

Internal CSR and the decline of organised labour: a possible elective affinity?

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to explore the potential relationship between internal corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the decline of organised labour in countries of the global North. Given the opposing trends since the late 20th century and the widespread adherence of internationally recognised labour standards in CSR codes, standards, and reporting frameworks, questions arise about the disparity between CSR rhetoric and practice regarding the collective rights of in-house employees. The paper further explores the tendency in CSR scholarship to overlook violations of collective rights for in-house employees in the global North.

Design/methodology/approach – To examine whether there is an elective affinity between the rise of CSR and the decline of organised labour, the paper uses a discursive institutionalism approach, providing a meta-theoretical analysis of academic literature on internal CSR. A scoping review methodology was used to identify relevant literature and compile it into an empirical corpus for a metatheoretical analysis. The empirical corpus, consisting of 38 articles, was generated through a Google Scholar (GS) search guided by the following questions: (1) What are the dominant conceptual framings of internal CSR? (2) What are the dominant roles and practical aspects of internal CSR?

Findings – The paper identifies two key disparities in the literature: (1) between rhetoric and practice regarding the collective rights of in-house employees in the global North and (2) between the extensive CSR research on violations of collective rights of value chain workers and the limited attention to in-house employees' collective rights. The analysis highlights two factors contributing to these disparities: the integration of internal CSR into the corporate managerial toolbox and the distinction in CSR discourse between core labour standards and workplace issues. The analysis shows that internal CSR has an elective affinity with the decline of organised labour.

Research limitations/implications – While scoping reviews are often standalone studies, this paper used the methodology for its stated purpose. Limitations include the broad span of internal CSR across various academic fields and reliance solely on GS. Measures taken to enhance inclusivity were unlimited review period, refined inclusion criteria and keywords during the selection process and cross-checks of cited articles.

Social implications – Considering the implications of the decline of organised labour on workers' collective voice, poverty and the distribution gap in wealth and income, this paper suggests that for CSR to play a significant role in advancing sustainable social justice, scholars and practitioners should look at ways to reduce the disparity between rhetoric and practice regarding employees' voice and collective rights.

Originality/value – The paper lays the foundation for a better understanding of the potential links between internal CSR and the decline of organised labour. It addresses a gap in the literature on the interrelations between CSR and organised labour in the global North and proposes root causes of this gap. This contribution enriches the scarce literature exploring the potential elective affinity between CSR and transformations in the global economy and labour markets since the late 1980s. Finally, the paper deepens the understanding of the implications of CSR for employees' collective rights and voice as well as for organised labour.

Keywords Internal CSR, Elective affinity, Organised labour, Collective rights, Human resource management, Scoping review, Trade unions

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The aim of this article is to explore the possible relationship between internal corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the decline of organised labour within high-income countries, often

referred to as the “global North”. This endeavour is grounded in three understandings. Firstly, since the 1980s, most OECD countries have witnessed a decline in unionisation and union density rates ([Visser, 2012](#)). Secondly, following the documented rise and standardisation of CSR since the 1990s, measures directed towards employees have progressively become integral components of CSR policies ([Mori et al., 2016](#)). These measures are commonly framed in the literature under the umbrella term “internal CSR”, referring to managerial programmes and practices designed to address the needs, expectations and interests of internal stakeholders, with a primary focus on employees ([Farooq et al., 2017](#)).

Thirdly, while the decline of organised labour and the rise of CSR are manifested in diverse natures and scopes across countries and corporations, it is widely agreed in the literature that the impacts of economic globalisation and labour markets’ liberalisation processes have accelerated both trends ([de Bakker et al., 2020](#); [Matten and Moon, 2008](#)). Given these understandings, the questions arise: Are the inverse trajectories of CSR, specifically internal CSR, and organised labour linked? And, if so, how?

To address these questions, the article invokes the notion of “elective affinity”, which facilitates the exploration of connections between distinct phenomena that are not reducible to direct causal relationships. “Elective affinity” specifically delineates a normative and historically mutually reinforcing connection among various economic, social, political or cultural phenomena. For instance, the transition from traditional government to new-governance models – a process debated in terms of its extent and nature ([Steurer, 2013](#)) – and the rise of CSR both occurred in the 1990s. Although this temporal overlap does not imply a cause-and-effect relationship, using the concept of elective affinity allows for the development of an argument that they are distinct yet mutually reinforcing phenomena. Through this lens, the article seeks to explore the potential elective affinity between internal CSR and the decline of organised labour, with a focus on developments since the latter part of the 20th century, a period during which both trends have notably either risen or accelerated.

While considerable CSR scholarship has explored the structural dynamics of CSR’s evolution ([Gond et al., 2011](#); [Mishra, 2019](#)) and its impact on workers’ collective rights in the global South ([Anner, 2012](#); [Amaeshi et al., 2016](#); [Egels-Zandén and Merk, 2014](#)), less attention has been given to the interrelations between CSR and organised labour in countries of the global North. The distinction between the global North and South used here reflects common understandings in global value chain and CSR research. Within the former body of research, it is widely accepted that under contemporary capitalism, lead firms increasingly outsource low-value production functions to low-cost countries, while retaining control over core activities of value creation and retention in their home countries ([Horner and Nadvi, 2018](#); [Landau and Hardy, 2021](#)). In the latter, differences in welfare arrangements between established economies in the global North and emerging economies in the global South are considered significant factors in shaping CSR policies ([Rambaree, 2019](#)). Given that most CSR codes and standards refer to internationally recognised labour rights, including the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining, this omission is particularly glaring. This article aims to address this gap in the literature, contributing to both the research exploring the nexus between CSR and organised labour and the burgeoning literature on internal CSR (e.g. [Preuss et al., 2015](#); [Taghian et al., 2015](#); [Harvey et al., 2017](#); [Jackson et al., 2018](#); [Colombo et al., 2019](#); [Lee, 2021](#); [Dawkins and Youm, 2024](#)).

To achieve this aim, the article provides a meta-theoretical analysis of the academic discourse considering CSR intra-organisational policies, programmes and practices addressing employees, and examining its underlying assumptions and rationales. This analysis underscores the differing approach within CSR research concerning the disparity between rhetoric and practice regarding the collective rights of subcontractors’ workers and in-house employees.

The primary argument is that internal CSR has evolved into a strategic and managerial tool, addressing employees as individuals, thereby contributing to the weakening of their collective voice and solidarity. Specifically, it demonstrates that internal CSR is widely

perceived and constructed as a strategic and managerial tool addressing the interests of employees as individuals. By doing so, corporations seek to attract, retain and motivate employees, while simultaneously downplaying or neglecting their collective rights. Through a scoping review methodology, the article identifies two factors contributing to this gap in the literature: firstly, the development of internal CSR as a governance tool within the strategic and managerial toolbox that assists in addressing intra-organisational challenges such as employees' dissatisfaction and staff turnover (Westermann-Behaylo *et al.*, 2014; Flammer and Luo, 2017; Lu *et al.*, 2020); and secondly, the widespread belief within this discourse that in-house employees, unlike the external workforce commonly located in the global South, are immune to the risk of collective rights violations due to the solid (formal or normative) regulatory mechanisms of home countries.

By delving into the dynamics of internal CSR policies and practices, the article aims to offer nuanced insights into the potential impacts internal CSR on organised labour. This exploration is essential for understanding the broader implications of CSR on labour relations within home countries, a dimension that has received relatively less attention in the existing scholarly discourse.

The article is organised as follows: The next section introduces related literature on organised labour, CSR and internal CSR, and offer conceptual clarification of the notion of elective affinity and its use in this study. The third section presents the study's methodology, followed by a meta-theoretical analysis of the academic discourse on internal CSR in the fourth section. The fifth section discusses the potential elective affinity of internal CSR and the weakening of organised labour. The sixth and final section draws the article's conclusion and outline directions for further research.

