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Exploring the Impact of Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility on Employee Innovative Behaviour: The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the relationships among perceived corporate social responsibility (CSR), organizational commitment, and employee innovative behaviour by constructing a multiple mediation model from the perspective of employees. A meticulous investigation into the mediating effects of different dimensions of organizational commitment has been undertaken. Utilizing a sample of 389 employees from enterprises situated in Guangdong Province, China, a structural equation model (SEM) is employed to methodically explore and validate the research hypotheses. Empirical findings reveal that perceived internal and external CSR not only significantly and positively influence employee innovative behaviour but also exert a noteworthy positive impact on affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative deemed pivotal mediating factors in the intricate relationship between perceived internal and external CSR and employee innovative behaviour. The ensuing analysis delves into the theoretical and managerial ramifications of these empirical revelations. Additionally, this study proposes research limitations and outlines future research trajectories. The results of this study not only guide business managers but also provide new perspectives and insights for future research on CSR and innovative behaviour.

Keywords: Perceived CSR, Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, Normative Commitment, Employee Innovative Behaviour.

Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of swift technological progression, organizations find themselves entangled in a tapestry of unparalleled opportunities and challenges (You et al., 2021). Within this intricate web, as organizations relentlessly pursue a competitive edge for the sake of enduring growth, the exigency of innovation becomes progressively salient (Li et al., 2023). Concomitantly, enterprises play a crucial role within the broader social system (Fernando et al., 2019). A growing number of enterprises are waking up to the realization that embracing social responsibility isn't just a trendy concept but a key driver of their core interests and sustained development. These enterprises are taking the reins of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) voluntarily, committing to it as a strategic move for achieving sustainable

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development (Li et al., 2020), to evolve into socially and environmentally responsible entities that actively contribute to the greater good (Ait Sidhoum & Serra, 2018). Hence, innovation and CSR stand out as pivotal concerns in the landscape of contemporary business survival and development. The intricate relationship between CSR and innovation has also garnered extensive attention in the academic realm.

The organizational framework of a corporate entity is fundamentally comprised of individuals, and the ultimate realization of innovation necessitates the enactment of innovative behaviours by its workforce (Taştan & Davoudi, 2015; Riaz et al., 2018). The manifestation of employee innovation has evolved into an indispensable determinant for ensuring organizational triumph in the dynamic and competitive commercial milieu (Pujianto & Musyaffaah, 2023). Simultaneously, employees function as stakeholders and participants in CSR endeavours (Glavas & Godwin, 2013; Chang et al., 2021). Their perceptions, attitudes, and conduct play a pivotal role in shaping the success of the organization. With the progression of the economy, the professional ethos of corporate personnel has undergone conspicuous transformations, particularly noticeable among well-educated staff. Their subjective needs have become increasingly diverse and intricate. No longer solely fixated on pecuniary gains, their work dispositions and behaviours are now profoundly influenced by the tenets of CSR. Consequently, it becomes imperative to scrutinize the nexus between CSR and innovation from an employee perspective.

Examining the relationship between CSR and innovative behaviour from an employee perspective constitutes a micro-level inquiry that typically attends to individual perspectives, attitudes, and conduct (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). Within such investigations, by assessing the perceived level of CSR among employees, one can effectively evaluate how CSR influences employee responses (Rupp et al., 2013). Perception, as a pivotal determinant of behaviour, indicates that if the social responsibility initiatives implemented by an enterprise are perceptible to employees, a corresponding behavioural response is anticipated (Glavas & Godwin, 2013). Therefore, from an employee vantage point, an inquiry emerges: Can their apprehension of CSR practices serve as a catalysing force for innovative behaviours?

On the other hand, according to the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory, recognizing the influence of perception on behaviour necessitates the identification of mediating factors (Glavas & Radic, 2019). Typically, these mediating factors manifest as psychological factors (Khaleel et al., 2017). Consequently, postulating a mediating variable between perceived CSR and innovative behaviour assumes significance (Glavas & Radic, 2019). Affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment may be construed as distinct psychological dispositions exhibited by employees (Buch, 2015). Moreover, antecedent research has validated the intermediary influence of organizational commitment in previous scholarly inquiries (Hayati & Caniago, 2012; Almutairi, 2016). Notably, scholars posit that employees inclined towards a belief in the ethical and moral treatment of critical stakeholders by the organization are predisposed to harbour positive organizational commitment (Kim & Lee, 2022). This inclination, in turn, engenders a proclivity among employees to reciprocate the organization with affirmative organizational commitment (Stojanovic et al., 2020), manifesting in positive work behaviours as a form of organizational recompense (Choi et al., 2018). Consequently, a critical inquiry arises as to whether affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment can function as mediating variables between employees' perceived CSR and ensuring innovative behaviours, warranting further scholarly exploration.

Based on the aforementioned context, the objective of this study is to comprehensively explore the relationship between employees' perceived CSR and innovative behaviour. We aim to validate whether employees' perceived internal and external CSR in the Chinese organizational

context influences affective commitment, continuous commitment, and normative commitment, consequently impacting employees' innovative behaviour. we will examine the mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between employees' perceived CSR and innovative behaviour, unveiling the impact pathways and effects among these factors.

Current scholarly investigations predominantly focus on elucidating the direct impact of perceived CSR on employee innovative behaviour or studying the relationship between the two through a singular mediator, missing multiple mediation analyses. This study strives to address this research gap by introducing affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuous commitment, delving into the dynamics of the relationship between perceived CSR and employee innovative behaviour. By constructing a comprehensive multiple mediation model, we aim to empirically verify the role of CSR in employees' organizational commitment and innovative behaviour from the employee perspective. This endeavour not only contributes substantively to the literature on CSR and innovative behaviour but also fills gaps in prior theoretical research, providing valuable insights for a nuanced understanding of the interaction between perceived CSR and employee innovative behaviour.

