869	**< .001**	0.972	1.029
	JS x IR Interaction	-0.093	0.018	**-0.214**	-5.245	**< .001**	0.979	1.021

Table B10. *Coefficient of Determination: Normative Commitment*

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	RMSE
M_0	0	0	0	1.422
M_1	0.102	0.01	0	1.422
M_2	0.567	0.322	0.312	1.18
M_3	0.591	0.349	0.338	1.158

M1: Tenure, Age, Gender
M2: Tenure, Age, Gender, Mean Centered CSI, Mean Centered JS
M3: Tenure, Age, Gender, Mean Centered CSI, Mean Centered JS, JS × CSI Interaction

Table B11. *ANOVA Normative Commitment*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
M_1	Regression	7.37	4	1.843	0.909	0.459
	Residual	790.572	390	2.027		
	Total	797.942	394			
M_2	Regression	255.681	6	42.613	30.491	< .001
	Residual	542.261	388	1.398		
	Total	797.942	394			
M_3	Regression	277.46	7	39.637	29.472	< .001
	Residual	520.482	387	1.345		
	Total	797.942	394			

Table B12. *Beta Coefficients: Normative Commitment*

							Collinearity Statistics	
Model		Unstandardized	Standard Error	Standardized[a]	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
M_0	(Intercept)	3.228	0.072		45.088	< .001		
M_1	(Intercept)	3.557	0.27		13.199	< .001		
	Age	-0.012	0.008	-0.1	-1.564	0.119	0.786	1.273
	Tenure	0.019	0.011	0.107	1.671	0.095	0.784	1.275
	$\text{Gender}^{\text{Female}}$	-0.047	0.148		-0.32	0.749	0.996	1.004
	$\text{Gender}^{\text{Other}}$	0.533	1.015		0.525	0.6		
M_2	(Intercept)	3.383	0.224		15.09	< .001		
	Age	-0.005	0.006	-0.043	-0.797	0.426	0.782	1.278
	Tenure	0.015	0.009	0.084	1.57	0.117	0.782	1.279
	$\text{Gender}^{\text{Female}}$	-0.201	0.124		-1.622	0.106	0.99	1.01
	$\text{Gender}^{\text{Other}}$	0.952	0.845		1.128	0.26		
	Centered IR	-0.195	0.026	-0.319	-7.524	< .001	0.986	1.014
	Centered JS	0.394	0.04	0.421	9.821	< .001	0.977	1.023
M_3	(Intercept)	3.322	0.22		15.071	< .001		
	Age	-0.004	0.006	-0.035	-0.67	0.503	0.782	1.279
	Tenure	0.015	0.009	0.087	1.664	0.097	0.782	1.279
	$\text{Gender}^{\text{Female}}$	-0.233	0.122		-1.916	0.056	0.989	1.011
	$\text{Gender}^{\text{Other}}$	0.883	0.829		1.066	0.287		
	Centered IR	-0.178	0.026	**-0.291**	-6.879	**< .001**	0.972	1.029
	Centered JS	0.41	0.04	**0.438**	10.371	**< .001**	0.972	1.029
	JS x IR Interaction	-0.068	0.017	**-0.169**	-4.024	**< .001**	0.979	1.021

Table B13. *Coefficient of Determination: Continuance Commitment*

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	RMSE
M_0	0	0	0	1.355
M_1	0.119	0.014	0.004	1.352
M_2	0.208	0.043	0.028	1.335
M_3	0.209	0.043	0.026	1.337

M1: Tenure, Age, Gender
M2: Tenure, Age, Gender, Mean Centered CSI, Mean Centered JS
M3: Tenure, Age, Gender, Mean Centered CSI, Mean Centered JS, JS × CSI Interaction