Related literature and theoretical considerations

Corporate social responsibility and organised labour

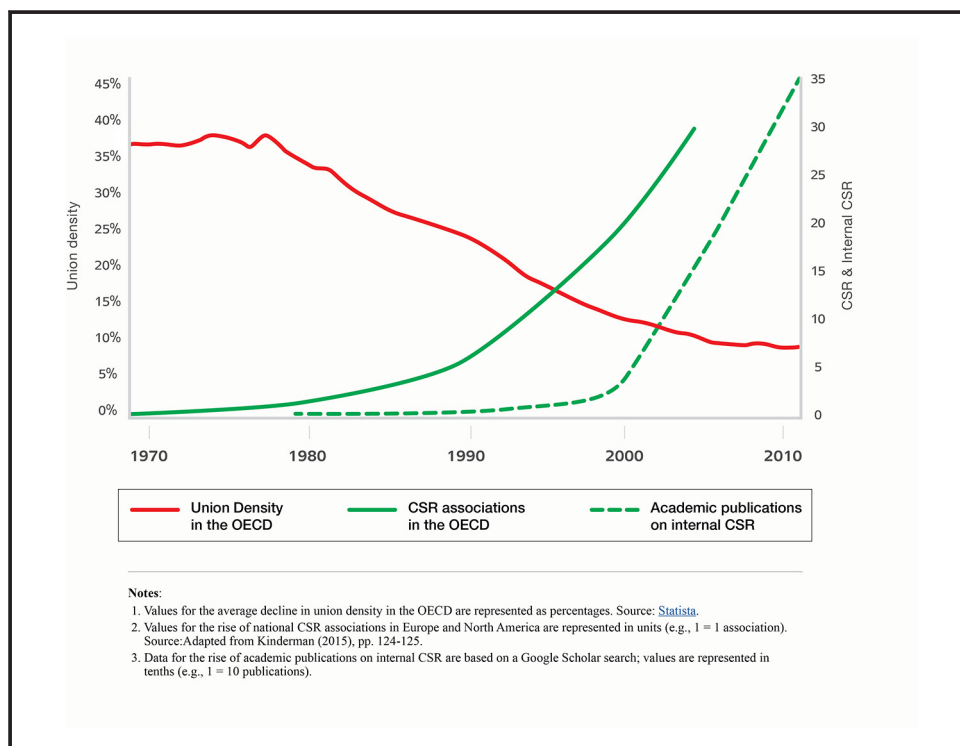
Among CSR and industrial relations scholars, there is a broad agreement that both the decline in unionisation rates and union density, and the flourishing of CSR can be attributed to fundamental socio-economic transformations in the local and global political economies of the 1980s (Gold *et al.*, 2020). Economic crises, accelerated competition between states and markets, rapid technological advances and the rise of global supply chains are considered major factors leading to far-reaching transformations in the organisation of labour worldwide (Wallerstein and Western, 2000; Munch and Olney, 2024). In response to increased competitiveness, employers opted to rely on unorganised cheap labour and unregulated labour markets to maximise their "managerial flexibility" (Kinderman, 2017). International organisations such as the OECD and IMF have pushed for labour market reforms to enhance flexibility, promoting it as essential for economic efficiency and social progress, and as beneficial for both employers and employees (Rasmussen *et al.*, 2016).

Simultaneously, the liberalisation of trade and capital flows, along with labour migration to the global North, further intensified competition in labour markets. The combined results of these processes in countries in the global North include increased de-industrialisation and a significant loss of production jobs, accompanied by the weakening of states' capacity and/or willingness to negotiate between capital and labour. This is reflected in the documented decline of union density, erosion of workers' collective voice and bargaining power (Visser, 2012; Brown, 2024). Under these circumstances, employers' ability to enforce workplace flexibility, especially in the private sector with few collective bargaining constraints, has increased. Overall, scholars suggest that these processes have contributed to the loss of political legitimacy of the corporatist model (Peters, 2012) and to a widening gap in the distribution of wealth and income (Rosenfeld, 2014).

Within CSR scholarship, these macro conditions are often seen as major catalysts in the emergence of social and consumer pressures exerted on corporations in the early 1990s to address their negative externalities (e.g. [Campbell, 2007](#); [Shabana et al., 2017](#)). Corporations' adoption of a diverse repertoire of non-binding and self-regulatory mechanisms under the banner of CSR is, therefore, understood as a response to these pressures ([Shamir, 2010](#)). At the dawn of the 21st century, with the launch of the UN Global Compact, CSR begun reaching new heights of recognition and legitimacy ([Rasche and Kell, 2010](#)). Grounded in an institutionalist approach, some scholars conceptualise the global rise and spread of CSR in terms of isomorphic processes ([Brammer et al., 2012](#)). Others, using comparative capitalism approaches, argue that the extent to which corporations adopted CSR was conditioned by national socio-economic configurations ([Matten and Moon, 2008](#); [Jackson and Rathert, 2017](#)).

This literature has led to studies examining whether CSR mirrors regulated and welfarist institutional environments or, in contrast, thrives as a substitute for absent or eroded regulatory and welfare institutions ([Kinderman and Lutter, 2018](#)). Some studies have explored the relations between trade unions and CSR, investigating the impact of unionisation and unions on CSR ([Preuss et al., 2009](#); [Preuss et al., 2015](#); [Harvey et al., 2017](#); [Colombo et al., 2019](#); [Gold et al., 2020](#); [Goerke, 2022](#); [Dawkins and Youm, 2024](#)), while others have examined the contribution of the decline of organised labour to the adoption of CSR schemes by corporations in the US and Europe, aiming to gain legitimacy with significant stakeholders ([Matten and Moon, 2008](#); [Voegtlin and Greenwood, 2016](#); [Jackson and Rathert, 2017](#)). Nevertheless, CSR scholarship often neglects the potential connections between the inverse trends of CSR and organised labour in the last decades (cf. [Kinderman, 2010](#)). [Figure 1](#) illustrates the inverse trends of CSR, including internal CSR, and organised labour over the past few decades.

Figure 1 Trends of CSR, internal CSR, and organised labour (1970-2010)



Against this backdrop, this article suggests that CSR and organised labour, more than simply occurring under the same macro socio-economic circumstances, tend to reciprocally complement and reinforce each other. This contention may appear paradoxical, given the documented institutionalisation of the internationally recognised core labour standards, including workers' collective rights, within most known and accepted CSR codes and reporting frameworks (O'Rourke, 2006; Egels-Zandén and Merk, 2014). While studies highlight consistently a disparity between rhetoric and practice regarding workers' collective rights at subcontractors' sites in host countries (Anner, 2012), such disparity has been understudied in the literature within the context of in-house employees in home countries (cf. Dawkins, 2012; Ryan and Turner, 2021). Arguably, this deficit is connected to the institutionalisation of CSR as a strategic management approach, both in scholarship and practice, in conjunction with the development of discourse and policies around internal CSR.

“Strategic CSR” and “internal CSR”

Since the 1990s, the CSR field and discourse have gradually shifted away from the conflictual macro socio-economic circumstances that have given rise to the global spread of CSR, as well as from the normative rationalisation that accompanied it. Simultaneously, CSR, both in practice and research, has increasingly been promoted and considered as a strategic managerial model (Lee, 2008). This shift, commonly addressed in terms of “the business-case for CSR” and “strategic CSR”, is manifested in the greater focus on whether and to what extent CSR impacts corporations' financial performance (Carroll and Shabana, 2010; Malik, 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2016).