Furthermore, the findings of this study offer valuable insights for practical implications in corporate management. This is poised to enable corporate executives to gain a more holistic understanding of employees' perceived CSR, encouraging them to place a heightened emphasis on the fulfilment of CSR in practice, it encourages executives to delve into the relationship between CSR fulfilment and employees' organizational commitment and innovative behaviour. This heightened awareness is anticipated to inspire corporate managers to actively participate in CSR activities. Not only does this contribute to more positive performance in the field of CSR, addressing deficiencies and imbalances in CSR in the current innovation development processes of Chinese enterprises, but it also aids in shaping a favourable image of the company in the eyes of society and employees, laying a foundation for the sustainable development of the enterprise.

Literature Review and hypotheses development

Perceived CSR and Employee Innovative Behaviour

There are various definitions of CSR (Latapí Agudelo et al., 2019). In 1979, Carroll proposed the first unified definition of CSR, which includes economic, legal, moral, and discretionary expectations of the organization that society possesses at a given point in time (Latapí Agudelo et al., 2019). However, some scholars believe that CSR should respond to the needs and expectations of stakeholders (Glavas & Godwin, 2013; Zárate-Rueda et al., 2021). Therefore, subsequent scholars have embraced a stakeholder-based perspective and have sought to delineate perceptions of CSR based on employees' views regarding how organizations treat stakeholders. For instance, Kong et al. (2019) stated that corporate social responsibility is the obligation of a company to create profits for its shareholders. Turker (2009a) contends that CSR measurement can be contingent upon the diverse expectations of stakeholders. El Akremi et al. (2018) posit that CSR can be construed as an organization's context-specific actions and policies designed to elevate stakeholders' welfare through the consideration of the triple bottom line, encompassing economic, social, and environmental performance. Agudo Valiente et al. (2015) argue that CSR is a strategic tool for companies to meet the needs and expectations of stakeholders.

The concept of perceived CSR comes from CSR. Gangi. et al. (2019) pointed out that perceived CSR is a multi-dimensional conceptual category constructed from the perspective of

stakeholders, measuring employees' perceptions of the company's CSR behaviour on employees and external stakeholders. While both perceptual and objective CSR holds significance, comprehending the micro-level mechanisms of engagement in CSR demands a closer consideration of perceived CSR (Ng et al., 2019). how employees perceive the employer's CSR practices may exert a more direct and potent influence on subsequent employee responses (Rupp et al., 2013; Gond et al., 2017; El Akremi et al., 2018). Therefore, this study centres on employees' perceived CSR, defining perceived CSR as the subjective sentiments and perspectives employees hold regarding their organization's implementation of CSR for various stakeholders.

Scott & Bruce (1994) Considering that employee innovative behaviour is "the behaviour of employees in creating, introducing, or applying new products, services, programs, or methods in the workplace." Many scholars agree with this definition, arguing that employee innovative behaviour is the intentional proposing and application of novel and improved ideas, processes, practices, and policies aimed at organizational effectiveness, business success, and long-term sustainability (Nazir et al., 2019. Kwon & Kim, 2020). Wahab (2022) believes that the difference between innovative behaviour and concepts such as employee creativity is that innovative behaviour is a spontaneous action aimed at improving the current situation or creating a new situation, including inventing, implementing or using innovative and appropriate ideas, procedures and Solutions and other processes. Innovative behaviour is also seen as an extrarole or discretionary behaviour (Cho & Song, 2021).

Several scholars have corroborated the relationship between perceived CSR and creativity (Abdullah et al., 2017; Hur et al., 2018; Tong et al., 2019; Chaudhary & Akhouri, 2019). Employee creativity stands as the genesis of innovation (Do & Shipton, 2019). Alhumoudi et al. (2023) also pointed out that organizations should actively engage in activities associated with CSR, as this fosters employees' passion at work, leading to a comprehensive manifestation of innovative behaviour. Despite the prevailing tendency in extant research to treat perceived CSR as a unidimensional construct, employees, in their perceptual landscape, do not perceive their employer's CSR as an undifferentiated whole. Instead, they discern and respond differentially by distinguishing among various stakeholders involved in CSR implementation (Farooq et al., 2017; El Akremi et al., 2018). From an employee's standpoint, perceived CSR typically bifurcates into two overarching categories: internal and external. The external dimension is intertwined with "others," while the internal dimension is intrinsically "self-related" (Glavas & Godwin, 2013).

When employees perceive high-quality internal CSR, it engenders a sense of support and care emanating from within the organization, rendering them more inclined to engage in proactive creative exploration and embrace innovative challenges (Hur et al., 2018). When corporations engage in fulfilling external social responsibilities, these activities can impact the corporate and brand reputation (Khojastehpour & Johns, 2014). As employees become cognizant of an organization's commitment to CSR activities for the benefit of society and the environment, coupled with adherence to ethical obligations, a sense of pride in being affiliated with such an entity ensues (Chaudhary & Akhouri, 2018). This, in turn, elicits positive attitudes and some extra-role behaviours among employees (Newman et al., 2015; Hameed et al., 2016). Employees' innovative behaviour is precisely one such extra-role behaviour that transcends specified role expectations (Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2019; Cho & Song, 2021). External CSR practices also signal an attractive, benevolent, and distinctive corporate identity to employees. Perceiving these signals, employees internalize these attributes as part of their self-worth and become more receptive to challenges and risks (De Roeck & Farooq, 2018), thereby

fostering more innovative behaviour. Moreover, engaging in social responsibility activities typically necessitates collaboration and coordination among different departments and employees within the company, fostering a sense of teamwork and innovative collaboration (Richter et al., 2021). This can also enhance the occurrence of innovative behaviours among employees. Based on the above analysis, we posit the following hypotheses:

H1: Perceived internal CSR is positively related to employee innovative behaviour.