Table B14. *ANOVA Continuance Commitment*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
M_1	Regression	10.22	4	2.554	1.398	0.234
	Residual	712.73	390	1.828		
	Total	722.95	394			
M_2	Regression	31.13	6	5.188	2.91	0.009
	Residual	691.82	388	1.783		
	Total	722.95	394			
M_3	Regression	31.44	7	4.491	2.514	0.015
	Residual	691.51	387	1.787		
	Total	722.95	394			

Table B15. *Beta Coefficient: Continuance Commitment*

							Collinearity Statistics	
Model		Unstandardized	Standard Error	Standardized[a]	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
M_0	(Intercept)	4.159	0.068		61.028	< .001		
M_1	(Intercept)	3.965	0.256		15.495	< .001		
	Tenure	0.019	0.011	0.114	1.784	0.075	0.784	1.275
	Age	6.065×10^{-4}	0.007	0.005	0.084	0.933	0.786	1.273
	$Gender^{Female}$	0.01	0.14		0.072	0.943	0.996	1.004
	$Gender^{Other}$	0.4	0.964		0.415	0.678		
M_2	(Intercept)	3.928	0.253		15.512	< .001		
	Tenure	0.02	0.011	0.119	1.875	0.062	0.782	1.279
	Age	0.001	0.007	0.012	0.191	0.848	0.782	1.278
	$Gender^{Female}$	0.007	0.14		0.047	0.963	0.99	1.01
	$Gender^{Other}$	0.6	0.954		0.629	0.53		
	Centered IR	-0.097	0.029	-0.166	-3.297	0.001	0.986	1.014
	Centered JS	0.02	0.045	0.023	0.448	0.654	0.977	1.023

M_3	(Intercept)	3.92	0.254		15.431	< .001		
	Tenure	0.02	0.011	0.12	1.879	0.061	0.782	1.279
	Age	0.001	0.007	0.013	0.206	0.837	0.782	1.279
	Gender^{Female}	0.003	0.14		0.019	0.985	0.989	1.011
	Gender^{Other}	0.592	0.955		0.619	0.536		
	Centered IR	-0.095	0.03	**-0.162**	-3.176	**0.002**	0.972	1.029
	Centered JS	0.022	0.046	0.025	0.488	0.626	0.972	1.029
	JS x IR Interaction	-0.008	0.019	-0.021	-0.416	0.678	0.979	1.021

Appendix C - Generative AI Disclosure

We'd like to dedicate a small section of this paper to address our way of working the generative AI. Generative AI, specifically ChatGPT & Gemini, were first introduced in this project when brainstorming ideas. These ideas were vague, too optimistic, and cluttered, nevertheless, it sparked our interest to conduct research in an area that is underdeveloped. ChatGPT was also used to guide our understanding of statistics, and software selection (JASP & Jamovi). It is to be noted that no statistical analyses were made with generative AI, instead it was solely used for educational purposes to become accustomed to quantitative approaches. ChatGPT was used as a starting point for our understanding, and our understanding as well as decisions were then confirmed through our own research through online statistics handbooks, such as the one provided by JASP, and our supervisor. ChatGPT and other specific software that have generative AI features, such as Grammarly, were used for grammar and spell checking. Suggestions were accepted and continuously modified to ensure our work remained original in writing as well as thought. In times of uncertainty we critically evaluated our design through GPT Deep Research, by allowing it to point out flaws in our thinking. Once again we'd like to emphasize that not only the research design, but also our reasonings have seen many iterations that resulted from individual discussions between ourselves, as well as, discussions with our supervisor.

The most important learning we'd like to address from the usage of generative AI, are the seemingly optimistic claims it provides. Most of the claims made by generative AI, need to be confirmed manually, and iterated to ensure that the ideas are logically sound and backed by empirical evidence. From this experience, we as authors of this paper do *NOT* recommend solely relying on generative AI for any type of work, be it for grammar checking, idea generation, or guidance for statistical approaches. Original ideas should take form first, then the original can be critically evaluated with generative AI, next all outputs should be evaluated once more, iterated multiple times, and manually confirmed through classical research approaches. Finally if possible the work should be checked through guidance of a supervisor.