Associated with this development is the rapid growth of an ESG auditing and ranking industry, reflecting the growing perception of CSR as a risk management strategy and its incorporation into advanced managerial systems (Marques-Mendes and Santos, 2016; Flammer and Luo, 2017). Along these lines, CSR is studied and implemented as a platform for mapping and mitigating reputational or business risks, including regulatory measures, consumer boycotts and employee dissatisfaction, mistrust and adverse behaviour, thereby enhancing business opportunities, such as attracting and retaining investors, customers and employees (Bhattacharya *et al.*, 2008; Godfrey *et al.*, 2009; Donnelly and Wickham, 2021; Ranjan and Dash, 2024). Overall, the strategic shift of CSR has led to the integration of its conceptual tenets into broader managerial considerations, including aspects such as branding, consumer relations and intra-firm employment issues. The latter aspect is extensively explored and discussed under the term “internal CSR” (Lee, 2021; Kim *et al.*, 2023).

The distinction between internal and external CSR arises from the institutionalisation of stakeholder theory as a dominant paradigm within the CSR field (Low, 2016; Gangi *et al.*, 2019). While an ongoing debate surrounds the nature, scope and meanings of CSR, there is a wide understanding among scholars that corporations' social responsibility involves considering the needs and interests of multiple stakeholder groups (Hawn and Ioannou, 2016; Song *et al.*, 2024). Stakeholder groups are commonly categorised into external stakeholders, which include customers, suppliers, governments, the media, financial institutions, competitors and trade unions, and internal stakeholders, which consist of employees, management and owners. This categorisation has fuelled the growing research on internal CSR, analysed in the fourth section, which focuses on policies and practices related to working environment and needs of employees (Farooq *et al.*, 2014).

Elective affinity: a conceptual note

To explore the potential linkage between the rise of CSR and the decline of organised labour, this study uses the Weberian concept of “elective affinity”. As a rationale for inquiry, elective affinity facilitates the examination of complex phenomena and processes of social change or institutionalisation. It highlights dynamic interrelations among distinct and

contingent social, political, economic and cultural institutions, practices and structures. These interrelations are characterised by intricate and reinforcing interconnectivity, fostering the emergence or institutionalisation of socio-economic systems. As such, they cannot be captured by statistical correlation, unlike empirical causality or coincidental relationships (Löwy, 1992).

Affirming elective affinity involves analysing the internal logic and organising principles of the social phenomena at hand, unlike causal relations, which arguably require the unfeasible task of isolating and generalising certain conditions out of the myriad conditions of social reality (McKinnon, 2010). Through this analysis, one “can state in general terms whether they further, impede or exclude one another – whether they are “adequate” or “inadequate” in relation to one another” (Weber, 1978, p. 341). The use of the concept of elective affinity involves analysing potential correspondences rather than asserting they are always present. Hence, in affirming a general possibility of elective affinity, one should acknowledge that the correspondences found between social phenomena may not be universally or necessarily present in all contexts (Treiber, 1985).

Previous research suggests an elective affinity between CSR and the agendas of economic liberalisation, privatisation, deregulation and marketisation that have developed since the 1990s (Kinderman, 2010). It argues that CSR has evolved as a substitute for eroded institutionalised social protection and provision systems. Business communities often view welfare state services, public regulation and trade unions as constraints on economic liberalism agendas, specifically corporate flexibility. At the same time, they perceive CSR as playing a legitimising role for market liberalism agendas. While acknowledging the reinforcing connection between the decline of organised labour and the rise of CSR, it offers a rather functionalist account that suggests the vacuum created by the former fostered the latter [1].

Adopting a similar Weberian analytical lens to understand whether and how CSR contributes to the weakening of organised labour, this article articulates the possible elective affinity between the inner logic of internal CSR and the decline of organised labour. Based on the structural homology and temporal alignment of these trends in reflecting transformations in the global economy and labour markets, it hypothesises a link between the two. To avoid an argument of universal causality, it uses elective affinity as an interpretative scheme, drawing on a meta-theoretical analysis of the academic literature on internal CSR. In doing so, it suggests a normative and historical buttressing interplay between the decline of organised labour and the rise of internal CSR, correspondingly facilitating managerial flexibility through practices aimed at weakening employees’ bargaining power. The primary argument is that internal CSR has evolved into a strategic and managerial tool, addressing employees as individuals, thereby contributing to the weakening of their collective voice and solidarity.

Data collection and methodology

Through meta-theoretical lens, this article explores possible links between the development of internal CSR and the decline of organised labour within countries in the global North. As discussed in the previous section, the latter trend is well-documented in the literature and, therefore, is taken as given for the purposes of this exploration. However, there is a gap in the literature regarding the disparity between rhetoric and practice related to in-house employees’ collective rights. To address this gap and better understand this disparity, this study offers a critical examination of the conceptual frameworks and assumptions that underlie the academic discourse on CSR’s intra-organisational policies, programmes and practices. Specifically, the analysis aimed to map the discourse of internal CSR and dissect its working assumptions and internal logic. Grounded in the discursive institutionalism analytical perspective, this literature analysis was informed by the understanding that the institutionalisation of norms, belief systems and behaviours – i.e. the construction and reproduction of social institutions – involves processes of diffusion and translation of “structured collections of texts” within a specific field of action (Phillips *et al.*, 2004, p. 638).

From this perspective, the conceptual understandings and practices commonly associated with internal CSR have undergone an institutionalisation process. Within this field, CSR scholarship, among other actors, engages in diffusion and translation processes, simultaneously shaping the field and being shaped by it (Shamir, 2010). Aligning with this viewpoint, both conceptual and empirical studies have undergone a comprehensive review following a qualitative content analysis protocol.

The article uses scoping review methodology, designed to map key themes and concepts and identify trends and gaps within a topical research field (Pham *et al.*, 2014), proving advantageous to its aims. While scoping reviews are often conducted as standalone studies (Pham *et al.*, 2014), in this article, one was conducted to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the conceptual and practical dimensions of internal CSR. This was undertaken to facilitate discussion on the disparity between rhetoric and practice related to in-house employees' collective rights, and on the possible elective affinity between internal CSR and the decline of organised labour, presented in the final section. Nevertheless, as presented below, the study adapted the widely accepted methodological framework for scoping reviews (Arksey and O'Malley, 2005) into three stages aligned with the aims of this study.

Stage 1– guiding question formulation

The field of internal CSR encompasses organisational policies, programmes and practices that address the needs and interests of employees. To depict how employees and their needs and interests are perceived within this field, as well the ways in which internal CSR is used, the scoping review was guided by the following questions:

- Q1. What are the dominant conceptual framings of internal CSR in the literature?
- Q2. What are the dominant roles and practical aspects of internal CSR according to the literature?

Stage 2 – study selection

For the metatheoretical analysis presented in the next section, an empirical corpus was compiled through a search process guided by the scoping review methodology, aimed at capturing the most relevant and impactful studies within the field of internal CSR. The search was conducted using Google Scholar (GS), one of the three major sources of citation data alongside Scopus and Web of Science (Harzing and Alakangas, 2016). Several reasons justified the choice of GS: Firstly, while all three databases are suitable for cross-disciplinary searches, GS is considered the most comprehensive for scholarly literature, particularly in social sciences and humanities (Martín-Martín *et al.*, 2021; Berkhout and Smit, 2022). Furthermore, as Bernardová *et al.* (2020) indicated, GS is significantly more encompassing in the field of CSR (p. 213). Secondly, GS provides a more complete picture of an academic discourse as its aggregation mechanisms are more effective at consolidating citations and references from a wide range of academic materials, including those not indexed by Scopus and Web of Science (Harzing and Alakangas, 2016). Thirdly, GS facilitates both forward and backward citation tracking. Fourthly, among other parameters, GS results are ordered by citation count and relevance to the search terms (Freeman *et al.*, 2009), both of which were particularly significant for this study.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of the literature on internal CSR, the selection process involved establishing inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure thematic and citation relevance, achieved through a qualitative analysis of article text and iterative refinement. Initial keywords included “internal CSR” (both abbreviated and not), “internal stakeholders” and “CSR + employees” (both abbreviated and not). Based on the initial search results, a

supplementary search for studies on CSR and human resource management (HRM) was conducted using the keywords “CSR + HRM” (both abbreviated and not).