H2: Perceived external CSR is positively related to employee innovative behaviour.

Perceived CSR and Organizational Commitment

Research on organizational commitment has also garnered significant attention, prompting various definitions to encapsulate its nuanced nature. Simplifying and elucidating this concept, organizational commitment can be construed as the psychological connection forged or the psychological state between employees and their organization (Buch, 2015; Wu & Chen, 2018). Khaleel. et al (2017) pointed out that Organizational commitment is an important dimension of work attitude and is a person's psychological identification with his organization. It reflects the employee's connection to the organization and to the decision to stay in the same organization. commitment is typically delineated along three dimensions: affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). These dimensions represent distinct psychological states of individual employees, and independent metrics can be devised for each dimension (Meyer et al., 1993; Singh & Gupta, 2015).

Affective commitment pertains to the identification, involvement, and emotional attachment an individual has with the organization. It is a commitment choice made by employees based on emotional alignment with the organization. Normative commitment emerges from a perceived obligation grounded in an individual's attachment to the goals of the organization. Continuance commitment is the perceived cost of leaving the organization, reflecting employees' economic attachment to the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer et al., 1993; Singh & Gupta, 2015). Hofman & Newman (2014) confirmed that employees' perceptions of CSR influence their organizational commitment. Ahmed & Tahir (2019) also pointed out that the implementation of internal CSR services, such as increased wages or benefits, positively affects employees' affective commitment. Tran et al. (2021) reveal that as employees' empowerment, health and safety, job satisfaction, and work-life balance increase, so does their level of affective commitment. On the other hand, if the organization's external CSR activities and its social status are respected and recognized by other parties, employees will feel proud and meaningful to be a part of the organization (Tian & Robertson, 2019). This may lead to a more positive attitude towards the organization (Khan et al., 2021), thereby enhancing organizational commitment. combined with Meyer & Allen's three-factor structural model, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: Perceived internal CSR is positively related to affective commitment.

H4: Perceived internal CSR is positively related to continuance commitment.

H5: Perceived internal CSR is positively related to normative commitment.

H6: Perceived external CSR is positively related to affective commitment.

H7: Perceived external CSR is positively related to continuance commitment.

H8: Perceived external CSR is positively related to normative commitment.

Organizational Commitment and Employee Innovation Behaviour

Organizational commitment stems from a favourable work environment (Kong et al., 2019) and is a psychological attitude (Buch, 2015). When employees in an organization receive support and benefits from interacting with the organization, this attitude will flourish. In such instances, employees cultivate positive sentiments towards the organization, fostering a greater inclination to engage and integrate into the organizational fabric (Buch, 2015). Subsequently, they actively participate in the triumph and sustenance of the company, thereby engendering proactive behaviors (Wu et al., 2022).

Simultaneously, organizational commitment establishes a robust structural linkage between employees and the organization. Once established, this linkage serves as a deterrent, impeding employees from seeking collaborative opportunities with alternative entities to safeguard their existing affiliations (Khaleel et al., 2017). Consequently, employees with a heightened degree of organizational commitment exhibit a greater sense of identification and commitment to the organization compared to their less committed counterparts. This emotional state amplifies their intrinsic motivation, thus yielding a rewarding effect for the organization. Employees opt to persist within the company or organization to safeguard their economic interests within the organizational domain and reciprocate through positive behaviors (Chaudhary & Akhouri, 2018; Fauziawati, 2021). In this context, innovation behaviour is unequivocally considered a form of affirmative work conduct.

Scholars such as Chtioui et al. (2023) and Ghasempour Ganji et al. (2021) confirmed that employees with high organizational commitment are more inclined to participate in innovative endeavours. Fauziawati (2021) also confirmed that employees with high affective commitment tend to have prolonged tenures and are more likely to engage in positive work behaviours. Hakimian et al. (2016) believe that employees with strong normative commitment also exhibit higher loyalty and satisfaction., Loyal employees within the organization are more likely to innovate, create, and meet customer demands. Based on the above analysis, we propose the following hypothesis:

H9: Affective commitment is positively related to employee innovative behaviour.

H10: Continuance commitment is positively related to employee innovative behaviour.

H11: Normative commitment is positively related to employee innovative behaviour.

S-O-R Theoretical Model and the Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment

This study revealed that the relationship among perceived CSR, organizational commitment, and employee innovative behaviour aligns with the S-O-R theoretical model. The S-O-R theoretical model underscores that external stimuli exert an influence on an individual's psychological state, triggering a sequence of psychological processes that subsequently impact behaviour (Zhu et al., 2020). According to previous research findings, perceived CSR activities by employees serve as stimulating factors influencing both organizational commitment and employee innovative behaviour (Ahmad et al., 2021). Thus, perceived CSR can be regarded as the "S" in the S-O-R model, while innovative behaviour represents the "R."

When employees perceive a high level of internal and external CSR, they recognize the organization as one that provides a positive work environment, holds a favourable societal reputation, and offers robust resource support (Chaudhary & Akhouri, 2018). In response to these external stimuli, employees cultivate a positive psychological disposition (Khan et al.,

2021). Such employees not only exhibit a strong emotional attachment to the company but also demonstrate a willingness to stay with the organization, dedicating themselves wholeheartedly to the achievement of organizational goals. Furthermore, they go beyond the specific requirements of their roles, spontaneously contributing to the effective functioning of the organization, thereby enhancing employee innovative behaviour. In this process, organizational commitment manifests as a robust positive psychological disposition towards the organization, explaining the internal psychological processes through which individuals perceive their environment and exhibit specific behaviours (Khaleel et al., 2017). Organizational commitment plays the mediating role of the organism (O) in the S-O-R relationship, linking perceived CSR (S) to employee innovative behaviour (R). Based on the above analysis, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H12: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between perceived internal CSR and employee innovative behaviour.

H13: Continuance commitment mediates the relationship between perceived internal CSR and employee innovative behaviour.