Aiming to identify prevailing themes in the scholarly discourse related to internal CSR, the search was not confined to any specific timeframe, methodology or study type. Consequently, the time span of the empirical corpus (1996 to 2021) is a direct outcome of this selection process. However, to specifically focus on studies of notable impact, only those with over 100 citations were included. In addition, studies on “perceived internal CSR”, i.e. employees’ perceptions of CSR and their engagement with CSR programmes (Yue *et al.*, 2024), that did not discuss internal CSR were excluded. Finally, since this article focuses on internal CSR and organised labour within countries in the global North, empirical studies conducted solely in non-OECD countries were excluded.

Overall, 38 studies, published from 1996 to 2021, were analysed (see [Appendices 1](#) and [2](#) for the table of articles, charted based on [Berchin *et al.*, 2021](#), and the references list, respectively).

Stage 3 – data analysis and reporting

Once selected, a two-phase qualitative content analysis was conducted:

1. an inductive content analysis, involving a thorough reading of the studies to identify relevant categories aligned with the review’s guiding questions; and
2. a deductive content analysis, examining the studies based on the following six categories identified in the first phase: themes, managerial objectives/outcomes, strategic objectives/outcomes, organisational risks, aspects and benefits to HRM.

This process ensured a comprehensive analysis, the findings of which are presented in the next section.

Internal corporate social responsibility: framings, roles and practical aspects

Internal CSR is recognised in the literature as an umbrella term for managerial programmes and practices designed to address the needs, expectations and interests of employees ([Skudiene and Auruskeviciene, 2012](#); [Chaudhary, 2017](#)). In line with this definition, some studies highlight aspects of socialisation to CSR values and ethical empowerment embedded in internal CSR programmes (e.g. [Ferreira and Real de Oliveira, 2014](#); [Carlini *et al.*, 2019](#)). Despite its derivation from the notion of “internal stakeholders”, and while management, owners and shareholders are commonly considered as internal stakeholders in the CSR literature ([Turker, 2009](#)), the term “internal CSR” is widely understood as “CSR in relation to employees” ([Low, 2016](#), p. 57).

The wide range of issues researched under these conceptual framings was divided into the following six themes:

1. the conceptual development and practical implementation of internal CSR;
2. measurements of the impact of internal CSR policies and practices on employees’ perceptions and behaviour;
3. managerial objectives and outcomes of internal CSR in relation to management–employee relations;
4. strategic objectives and outcomes of internal CSR in relation to business performance and competitive advantage;
5. dimensions of the interface between internal CSR and HRM; and
6. the effects of internal CSR on individuals, often studied under the term “micro-CSR”, and employees’ perceptions of organisational justice.

Table 1 depicts the categorisation of the selected articles according to these themes.

While this corpus of articles provides a breadth of knowledge using a variety of methodologies and research designs, for the purposes of this study, the following analysis focuses on the dominant conceptual framings, roles and aspects associated with internal CSR.

Often anchored in the [European Commission \(2001\)](#)'s Green Paper, the underlying working assumption within this literature is that CSR encompasses both external and internal dimensions (e.g. [Ferreira and Real de Oliveira, 2014](#); [Mory et al., 2016](#); [De Roeck and Maon, 2018](#)). Whether presented descriptively or prescriptively, the assumption that internal CSR is an integral element of CSR fuels extensive explorations of the meanings, policies, practices and implications of internal CSR.

Commonly using an instrumental approach, most studies highlight the managerial and strategic positive objectives and outcomes of internal CSR. The term "managerial" is used here to refer to management–employee relations, and "strategic" pertains to corporations' business performance and competitive advantage (see [Tables 2 and 3](#), respectively).

The common understanding in the articles in [Tables 2 and 3](#), and broadly speaking within the literature on internal CSR as a whole, is that implementation of internal CSR practices positively contributes to achieving corporations' managerial and strategic objectives. However, while managerial objectives are presented as direct outcomes of internal CSR, strategic outcomes are often perceived as by-products of internal CSR's managerial outcomes, influenced by mediating factors. For example, it is argued that internal CSR enhances the health, satisfaction and commitment of in-house workforce and as a consequence contributes to corporations' productivity and financial performance ([Sancho et al., 2018](#)).

From a strategic approach, internal CSR is often framed as a form of risk management. In this context, the managerial outcomes and objectives of internal CSR in [Table 2](#) are linked to organisational risks mitigated by internal CSR programmes (see [Table 4](#)).

Organisational risks and challenges as detailed in [Table 4](#), are typically discussed in the literature within the context of five to seven aspects. The literature broadly agrees that these aspects, listed in [Table 5](#), comprise the core of internal CSR ([Lee, 2021](#)).

Table 1 Themes*	
Theme	Sources
Practical and conceptual development measurement	Welford (2004) ; Mory et al., 2016 ; Cornelius et al. (2008; 2015) ; Low (2016
Managerial objectives and outcomes	El Akremi et al. (2015) ; Scheidler et al. (2019)
Strategic objectives and outcomes	Brammer et al. (2007) ; Bhattacharya et al. (2008) ; Skudiene and Auruskeviciene (2012) ; De Roeck et al. (2014) ; Ferreira and Real de Oliveira (2014) ; Glavas (2016) ; Story et al. (2016) ; Chaudhary (2017) ; Farooq et al. (2017) ; Flammer and Luo (2017) ; Rupp et al. (2018) ; Tsourvakas and Yfantidou (2018) ; Jia et al. (2019)
Interface with HRM	Burke and Logsdone (1996) ; Greening and Turban (2000) ; Carlini et al. (2019) ; Gangi et al. (2019)
Micro-CSR and organisational justice (effects on individuals)	Gond et al. (2011) ; Sharma et al. (2011) ; Buciuniene and Kazlauskaitė 2012 ; Celma et al. (2012) ; Cohen et al. (2012) ; Ehnert (2013) ; Kramar (2013) ; Jamali et al. (2015) ; Voegtlin and Greenwood (2016) ; De Stefano et al., 2018 ; Sancho et al. (2018)
Note: *Studies are categorised according to their distinct perspective regarding internal CSR, while they may discuss other themes included in this table	
Source: Author's own work	

Table 2 Managerial objectives and outcomes

<i>Managerial objective/outcome</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Organisational commitment and identification and employee engagement	Burke and Logsdone (1996); Bhattacharya et al. (2008) ; Ferreira and Real de Oliveira (2014) ; El Akremi et al. (2015) ; De Roeck and Maon (2018) ; Glavas (2016) ; Chaudhary (2017) ; Farooq et al. (2017) ; Rupp et al. (2018) ; Tsourvakas and Yfantidou (2018) ; Carlini et al. (2019) ; Jia et al. (2019) ; Ehnert (2013) ; Mori et al. (2015) ; Low (2016)
Employee motivation	Burke and Logsdone (1996); Bhattacharya et al. (2008) ; Celma et al. (2012) ; Skudiene and Auruskeviciene (2012) ; Tsourvakas and Yfantidou (2018)
Employee productivity	Burke and Logsdone (1996); Bhattacharya et al. (2008) ; Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite 2012 ; Tsourvakas and Yfantidou (2018) ; Flammer and Luo (2017)
Employee retention	Burke and Logsdone (1996); Bhattacharya et al. (2008) ; Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite 2012 ; Tsourvakas and Yfantidou (2018) ; Flammer and Luo (2017) ; Low (2016)
Talent management	Bhattacharya et al. (2008) ; Story et al. (2016)
Employee attraction and employer branding	Greening and Turban (2000) ; Bhattacharya et al. (2008) ; Sharma et al. (2011) ; Story et al. (2016) ; Carlini et al. (2019)
Job satisfaction	De Roeck et al. (2014) ; Tsourvakas and Yfantidou (2018) ; Carlini et al. (2019)
Source: Author's own work	

Table 3 Strategic objectives and outcomes

<i>Strategic objective/outcome</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Reputation	Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite 2012 ; El Akremi et al. (2015) ; Jones et al. (2017) ; Tsourvakas and Yfantidou (2018) ; Scheidler et al. (2019) ; Gangi et al. (2019) ; Ehnert (2013)
External legitimacy and trust	Gangi et al. (2019) ; Flammer (2015) ; Ehnert (2013)
Financial performance and competitive advantage	Sharma et al. (2011) ; Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite 2012 ; El Akremi et al. (2015) ; Tsourvakas and Yfantidou (2018) ; Jones et al. (2017) ; Gangi et al. (2019) ; Flammer and Luo (2017)
Long-term stability and success	Burke and Logsdone (1996); Sharma et al. (2011) ; Skudiene and Auruskeviciene (2012) ; Jamali et al. (2015) ; Sancho et al. (2018) ; Gangi et al. (2019) ; Ehnert (2013) ; Kramar (2013)
Source: Author's own work	

Table 4 Organisational risks*

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Mistrust and low employee engagement	De Roeck and Maon (2018) ; Jones et al. (2017) ; Sancho et al. (2018) ; Carlini et al. (2019)
Low productivity	Carlini et al. (2019) (Greening and Turban (2000))
Employee turnover and absenteeism	Cornelius et al. (2008) ; Bhattacharya et al. (2008) ; Rupp (2011) ; Sharma et al. (2011) ; Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite 2012 ; De Roeck and Maon (2018) ; Low (2016) ; Sancho et al. (2018) ; Carlini et al. (2019) ; Jones et al. (2017) ; Ehnert (2013) ; Scheidler et al. (2019)
Dissatisfaction and burnout	Cornelius et al. (2008) ; Gond et al. (2017) ; Sancho et al. (2018) ; Carlini et al. (2019) ; Scheidler et al. (2019)
Employee destructive behaviours	Cornelius et al. (2008) ; Rupp (2011) ; De Roeck and Maon (2018) ; Gond et al. (2017) ; Flammer (2015)
Notes: *The table encompasses all studies that refer explicitly to organisational risks, challenges or problems requiring mitigation	
Source: Author's own work	

Table 5 Aspects

Aspect	Sources
Safe and healthy working environment	Kramar (2013); Burke and Logsdon (1996); Celma et al. (2014) ; Cornelius et al. (2008) ; Gond et al., 2011 , Low (2016) ; Mori et al., (2015) ; Scheidler et al.; 2019 Skudiene and Auruskeviciene (2012) ; Cohen et al. (2010)
Work–life balance	Celma et al. (2014) ; Mori et al., (2015) ; Sancho et al. (2018) ; Scheidler et al. (2019) ; Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite (2012) ; Cohen et al. (2010)
Well-being and quality of work	Kramar (2013); Cohen et al (2012) ; De Stefano et al., 2018 ; Cornelius et al. (2008) ; De Roeck and Maon (2018) ; Jia et al (2019) ; Skudiene and Auruskeviciene (2012)
Career development	Cornelius et al. (2008) ; Low (2016) ; Mori et al., (2015) ; Sancho et al. (2018) ; Scheidler et al. (2019) ; Skudiene and Auruskeviciene (2012)
Training	Celma et al. (2014) ; Cornelius et al. (2008) ; Gond et al., 2011 ; Scheidler et al. (2019) ; Welford (2004) ; Brammer et al. (2007)
Equal opportunities and diversity policies	Celma et al. (2014) ; Gond et al., 2011 ; Mori et al (2015) ; Sancho et al. (2018) ; Sharma et al (2011) ; Skudiene and Auruskeviciene (2012) ; Welford, 2004 ; Brammer et al. (2007)
Organisational fairness	Scheidler et al. (2019) ; Brammer et al.; (2007) ; Rupp (2011) ; De Roeck et al. (2014) ; De Stefano et al. (2018)
Human rights	Cornelius et al. (2008) ; Sharma et al (2011) ; Voegtlin and Greenwood (2016) ; Welford (2004)
Source: Author's own work	

Arguably, this relative convergence in aspects related to internal CSR can be attributed to the framing suggested by the [European Commission \(2001\)](#)'s Green Paper. According to the Green Paper, amid the pressing challenge of attracting and retaining skilled workers, relevant aspects of internal CSR may “include life long learning, empowerment of employees, better information throughout the company, better balance between work, family, and leisure, greater work force diversity, equal pay and career prospects for women, profit sharing and share ownership schemes and concern for employability as well as job security” (p. 9). Notably, these practices are directed towards the betterment of employees as individuals. Simultaneously, reflected in the limited number of studies that identify human rights as an internal CSR aspect (see [Table 5](#)), the Green Paper refers to human rights as an aspect related to the external dimension of CSR, suggesting that it is related “to international operations and global supply chains” (p.13). Importantly, of the studies that relate human rights to internal CSR, only two explicitly refer to employees' collective rights ([Welford, 2004](#); [Cornelius et al., 2008](#)).

Alongside emphasising the significance of the internal dimension of CSR, the Green Paper explicitly associated it with HRM ([European Commission, 2001](#), p. 8). In the subsequent years since the publication of the Green Paper, with the integration of CSR into advanced managerial systems, the intersection between CSR and HRM, has garnered increased attention in both practice and research. As illustrated in [Table 1](#), this evolution has resulted in a growing body of research exploring how CSR and HRM may mutually reinforce their respective goals, contributing jointly the successful performance of corporations. This literature often links CSR to strategic HRM (SHRM) approaches that emphasise the contribution of HRM practices to organisational outcomes and corporate financial performance ([Kramar, 2014](#)). While this body of research explores both how internal CSR can aid HRM and how HRM may contribute to the implementation of CSR, this review focuses on identifying framings of the former, keeping the purposes of this article in mind (see [Table 6](#)).

This scoping review identifies the dominant framings, roles and practical aspects associated with internal CSR and unpacks the instrumental and strategic rationales underlying the literature that surrounds it. Commonly adhering to a relatively unified blueprint organised around several defined

Table 6 Benefits to HRM

<i>Benefit</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Employee attraction and employer branding	Greening and Turban (2000) ; Voegtlin and Greenwood (2016)
Employee retention and commitment	Ehnert (2017) ; El Akremi et al. (2018) ; Farooq et al. (2017) ; Jamali et al. (2015) ; Sancho et al. (2018) ; Buciuniene and Kazlauskaitė (2012)
Job satisfaction and morale	Ehnert (2013) ; Sharma et al (2011) ; El Akremi et al. (2018) ; Cornelius et al. (2008) ; De Roeck et al. (2014)
Organisational commitment and identification and employee engagement	Ehnert (2013) ; Flammer and Lou 2015 ; Cohen et al. (2010) ; Ferreira and Real de Oliveira (2014) ; Jamali et al. (2015) ; El Akremi et al. (2018) ; Farooq et al. (2017) ; Sancho et al. (2018) ; Buciuniene and Kazlauskaitė (2012) ; De Roeck et al. (2014) ; Mori et al (2015) ; Voegtlin and Greenwood (2016)
Employee motivation	Cohen et al. (2010) ; Jamali et al. (2015) ; Celma et al. (2014) ; Voegtlin and Greenwood (2016)
Source: Author's own work	

aspects for executing internal CSR policies (see [Table 5](#)), this literature constructs internal CSR as a risk management tool for mitigating organisational threats such as employee turnover, adverse behaviour, burnout and absenteeism (see [Table 4](#)), thereby enhancing organisational and financial performance (see [Tables 2 and 3](#)). These framings of internal CSR highlight its evolution into a governance tool, whereby its logic and commitments are incrementally fused with managerial concerns for intra-firm branding, reputation, employment and workplace issues traditionally associated with SHRM's rationale and practices (see [Table 6](#)). Taken together, these findings attest to a growing conceptual and functional isomorphy between CSR and SHRM, and even to their integration into a unified strategic and managerial platform ([Jamali et al., 2015](#); [Story et al., 2016](#), see also [Pimenta et al., 2024](#)).