H14: Normative commitment mediates the relationship between perceived internal CSR and employee innovative behaviour.

H15: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between perceived external CSR and employee innovative behaviour.

H16: Continuance commitment mediates the relationship between perceived external CSR and employee innovative behaviour.

H17: Normative commitment mediates the relationship between perceived external CSR and employee innovative behaviour.

Methodology

Participants and procedure

The data were gathered from employees of High-tech enterprises in Guangdong. We employed a stratified and PPS sampling method based on the list of High-tech enterprises published on the government website. 25 High-Tech enterprises were selected, and surveys were distributed to the employees within these selected enterprises. High-tech enterprises are an important force in promoting national scientific and technological innovation, and these employees are directly involved in the day-to-day operational activities and business processes of the organization. They serve as both internal stakeholders and labour service providers, engaging in direct interactions with clients and customers. They genuinely experience the CSR initiatives of the company and can observe the organization's CSR decisions toward other stakeholders, effectively achieving the research objectives.

Data collection occurred in two phases: in the first phase, participants completed questionnaire A regarding their perceived CSR and demographic variables (gender, age, education level, and Length of Service). One month later, in the second phase, participants were asked to complete questionnaire B concerning employee organizational commitment and innovative behaviour. Prior to the survey, participants were informed of the academic purpose of the investigation. We assured them that their responses would be kept confidential and used solely for academic research. We

ensured that all items included in the survey were clear and comprehensive. The survey was administered only after obtaining consent from all participants involved in the study.

Before the formal distribution of the questionnaire, a small-scale pilot test was conducted. The analysis of the small-sample pilot test results indicated that the original model's scale reliability and validity passed the examination. The dimensionality was also consistent with the assumptions, demonstrating the applicability of these questionnaires. The variables exhibited good stability and consistency. Consequently, the questionnaire was deemed suitable for formal data collection.

Considering the response rate, to achieve the minimum required sample size of 385 for the research objectives (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970), 400 questionnaires were distributed. After excluding data with missing values and responses that did not meet the questionnaire requirements, the final dataset comprised 389 valid responses, resulting in an overall response rate of 97.25%. As depicted in the table, the sample includes 196 males and 193 females, with the majority of employees falling within the age range of 31 to 40. Approximately 50.13% of the workforce has organizational tenures of 4-6 years, and around 67.35% possess an undergraduate education or above. The majority of respondents have substantial tenure within the company, indicating a profound understanding of their work and organizational context. Moreover, this demographic, with a significant portion having received higher education, exhibits a reasonable familiarity with concepts such as CSR, organizational commitment, and innovative behaviour. They demonstrate a relatively high level of engagement with social responsibility information and are primary contributors to the company's innovative initiatives.

Table 1: Characterization of Demographic Variables.

Type	Category of Statistics	Frequency	Percent
Gender —	Male	196	50.39%
Gender	Female	193	49.61%
	Diploma and below	127	32.65%
Education	Bachelor's degree	202	51.93%
Education	Master's degree	51	13.11%
	Doctorate and above	9	2.31%
	3 year and below	49	12.60%
Length of Service	4-6 year	195	50.13%
Length of Service	7-9 year	101	25.96%
	10 year and above	44	11.31%
	30 and below	151	38.82%
Λ	31-40 years old	181	46.53%
Age	41-50 years old	48	12.34%
	50 above	9	2.31%

Measurement Scales

The Perceived Internal CSR Scale, adapted from Turker (2009a), is designed to elucidate the perspectives of employees regarding the CSR practices implemented by their organization. Consisting of six items, this scale is administered on a 5-point Likert scale, engaging respondents in self-reporting. Derived from the metrics developed by Skudiene & Auruskeviciene (2012), the Perceived External CSR Scale is specifically crafted for assessing employees' subjective perceptions of the organization's external CSR initiatives. Comprising ten items, it employs a 5-point Likert scale and relies on self-reporting by respondents.

The Employee Innovative Behaviour Scale utilized in this study originates from the scale employed by Scott & Bruce (1994). Extensively validated in previous related studies, this scale

measures employees' exploration, generation, promotion, and implementation of ideas across six items. Employing a 5-point Likert scale, respondents self-report their innovative behaviours.

This study adopts the classic three-factor Organizational Commitment Scale introduced by Meyer et al. (1993), encompassing affective, normative, and continuance commitment scales. Demonstrated to exhibit robust reliability and validity in prior studies, each scale comprises six questions. Operating on a 5-point Likert scale, it relies on the self-reporting method employed by respondents.

Common Method Bias

The utilization of a self-reporting format may introduce common method bias (Tsai et al., 2012; Farooq et al., 2017), yet this study employs procedural controls to mitigate this concern to the extent possible. Respondents were assured that the questionnaire data would be strictly confidential during and after the research activities, and used exclusively for academic research. The questionnaire items were framed based on respondents' subjective perceptions, with no standardized answers. Participants volunteered anonymously, completing the survey at their convenience and in the absence of researchers. The questionnaire refrained from an extensive introduction to the study to minimize participant anticipation. These measures collectively contribute to the reduction of common method bias issues.

Subsequently, Harman's single-factor test (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986) was employed to assess the presence of common method bias. The results of Harman's test indicate that the characteristic roots of the factor with the maximum explanatory power are 11.225, accounting for 28.063% of the total variance. This falls below the widely accepted threshold of 50%, suggesting the absence of a single factor explaining the majority of the variance. Examination of the indices from the single-factor test reveals no significant common method bias among the variables.