This study suggests that the interconnectedness developed between internal CSR and SHRM is key to the link between the inverse trajectories of internal CSR and organised labour. Developed in the late 1970s within the context of transformations in the organisation of work and an increasingly competitive business environment, SHRM repositioned human resources as a strategic approach for securing managerial flexibility and industrial peace, creating shareholder value and enhancing organisational financial performance through intra-firm managerial activities ([Kramar, 2014](#)). This strategic shift has often faced criticism for prioritising managerial flexibility through individualised human resources mechanisms over employees' collective rights, thereby impeding unionisation efforts ([Van Buren et al., 2011](#)). Nevertheless, while the discourse on internal CSR also adheres to individualised managerial mechanisms for achieving strategic objectives, its potential negative impact on employees' collective rights in the global North is largely overlooked. Building on these insights, the next and final section lays the groundwork needed for researching CSR's elective affinity to the decline of organised labour.

Discussion

The primary concern of this article is the conundrum arising from the inverse trends experienced by CSR and organised labour in the global North since the last decades of the 20th century. This concern is of particular interest given that internationally recognised labour standards, including the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining, are upheld as cornerstones of CSR codes, standards and reporting frameworks. The development of the internal CSR field turns this conundrum into a question of a couple of disparities. Firstly, there is a disparity between CSR rhetoric and practice regarding the collective rights of in-house employees. Secondly, while both workers in the supply chain

and in-house employees fall under the purview of CSR as corporations' stakeholders, there is a disparity between the thorough examinations of the violations of collective rights of the former conducted by CSR scholars and the limited academic attention given to such violations or neglect when it comes to the latter, especially in the global North. The analysis of the literature on internal CSR, presented in the previous section, highlights two complementary factors that perpetuate these disparities.

The first factor is the incorporation of internal CSR into the corporate managerial toolbox, particularly its increased interconnectedness with SHRM. As CSR has advanced as a corporate governance and risk-management strategy – enabling the mapping and addressing of reputational risks and business opportunities – internal CSR has been framed as a managerial toolbox for enhancing employees' positive attitudes towards their employers and workplace environment, and mitigating organisational risks associated with employees' negative attitudes (Flammer and Luo, 2017). The strategic role of internal CSR resonates with both welfare capitalism programmes and enlightened personnel policies adopted by American corporations during the early 20th century, and the more recent SHRM approaches that, whether explicitly stated or implied, construct industrial unrest and unionisation efforts as organisational risks (Van Buren *et al.*, 2011; Marens, 2013; De Roeck *et al.*, 2014; Farooq *et al.*, 2017).

The second factor is the prevalent distinction in the CSR discourse between core labour standards, including collective rights, and other employment and workplace issues. While the former are commonly categorised as human rights, other issues, such as labour/management relations, occupational health and safety, work-life balance, training and diversity, are considered within the framework of workplace environment aspects (e.g. Fortanier *et al.*, 2011; Taghian *et al.*, 2012; 2016; Low, 2016; Gangi *et al.*, 2019). Prime examples include the European Green Paper (2001) and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards. Similar to the Green Paper, in the GRI, core labour standards are listed under the "Human Rights" sub-category, while other employment indicators are listed under the "Labour practices and decent work" sub-category (Parsa *et al.*, 2018). As prominent CSR frameworks, both contribute to the institutionalisation of this distinction, arguably reflecting the (erroneous) belief that core labour standards are less relevant to internal workforces in the global North, given their solid (formal or normative) regulatory mechanisms. Essentially, the strategic approach to CSR promotes corporate human rights policies to refute reputational risks, while internal CSR programmes aim to neutralise organisational threats, among other goals.

Together, these two factors – the interconnectedness between internal CSR and SHRM on the one hand, and the distinction in CSR discourse between core labour rights and other workplace issues – underscore the differential treatment of the collective rights of sub-contractors' workers and in-house employees within CSR discourse. Furthermore, their significance lies in the characteristic construction of employees as individual stakeholders (Stoney and Winstanley, 2001). Critics suggest that the focus of internal CSR programmes on employees' individual needs and aspirations, while downplaying or even disregarding employees' collective rights, undermines workers' voice, collectivity and solidarity (Fleming and Jones, 2013). Along similar lines, industrial relations scholars argue that the dominance of the stakeholder approach undermines the capacity of CSR frameworks to influence employees' working conditions. Viewing stakeholder mapping and dialogue as methods that merely preserve the unbalanced power relations in corporate decision-making processes, these scholars suggest that CSR weakens or prevents the contractual commitment to collective negotiations (Preuss *et al.*, 2015; Jackson *et al.*, 2018) [2].

Altogether, the examination of the organising principles and dominant framings of internal CSR – as a strategic and managerial tool that focuses on the individuality of employees – supports the idea that internal CSR has an elective affinity towards the decline of organised labour. Acknowledging that these trends present distinct and contingent phenomena,

where the decline of organised labour began before the rise of CSR, this analysis advances the argument that the acceleration of these two trends under similar macro conditions of economic globalisations and labour market restructuring processes in the global North suggests an elective affinity. It demonstrates that this structural homology and temporal alignment create a reinforcing connection, enhancing power imbalances between management and employees and undermining workers' collective solidarity.

Drawing on the literature on the decline of organised labour and a meta-theoretical analysis of academic discourse on internal CSR, this article shows that while the former has eroded workers' collective voice by pursuing corporate flexibility, the latter neglects workers' collective rights by addressing their needs and interests as individuals. However, given the complex social realities and diverse institutional and geographical contexts in which these phenomena have materialised, their structural resemblance in consequences cannot be accounted for by an empirical causality argument. Hence, this study uses the concept of "elective affinity" as an interpretive scheme, suggesting that the decline of organised labour and the development of internal CSR are not only "adequate" phenomena but also reinforce each other in weakening employees' collective power resources.

In doing so, this article contributes to the scarce literature exploring the potential elective affinity between CSR and transformations in the global economy and labour markets since the late 1980s. Previous research hypothesised that corporations and business communities have engaged in CSR frameworks as a substitute for eroded institutionalised social protection and provision systems, such as welfare state services, public regulation and trade unions, which they often perceive as constraints on economic liberalism agendas, specifically corporate flexibility (Kinderman, 2010). Against this backdrop, this study highlights the role of CSR, particularly internal CSR, in legitimising market liberalism agendas, including de-unionisation and the overall weakening of organised labour. By articulating the connection between the inner logic of internal CSR and the decline of organised labour, it shows how internal CSR evolved into a strategic and managerial tool used to identify and mitigate intra-organisational risks by addressing employees as individuals.

While these findings are based on an analysis of studies on internal CSR in global North countries, they hold significance beyond their immediate context, extending to other geopolitical regions where internal CSR tools are implemented. Specifically, these findings illuminate the implications of CSR for employees' collective rights and voice as well as for organised labour. Moreover, by challenging the prevailing assumption that employee entitlements in high-income countries can be taken for granted, this study strengthens the understanding of the insufficiency of economic affluence and so-called enlightened corporate managerial practices in guaranteeing employee wellbeing and protection.

These insights may further suggest that the interaction between organised labour and internal CSR follows a Polanyian dynamic. Polanyi's "double movement" describes the dialectic involved in the development of capitalist systems: the movement of laissez-faire seeks to disembed the economy from social structures and to expand self-regulating markets, while the countermovement of social protection aims to shield societies from the destructive impacts of markets (Polanyi, 2001). Through this prism, the institutionalisation of labour markets is seen as a constituent element of the laissez-faire movement, whereas institutional innovations like welfare policies, labour regulation and trade unions are integral to the social protection countermovement.

Polanyi's theorisation has fuelled a debate over the extent to which CSR increases or decreases the social embeddedness of economic systems (Schneider, 2014). Some view the rise of CSR as an attempt to compensate for the decline of corporatist arrangements and welfare retrenchments (Ruggie, 2003; Gereffi and Mayer, 2004; Levy and Kaplan, 2008). Others regard the spread of CSR as serving the corporate effort to defuse social criticism and protests and as further grounding self-regulating markets (Lipschutz and Rowe, 2005; Fleming and Jones, 2013). Aligning with the latter perspective, it is suggested

that the integration of internal CSR into the managerial and risk strategy toolbox and its promotion as an innovative and effective approach for retaining and motivating in-house employees may have contributed to the legitimisation of the loss in power of trade unions. Despite the widespread inclusion of the core labour standards in CSR frameworks, not only have CSR and organised labour experienced inverse trajectories in recent decades, but also, internal CSR discourse may have been instrumental in depoliticising employment relations.

Conclusion and future directions

The decline in organised labour in recent decades has been accompanied by the erosion of workers' collective voice, an increase in poverty among workers and a widening gap in wealth and income distribution. The mainstreaming of strategic and managerial approaches to CSR has allowed it to shift away from addressing such socio-economic challenges and, concomitantly, has enhanced the alignment of CSR schemes with corporate and organisational values and goals. With this in mind, the observations offered by this study pave the way for future research in four main directions.

Firstly, this study highlights a disparity between CSR rhetoric and practice concerning the collective rights of in-house employees, as well as a disparity in the literature regarding violations or neglect of these rights in the context of in-house employees in the global North. Further research could examine the extent and implications of these disparities in CSR discourse and practice. Moreover, the structural conditions and dynamics that sustain – or, conversely, could transform – the elective affinity between internal CSR and the decline of organised labour remain under-researched and theorised. Specifically, this article focused on the relationships between the overarching trends that CSR and organised labour have experienced since the 1990s. However, the question of how potential changes in either of these trends might affect the nature of this relationship has not yet been investigated yet. Secondly, the nexus between CSR and stakeholder approaches, and trade unions is also empirically understudied from a CSR lens. Thirdly, the observation that the utilisation of internal CSR practices to address employees contributes to the weakening of their collective voice calls for further exploration. The capacity of employee voice, both in shaping and being shaped by CSR, is particularly significant and warrants examination. Finally, the opportunity for CSR to act as a pivotal force in a countermovement for social protection and justice invites further scholarly exploration, marking a crucial area for future research.

Notes

1. Interestingly, [Kinderman and Lutter \(2018\)](#) find that increases in union density positively impact on countries' CSR activity. Notwithstanding, they also argue that the growth of CSR within OECD countries is "a substitute for market-constraining social regulation" (p. 17).
2. While these critiques often refer to the internal workforce, it is worth noting that both internal and external workers are addressed in CSR frameworks as individuals. External workforces operating at the lowest tiers of supply chains are addressed through the prism of human rights, which includes workers' collective rights in CSR frameworks, whereas internal workforces are addressed through the prism of labour and workplace issues ([Parsa et al., 2018](#)).

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Appendix 1

Table A1 List of selected articles for scoping review

Year	Authors	Title	Journal/book	Citations	Keywords
1996	Burke, L. and Logsdon, J.M.	How corporate social responsibility pays off long range planning	<i>Long Range Planning</i>	2,264	
2000	Greening, D.W. and Turban, D.B.	Corporate social performance as a competitive advantage in attracting a quality workforce	<i>Business & Society</i>	3,108	
2004	Welford, R.	Corporate social responsibility in Europe and Asia: Critical elements and best practice	<i>Journal of Corporate Citizenship</i>	481	Corporate social responsibility policies, Asia, Europe, citizenship, accountability, international comparison
2007	Brammer, S., Millington, A. and Rayton, B.	The contribution of corporate social responsibility to organisational commitment	<i>International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>	2,171	Organisational commitment, corporate social responsibility, training, justice, gender, banking
2008	Bhattacharya, C.B., Sen, S. and Korschun, D.	Using corporate social responsibility to win the war for talent	<i>MIT Sloan Management Review</i>	1,492	
2008	Cornelius, N., Todres, M., Janjuha-Jivraj, S., Woods, A. and Wallace, J.	Corporate social responsibility and the social enterprise	<i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>	510	Capabilities theory, corporate social responsibility, human resource management, small business, social enterprise
2011	Gond, J. P., Igalens, J., Swaen and V., El Akremi, A	The human resources contribution to responsible leadership: an exploration of the CSR – HR interface	<i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>	346	Corporate social responsibility, employees; human resources, organisational behaviour
2011	Rupp, D.E.	An employee-centred model of organizational justice and social responsibility	<i>Organizational Psychology Review</i>	435	Cognitive processing, corporate social responsibility, emotion, ethics, fairness, justice
2011	Sharma, S., Sharma, J. and Devi, A.	Corporate social responsibility: the key role of human resource management		293	
2012	Buc'iu'niene', I. and Kazlauskaite', R.	The linkage between HRM, CSR and performance outcomes	<i>Baltic Journal of Management</i>	311	Lithuania, corporate social responsibility, human resource management, organisational performance, business strategy
2012	Cohen, E., Taylor, S. and Muller-Camen, M.	HRMs role in corporate social and environmental sustainability	<i>SHRM report</i>	315	
2012	Skudiene, V. and Auraskeviciene	The contribution of corporate social responsibility to internal employee motivation	<i>Baltic journal of management</i>	325	Lithuania, corporate governance, employees' behaviour, motivation (psychology), social responsibility, internal corporate social responsibility, external corporate social responsibility, internal employee motivation
2013	Enhart, I.	Paradox as a lens for theorizing sustainable HRM: mapping and coping with paradoxes and tensions	<i>Developing Sustainable Business Organizations, Springer Berlin Heidelberg, Berlin, Heidelberg</i>	108	

(continued)