Results

Descriptive statistics

This study conducted a descriptive statistics analysis. Table 2 presents the mean values, standard deviations, and interrelationships among the research variables. It is discernible that the mean values of all variables are above 3. Among them, the mean value for the perceived external CSR is the highest, while the mean value for employee innovative behaviour is the lowest. This indicates a higher level of concurrence on the part of the survey participants regarding the research questions, coupled with a commendable willingness to engage. The standard deviations for the survey items generally range between 0.8 and 1.3, suggesting a relatively concentrated data distribution with moderate dispersion. The tolerance values of each variable exceed 0.20, and the variance inflation factor (VIF) value remains below 10. Consequently, no multicollinearity issues were detected among the variables (Thompson et al., 2017).

Table 2: Results of Descriptive Analyses.

Variable	Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation Statistic	Tolerance	VIF
PIC	4.000	0.833	0.826	1.211
PEC	4.034	0.783	0.747	1.339
AC	3.874	0.855	0.778	1.285
CC	3.697	0.874	0.746	1.341

NC	3.673	0.837	0.876	1.142
FIB	3 500	0.954		_

Notes: N = 389. PIC: Perceived Internal CSR; PEC: Perceived External CSR; AC: Affective Commitment; CC: Continuance Commitment; NC: Normative Commitment; EIB: Employee innovative behaviour.

Reliability and Validity

This study underwent a scrutiny of reliability and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Table 2 illustrates that Cronbach's α values for all constructs surpass 0.70, thereby substantiating the elevated reliability of the research constructs (Tabe., 2018). Simultaneously, Table 3 reveals that the average variance extracted (AVE) values all exceed 0.50, and all composite reliability (CR) values surpass 0.8. This further corroborates the convergent validity of the research model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), affirming the rationality of the questionnaire items and the commendable intrinsic quality of the model. All measurement items demonstrate acceptable reliability, and each dimension manifests robust convergent validity.

Furthermore, as indicated in Table 4, the square roots of the AVE values for each variable exceed the correlation coefficients between the variable and other variables. Therefore, the measurement model in this study exhibits sound discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Consequently, the reliability and validity of all research constructs are deemed commendable. The significant positive correlation among the variables supports our initial hypotheses.

Table3: Results of Convergent Reliability and Validity.

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading	CR	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha
	IR1	0.7677			
PIC -	IR2	0.7421			
	IR3	0.7627	0.891	0.578	0.890908
110	IR4	0.7673	0.071	0.576	0.070700
	IR5	0.7894			
	IR6	0.7286			
	ER1	0.7434			
	ER2	0.7159			
	ER3	0.6837			
	ER4	0.6894			
PEC	ER5	0.6575	0.909	0.501	0.909
PEC	ER6	0.748	0.909	0.501	
	ER7	0.7389			
=	ER8	0.6601			
	ER9	0.7238			
	ER10	0.7108			
	AC1	0.7752		0.554	0.880627
	AC2	0.7228			
AC	AC3	0.7391	0.001		
AC	AC4	0.7263	0.881		
	AC5	0.7736			
	AC6	0.725			
	CC1	0.7361		0.524	0.050
	CC2	0.7302			
CC	CC3	0.7258	0.872		
CC	CC4	0.7295	0.872	0.531	0.872
	CC5	0.736			
	CC6	0.7152			
	NC1	0.7299			
	NC2	0.7506			
NC	NC3	0.7034	0.866	0.519	0.86587
	NC4	0.7162			
_	NC5	0.7238			

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	NC6	0.6972			_
EIB —	IB1	0.7671			
	IB2	0.716	0.883		
	IB3	0.761		0.557	0.885
EID	IB4	0.7315		0.557	0.000
•	IB5	0.7541			
-	IB6	0.7448			

Table 4: Discriminant Validity.

Variable	PIC	PEC	AC	CC	NC	EIB
PIC	0.760					
PEC	0.272**	0.708				
AC	0.377**	0.421**	0.744			
CC	0.373**	0.476**	0.269**	0.729		
NC	0.256**	0.275**	0.167**	0.179**	0.72	
EIB	0.513**	0.581**	0.469**	0.531**	0.461**	0.746

^{*} p < 0.05 (two-tailed), *** p < 0.01 (two-tailed), **** p < 0.001(two-tailed). The bold items on the diagonal represent the square root of AVE; off-diagonal elements are the correlation estimates.

Structural Model Fit Test

This study employed a structural equation model for examination. employing the Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) method to conduct an in-depth examination of the model. Table 5 delineates the fit indices for the structural path model in this study. On the whole, all fit indices fall within the standard range. It can be deduced that the model demonstrates commendable goodness of fit (Hu & Bentler, 1998).

Table 5: Fit Indices for Models Tested.

χ2	df	χ^2 / df	NFI	GFI	CFI	IFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA
790.048	728	1.085	0.904	0.911	0.992	0.992	0.992	0.042	0.015

Hypothesis Testing

This study employed path analysis and mediation analysis to examine the validity of the proposed hypotheses. The final path coefficients and significance levels are depicted in Figure 1 and Table 6. From the test results, it is discerned that the perceived internal CSR (PIC) positively influences employee innovative behaviour (EIB), affective commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC), and normative commitment (NC), this supports H1, H3, H4, and H5. Perceived external CSR (PEC) also positively influences innovative behaviour (EIB), affective commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC) and normative commitment (NC), and this supports H2, H6, H7, and H8. Affective commitment (AC) positively affects employee innovative behaviour (EIB), continuance commitment (CC) positively affects employee innovative behaviour (EIB). This supports H9, H10, and H11.

Presently, the Bootstrap method is widely acknowledged as an effective approach for testing the mediation effects (Hayes, 2009). Therefore, within the SEM framework, this study utilizes both Bootstrap and path analysis to scrutinize the mediation effect. Specifically, 5,000 bootstrap resamples were conducted to scrutinize the multiple mediation effects in the model,

resulting in a 95% Bias Corrected confidence interval (BC 95% CI). Total effects, direct effects, and indirect effects are detailed in Table 7.