Table A1

Year	Authors	Title	Journal/book	Citations	Keywords
2014	Celma, D., Martínez-García, E. and Coenders, G.	Corporate social responsibility in human resource management: analysis of common practices and their determinants in Spain	<i>Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management</i>	130	Corporate social responsibility/ CSR, human resource management/HRM, determinants of CSR implementation, quality
2014	De Roeck, K., Marique, G., Stinglhamber, F. and Swaen, V.	Understanding employees' responses to corporate social responsibility: mediating roles of overall justice and organisational identification	<i>The International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>	376	Corporate social responsibility, employee-organisation relationship, job satisfaction, organisational identification, overall justice
2014	Ferreira, P. and Real de Oliveira, E	Does corporate social responsibility impact on employee engagement?	<i>Journal of Workplace Learning</i>	257	Corporate social responsibility, employee engagement, CSR, internal CSR, external CSR, Utrecht work engagement scale
2014	Jamali, D.R., El Dirani, A.M. and Harwood, I.A.	Exploring human resource management roles in corporate social responsibility: the CSR-HRM co-creation model	<i>Business Ethics: A European Review</i>	422	
2014	Krammar, R.	Human value management: the influence of the contemporary developments of corporate social responsibility and social capital on HRM'	<i>Management Revue</i>	1040	Human value management, human resource management, social capital, corporate social responsibility
2016	Glavas, A.	Corporate social responsibility and employee engagement: Enabling employees to employ more of their whole selves at work	<i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>	351	Knowledge management, CSR knowledge
2016	Low, M.P.	Corporate social responsibility and the evolution of internal corporate social responsibility in 21st century	<i>Asian Journal of Social Science Management Studies</i>	127	CSR, CSR themes, evolution of internal CSR, employees, stakeholders, organisation performance, organisation sustainability
2016	Mory, L., Wirtz, B. W. and Göttel, V.	Factors of internal corporate social responsibility and the effect on organizational commitment	<i>The International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>	232	Corporate social responsibility; employees; internal stakeholders; social exchange theory; structural equation modelling
2016	Story, J., Castanheira, F. and Hartig, S.	Corporate social responsibility and organizational attractiveness: implications for talent management	<i>Social Responsibility Journal</i>	188	Human resource management, organisational reputation, corporate social responsibility, organisational attractiveness
2016	Voegtlin, C. and Greenwood, M	Corporate social responsibility and human resource management: a systematic review and conceptual analysis	<i>Human Resource Management Review</i>	455	Corporate social responsibility, human resource management, political CSR, political HRM, systematic review, employee involvement
2017	Chaudhary, R.	Corporate social responsibility and employee engagement: can CSR help in redressing the engagement gap?	<i>Social Responsibility Journal</i>	147	Gender, moderation, corporate social responsibility, employee engagement
2017	Farooq, O., Rupp, D. E. and Farooq, M.	The multiple pathways through which internal and external corporate social responsibility influence organizational identification and multifoci outcomes: the moderating role of cultural and social orientations	<i>Academy of Management Journal</i>	542	Corporate social responsibility, organisational identification, individualism, collectivism, cosmopolitan-local orientations, organisational citizenship behaviour

(continued)

Table A1

Year	Authors	Title	Journal/book	Citations	Keywords
2017	Flammer, L. and Luo, J.	Corporate social responsibility as an employee governance tool: Evidence from a quasi-experiment	<i>Strategic Management Journal</i>	508	Employee engagement, adverse behaviour, employee governance, corporate social responsibility, unemployment insurance
2017	Gond, J.P., El Akremi, A., Swaen, V. and Babu, N	The psychological microfoundations of corporate social responsibility: a person-centric systematic review	<i>Journal of Organizational Behavior</i>	640	Corporate social responsibility, drivers; evaluations, reactions, microfoundations
2017	Jones, D.A., Willness, C.R. and Glavas, A.	When corporate social responsibility (CSR) meets organizational psychology: New frontiers in micro-CSR research, and fulfilling a quid pro quo through multilevel insights	<i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>	173	Corporate social responsibility, corporate social performance, sustainability, organisational psychology, microfoundations, multilevel theory, micro-CSR, stakeholder
2018	De Roeck, K. and Maon, F.	Building the theoretical puzzle of employees' reactions to corporate social responsibility: an integrative conceptual framework and research agenda	<i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>	242	Corporate social responsibility, employees' attitudes and behaviours, social identity theory, social exchange theory, micro-CSR
2018	De Stefano, F., Bagdadli, S. and Camuffo, A.	The HR role in corporate social responsibility and sustainability: a boundary-shifting literature review	<i>Human Resource Management</i>		
2018	El Akremi, A., Gond, J.P., Swaen, V., De Roeck, K. and Igalens, J.	How do employees perceive corporate responsibility? Development and validation of a multidimensional corporate stakeholder responsibility scale	<i>Journal of Management</i>	645	Corporate social responsibility, stakeholders, employees' perceptions, scale development and validation, multidimensional construct
2018	Rupp, D.E., Shao, R., Skarlicki, D.P., Paddock, E.L., Kim, T.Y. and Nadisic, T.	Corporate social responsibility and employee engagement: the moderating role of CSR-specific relative autonomy and individualism	<i>Journal of Organizational Behavior</i>	234	
2018	Sancho, M.P.L., Martínez-Martínez, D., Jorge, M.L. and Madueño, J.H.	Understanding the link between socially responsible human resource management and competitive performance in SMEs	<i>Personnel Review</i>	113	Quantitative, corporate social responsibility, business performance, employee engagement, human resource management (HRM), small to medium size enterprises (SME)
2018	Tsourvakas, G. and Yfantidou, I.	Corporate social responsibility influences employee engagement	<i>Social Responsibility Journal</i>	101	Corporate social responsibility, employee engagement, job satisfaction, staff motivation
2019	Carlini, J., Grace, D., France, C. and Lo Iacono, J.	The corporate social responsibility (CSR) employer brand process: integrative review and comprehensive model	<i>Journal of Marketing Management</i>	125	Corporate social responsibility, employer brand, CSR, employer brand, internal CSR, CSR branding
2019	Gangi, F., Gangi, M., Mustilli, N.V.	The impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) knowledge on corporate financial performance: evidence from the European banking industry	<i>Journal of Knowledge Management</i>	198	Corporate social responsibility, financial performance, banks, social performance,

(continued)

Table A1

Year	Authors	Title	Journal/book	Citations	Keywords
2019	Jia, Y., Yan, J., Liu, T. and Huang, J.	How does internal and external CSR affect employees' work engagement? Exploring multiple mediation mechanisms and boundary conditions	<i>International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health</i>	106	Corporate social responsibility, collectivism, individualism, organisational pride, perceived organisational support, work engagement
2019	Scheidler, S., Edinger-Schons, L. M., Spanjol, J and Wieseke, J.	Scrooge posing as Mother Teresa: How hypocritical social responsibility strategies hurt employees and firms	<i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>	164	Corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate hypocrisy, inconsistent CSR strategies, employee emotional exhaustion, employee turnover, social and moral identification theory

Source: Authors own workAppendix 2

Appendix 2. References of selected articles for scoping review

1. Bhattacharya, S., Sahay, A., Pratap Arora, A. and Chaturvedi, A. (2008), "A toolkit for designing firm level strategic corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives", *Social Responsibility Journal*, Vol. 4 No. 3, pp. 265-282.
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6. Celma, D., Martínez-García, E. and Coenders, G. (2014), "Corporate social responsibility in human resource management: analysis of common practices and their determinants in Spain", *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Vol. 21 No. 2, pp. 82-99.
7. Chaudhary, R. (2017), "Corporate social responsibility and employee engagement: can CSR help in redressing the engagement gap?", *Social Responsibility Journal*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 323-338.
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14. El Akremi, A., Gond, J.P., Swaen, V., De Roeck, K. and Igalens, J. (2018), "How do employees perceive corporate responsibility? Development and validation of a multidimensional corporate stakeholder responsibility scale", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 44 No. 2, pp. 619-657.
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16. Ferreira, P. and Real de Oliveira, E. (2014), "Does corporate social responsibility impact employee engagement?", *Journal of Workplace Learning*, Vol. 26 No. 3/4, pp. 232-247.
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36. Tsurvakas, G. and Yfantidou, I. (2018), "Corporate social responsibility influences employee engagement", *Social Responsibility Journal*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 123-137.
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