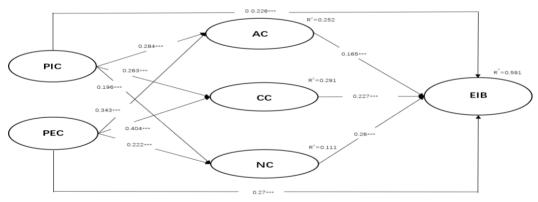
The mediation effects examination reveals that affective commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC), and normative commitment (NC) mediate the relationship between perceived internal CSR (PIC) and employee innovative behaviour (EIB). Similarly, affective commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC), and normative commitment (NC) mediate the relationship between perceived external CSR (PEC) and employee innovative behaviour (EIB). H12-H17 are confirmed. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that all mediation is deemed partial mediations. Table 8 summarizes the results of all hypothesis tests.

Table 6: Standardized	Path	Estimates.
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Paths	Standardized Coefficient	Standard Error	T-value (C.R.)	P-value
PIC →EIB	0.226	0.057	4.497	***
$PEC \rightarrow EIB$	0.271	0.062	4.943	***
$PIC \rightarrow AC$	0.284	0.057	5.073	***
PIC →CC	0.263	0.057	4.756	***
$PIC \rightarrow NC$	0.196	0.058	3.322	***
$PEC \rightarrow AC$	0.343	0.058	6.036	***
$PEC \rightarrow CC$	0.404	0.06	6.908	***
$PEC \rightarrow NC$	0.222	0.058	3.763	***
$AC \rightarrow EIB$	0.165	0.055	3.308	***
$CC \rightarrow EIB$	0.227	0.057	4.290	***
$NC \rightarrow EIB$	0.260	0.055	5.482	***

^{*} p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Figure 1: Path Parameter Estimates for The Mode



^{*} p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 7: Total, Direct and Indirect Effects.

Indirect Effect	Point Estimate	Standard Error -	BC 95%	6 CI	P-value
indirect Effect	Point Estimate	Standard Error -	Lower	Upper	P-value
$PIC \rightarrow AC \rightarrow EIB$	0.047	0.020	0.016	0.096	0.004
$PIC \rightarrow CC \rightarrow EIB$	0.060	0.023	0.028	0.124	0.001
$PIC \rightarrow NC \rightarrow EIB$	0.051	0.024	0.015	0.112	0.013
$PEC \rightarrow AC \rightarrow EIB$	0.057	0.021	0.024	0.103	0.004
$PEC \rightarrow CC \rightarrow EIB$	0.092	0.028	0.048	0.159	0.002
$PEC \rightarrow NC \rightarrow EIB$	0.058	0.021	0.025	0.113	0.002
		Direct Effect			
$PIC \rightarrow EIB$	0.226	0.063	0.086	0.334	0.009
PEC →EIB	0.271	0.058	0.165	0.392	0.003
	•	Total Effect	·		·

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$PIC \rightarrow AC \rightarrow EIB$	0.273	0.062	0.139	0.383	0.007
PIC →CC →EIB	0.286	0.063	0.138	0.393	0.009
$PIC \rightarrow NC \rightarrow EIB$	0.277	0.056	0.154	0.378	0.009
$PEC \rightarrow AC \rightarrow EIB$	0.327	0.058	0.222	0.449	0.002
$PEC \rightarrow CC \rightarrow EIB$	0.363	0.052	0.265	0.466	0.002
$PEC \rightarrow NC \rightarrow EIB$	0.329	0.057	0.213	0.439	0.003
		R-square			
AC					0.252
CC					0.291
NC					0.111
EIB					0.591

Table 8: Summary of Hypotheses Testing.

Hypotheses	Result
H1: perceived internal CSR is positively related to employee innovative behaviour.	Accepted
H2: perceived external CSR is positively related to employee innovative behaviour.	Accepted
H3: Perceived internal CSR is positively related to affective commitment	Accepted
H4: Perceived internal CSR is positively related to continuance commitment	Accepted
H5: Perceived internal CSR is positively related to normative commitment	Accepted
H6: Perceived external CSR is positively related to affective commitment	Accepted
H7: Perceived external CSR is positively related to continuance commitment	Accepted
H8: Perceived external CSR is positively related to normative commitment	Accepted
H9: Affective commitment is positively related to employee innovative behaviour	Accepted
H10: Continuance commitment is positively related to employee innovative behaviour	Accepted
H11: Normative commitment is positively related to employee innovative behaviour	Accepted
H12: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between perceived internal CSR and employee innovative behaviour.	Accepted
H13: Continuance commitment mediates the relationship between perceived internal CSR and employee innovative behaviour	Accepted
H14: Normative commitment mediates the relationship between perceived internal CSR and employee innovative behaviour	Accepted
H15: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between perceived external CSR and employee innovative behaviour	Accepted
H16: Continuance commitment mediates the relationship between perceived external CSR and employee innovative behaviour	Accepted
H17: Normative commitment mediates the relationship between perceived external CSR and employee innovative behaviour	Accepted

Discussion and Theoretical Implications

The study results indicate that, firstly, perceived CSR positively influences employee innovation behaviour, partially aligning with prior research (Chi-fen & Jer-Yan, 2020; Bibi et al., 2022; Alhumoudi et al., 2023). In essence, when an organization undertakes its CSR, employees can attain a positive perceptual outcome, ultimately influencing their behaviour. Different from these studies, this study categorizes employees' perceived CSR into two dimensions: perceived internal CSR and external CSR. This categorization facilitates a detailed exploration of the

distinct impacts of these dimensions on employees' innovative behaviour.

The results prove that employees' perceived internal CSR positively influences their innovative behaviour. As direct beneficiaries of internal CSR, employees experience heightened organizational focus on their welfare and are provided with more developmental opportunities (El Akremi et al., 2018). This environment enables continuous enhancement of skills and knowledge, fostering the generation of innovative ideas and activities among employees. Furthermore, in reciprocation for organizational care, employees are motivated to kindle creativity, contributing innovatively to the company (Hur et al., 2018).

The results also establish a noteworthy positive impact of employees' perceived external CSR on their innovative behaviour. Companies engaging in CSR garner positive reputations externally and attain commendable public recognition (Khojastehpour & Johns, 2014). This good reputation generates a sense of pride among employees (Chaudhary&Akhouri, 2018). It also enhances the convenience for companies to access external resources, including various technologies, capital, and talents (Boateng et al., 2022). The acquisition of these resources and acknowledgment of the company's responsible conduct stimulate employees' innovative capabilities (Hameed et al., 2016; Chaudhary & Akhouri, 2018), providing them with additional inspiration and opportunities for their innovative endeavours. Such employees demonstrate a proclivity for actively seeking the application of novel technologies, procedures, or methodologies in their work, thereby aiding the company in better fulfilling its societal responsibilities (De Roeck & Farooq, 2018). Moreover, CSR initiatives typically necessitate collaboration and coordination among various departments and personnel within the company, fostering team cooperation and collaborative innovation, thereby enhancing the occurrence of innovative behaviors among employees (Richter et al., 2021).

Simultaneously, this study unveils that the impact of perceived external CSR on employee innovative behaviour surpasses that of perceived internal CSR. In other words, concerning a company's discharge of corresponding responsibilities towards its employees, employees tend to exhibit more innovative behaviour when perceive the company's fulfilment of responsibilities to external stakeholders more effectively. This observation can be attributed to contemporary employees transcending the confines of meeting only their economic needs, emphasizing the realization of personal values more prominently (De Silva & De Silva Lokuwaduge, 2021). When a company actively undertakes responsibilities towards external stakeholders such as consumers and the environment, employees, while not direct beneficiaries, align more with the company's values due to the positive reputation generated by such actions (Newman et al., 2015; Hameed et al., 2016). In the pursuit of aligning their capabilities with corporate expectations, employees engage in more innovative behaviour to contribute to the company's enhanced development (Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2019).

In previous research, it has been generally posited that a corporation's fulfilment of internal CSR towards its employees constitutes an effective incentive mechanism, representing a primary determinant for fostering individual proactive behaviors (Onyishi, et al., 2020). However, through this study analysis, it becomes discernible that, relative to internal CSR, certain external CSR factors more effectively galvanize positive conduct. This external CSR encompasses facets such as corporate reputation, societal identification, and the company's values (Hui, Z., 2021). Specifically, while welfare provisions represent a component of internal CSR, their sphere of influence may be comparatively circumscribed. In contrast, external social responsibility factors, including corporate public image, sense of social responsibility, and contributions to the environment and society, may exert more profound and affirmative effects

on individual proactive behaviors. Internal CSR primarily operates through the direct material incentivization of individuals, whereas external CSR places a greater emphasis on affecting individuals at the psychological and emotional strata. The manifestation of external responsibility enables individuals to perceive positive contributions to society and the environment, thereby kindling their proactive behaviors. This contrasts with the effects solely reliant on internal incentive mechanisms, underscoring the unique role of external CSR in motivating innovative behaviors among employees. Consequently, it is important to recognize that, in cultivating employee innovative behaviors, organizations should comprehensively consider the significance of external CSR. Moreover, an awareness of potential disparities between external and internal CSR in shaping and motivating innovative behaviors necessitates more flexible management strategies to address this challenge.

Secondly, the results further affirm the positive impact of employees' perceived CSR on organizational commitment. In previous studies, some scholars argue that internal CSR enhances organizational commitment (Turker, 2009b), while some posit that external CSR has no significant effect on affective, normative, or continuance commitment (Hofman & Newman, 2014). Regarding the impact of organizational commitment on employee innovative behaviour, although some scholars confirm a positive influence (Nazir et al., 2018; Ghasempour Ganji et al., 2021; Fauziawati, 2021; Chen & Liu, 2022). There has been limited exploration of specific dimensions of organizational commitment. Typically, organizational commitment is treated as a singular concept or analysed solely from the perspective of affective commitment, lacking an examination of the comprehensive relationship between perceived internal and external CSR, affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment, and employee innovative behaviour.

This study reveals that the perceived internal and external CSR positively influences affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. The impact of employees' perceived internal CSR on affective commitment surpasses that of perceived external CSR. Conversely, in comparison to employees' perceived internal CSR, perceived external CSR holds greater sway over continuance commitment and normative commitment. This implies that organizations engaging in more proactive internal CSR practices are more likely to fortify employees' affective commitment. organizations involved in more proactive external CSR practices are more likely to enhance employees' continuance commitment and normative commitment. This is because, when organizations actively undertake CSR responsibilities towards external stakeholders such as consumers and the environment, employees, though not direct beneficiaries, recognize the positive outcomes of these actions, aligning more closely with the organizational values (Tian & Robertson, 2019). When employees' values align with those of the organization, a significant emotional bond is formed, fostering a profound sense of responsibility (Diatmono, 2019) and nurturing a robust commitment (Lu et al., 2020). This sense of responsibility contributes to their normative commitment, elevating their willingness to engage in long-term employment with the company, thereby augmenting their levels of continuance commitment.

Thirdly, this study discerns that in addition to the significant impact of perceived CSR on employee innovative behaviour, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment also exert positive influences on employee innovative behaviour. The observed relationships among the perceived internal and external CSR, organizational commitment dimensions, and employee innovative behaviour align with causal relationships

identified in mediation effects (Sobel, 1982; Baron and Kenny, 1986; MacKinnon et al., 2007). That is to say, the multiple mediating roles of various dimensions of organizational commitment in the relationship between employees' perceived CSR and innovative behaviour. This is a relatively lacking perspective in previous research. This study suggests that employees' perceived CSR can directly affect their innovative behaviour. Additionally, it can exert a notable indirect effect on employee innovative behaviour through the mediating variables of affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. This influence aligns well with the S-O-R theory (Wu et al., 2022). Specifically, the impact of employees' perceived CSR on their innovative behaviour is a nuanced process involving stimuli (S), organismic responses (O), and subsequent behaviour (R). Organizational commitment elucidates the internal psychological processes of individuals perceiving the environment and generating specific behaviors (Khaleel et al., 2017), serving as the organismic mediator in the S-O-R relationship. It connects the perceived CSR (S) to employee innovative behaviour (R). This suggests that when employees perceive high levels of internal CSR, they perceive the company as providing a favourable work environment, compensation, benefits, career development, education, and training opportunities (Ahmed & Tahir, 2019). Employees are more likely to develop affective, continue to stay in the company, adhere to norms, take on responsibilities, and engage in innovative behaviors as a reciprocation of organizational care. When employees perceive high levels of external CSR, they believe the company creates value for customers and society, maintains a positive reputation, and fosters positive relationships with stakeholders (Diatmono, 2019; Tian & Robertson, 2019). In such instances, employees strengthen their emotional connection with the company, become more inclined to stay, assume responsibilities, and exhibit better affective, continuance, and normative commitment, thereby fostering behaviors conducive to corporate innovation. Affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment emerge as effective mediating factors in the relationship between employees' perceived internal and external CSR and their innovative behaviour.

Furthermore, this study indicates that different types of commitments contribute slightly differently to the mediation effect. In the process of the impact of perceived internal CSR on innovative behaviour, affective commitment plays a more significant mediating role than continuance and normative commitment. Conversely, in the process of the impact of perceived external CSR on innovative behaviour, continuance commitment exhibits a stronger mediating effect. Therefore, when organizations navigate the realms of internal and external CSR, it becomes evident that a comprehensive understanding of their effects is vital.

Practical Implications

Based on the discussion, it becomes evident that when employees effectively perceive a company's fulfilment of social responsibility, it contributes to enhancing their innovative behaviour. The improvement of innovative behaviour is the basis for enhancing a company's competitive advantage (Flammer & Kacperczyk, 2019). Therefore, enterprises need to take a series of measures to bolster the publicity and communication of CSR activities. This ensures that employees authentically perceive the implementation of CSR measures. Simultaneously, there is a need to shift from the traditional perspective of viewing CSR as a managerial burden. Instead, actively integrate social responsibility into the development strategy and daily operational management. When formulating company strategies and decisions, considerations should extend beyond the needs of internal stakeholders, comprehensively evaluating the

demands of external stakeholders. Only through effective coordination of internal and external CSR activities can the promotion of employees' innovative behaviour be fully realized. However, under conditions of limited resources, allocating more resources to implement external CSR initiatives may be more effective in enhancing employee innovation outcomes.

Additionally, empirical research indicates that organizational commitment plays a mediating role in the relationship between employees' perceived internal and external CSR and innovative behaviour. We suggest that corporate managers should prioritize employees' psychological well-being, intertwining the fulfilment of CSR with employees' organizational commitment. Strengthening organizational commitment can magnify the positive impact of perceived CSR on employee innovative behaviour. Specifically, concerning affective commitment, organizations should augment care and trust in employees, facilitating the establishment of stronger emotional bonds with the organization. To enhance continuance commitment, continual improvement of the company's image, fostering employee identification, formulating long-term talent plans, and ongoing enhancement of the working environment coupled with the implementation of reasonable incentive measures. to improve normative commitment, efforts should focus on heightening employees' alignment with the company's values, fostering a sense of responsibility, and promoting positive innovative behaviour.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the primary objective of this study is to scrutinize the impact of employees' perceived CSR on their innovative behaviour. Additionally, the study aims to analyse the mediating roles of various dimensions of organizational commitment in the relationship between employees' perceived CSR and innovative behaviour. The intention is to elucidate the diverse mechanisms and operational dynamics underlying the relationship between the employee's perceived CSR and their innovative behaviour. In the course of further empirical scrutiny, it was discerned that the perceived internal and external CSR exerted positive and significant impacts on employee innovative behaviour, as well as affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Specifically, the impact of perceived external CSR on employee innovative behaviour was notably more pronounced. Furthermore, the influence of perceived internal CSR on affective commitment was considerable, while the impact of perceived external CSR on continuance commitment and normative commitment surpassed that of perceived internal CSR.

Simultaneously, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment all exhibited substantial positive effects on employee innovative behaviour. Significantly, the influence of normative commitment on employee innovative behaviour outweighed that of affective commitment and continuance commitment. It is worth mentioning that this study additionally validated the mediating roles of affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment in the relationship between perceived internal and external CSR and employee innovative behaviour. This implies that the impact of perceived internal and external CSR extends beyond a direct pathway to organizational commitment but also indirectly influences innovative behaviour through its effects on organizational commitment. Specifically, in the mediating relationship between perceived internal CSR and employee innovative behaviour, the mediating effect of affective commitment was relatively prominent. In the mediating effect of continuance commitment was relatively prominent. this

study expands the research on the multiple mediating mechanisms between perceived CSR and employee innovative behaviour. It enriches the micro-level research on employees in Chinese enterprises, addressing a gap in the literature. This study provides a broad perspective on the complex relationship between CSR and the attitudes and behaviours of employees, offering insights to help business managers recognize new driving factors and mechanisms for employee innovation in practice.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study has certain limitations, such as reliance on self-reported data and the cross-sectional nature of the research, which may limit causal inferences. Future research could employ longitudinal designs and objective measurements to further investigate these relationships.

Additionally, this study is subject to constraints in terms of cost and resources, preventing a comprehensive survey of the entire population. Conducting larger-scale sampling surveys across countries, regions, multiple industries, and companies of different natures in the future would be conducive to the broader applicability and generalization of the study results.

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