



# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY RESEARCH

## »» What is Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been discussed and defined for most of the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Rahman 2011). In the 1950s, Heald (1957) gave this definition of CSR: CSR is recognition on the part of management of an obligation to the society it serves not only for maximum economic performance but for humane and constructive social policies as well. Today, the European Commission defines CSR as: the responsibility of enterprises for their impact on society. The definition of CSR has changed over time and from country-to-country, but its importance to a company's well-being has steadily increased as has the focus on it by internal and external stakeholders. This focus and the evolving definition of CSR, have given rise to many studies on the theory and practice of CSR. Many of those studies, especially in the last 20 years have, used mixed-methods qualitative and quantitative software such as QDA Miner and WordStat to assist in the analysis of the CSR literature and data gathered from many sources including annual reports, letters to shareholders, 10-ks, environmental reports, press releases and interviews.

# » Systematic CSR Literature Review Using QDA Miner and WordStat

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In the first extensive, systematic analysis of the industry-specific CSR scholarly literature, Marina et al. (2016) used Provalis Research software, QDA Miner, to analyze and map the first 20 years of CSR research studies where industry played a role, beginning with the first CSR study in January 1995. They relied upon the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) database, including all journals indexed and abstracted there that focused on the interconnection between CSR and industry.

In this study, Marina et al. (2016) examined the interest in CSR that various industries attract, the current state of CSR research in industries, and what the research trajectories looked like. This included the identification and analysis of the industry-specific issues and attitudes toward CSR within different industries. The authors used WordStat's wildcard "\*" feature to help identify all the variations and combinations of corporate social responsibility, industry, and sector, as well as all of the various splinters each term produced in the first 20 years of CSR research.

Marina et al. (2016) then used QDA Miner to extract the list of papers and then manually verified that the results were valid and classified correctly. The massive list contained over 800 keywords. QDA Miner was then used to manually code the sectors and industries referred to in the articles, using the United Nations' International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC), and group them into industry/economic subcategories to facilitate further analysis. QDA Miner also allowed the authors to identify a selection of representative (most cited) articles that could be read and analyzed in further detail. Using QDA Miner, Marina et al. were able to quickly identify the various theories, methods, and data used in the studies and provide in-depth analyses on the various interconnections between CSR and the industries involved in the practice, and systematically identify the research gaps that would inform future research.

Through their analysis with QDA Miner and WordStat, Marina et al. (2016) were able to develop numerous insights into the roles industries played in CSR studies, including when research studies were not clear enough about industry

influences. They examined the most frequently studied industries and examined the studies to determine the degree to which industry-category studies focused solely on their own industry or compared it to others in cross-sector studies, when studies sought to examine industry-level differences in CSR practices, and when industry was simply used as a control variable for insights about other organizational outcomes. Importantly, the authors were able to demonstrate how some industries were "over studied" while many more were simply neglected altogether.

The most important contribution Marina et al. (2016) were able to make was to systematically demonstrate the highly contextual nature of CSR practices, a claim commonly made in previous CSR research, but one based mostly on anecdotal evidence at best. Their analysis with QDA Miner and WordStat helped to illustrate how policymakers need to better understand the influence of industry context on CSR. Such understanding enables them to develop policies that take into account the specific feature of different industrial contexts, rather than merely setting forth "one size fits all" measures.



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# » Content Analysis of CSR Using QDA Miner and WordStat

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As CSR becomes more and more mainstream with large and small companies around the globe, studies and analysis of not only the communication but also the effects of CSR programs and policy are increasing.

These studies are being conducted by academics, activist shareholder groups, financial analysts, environmentalists, ethicists and many others. Much of this analysis is done using available public communication such as 10-Ks, websites, press releases, annual reports and also through direct interviews with company personnel. The following are examples of such studies and how QDA Miner and WordStat were used in the research.

Talbot and Boiral (2015) examined the justifications managers gave for their companies' negative environmental impacts. They relied on an inductive qualitative approach involving in-depth interviews and analysis of public documents. They conducted 32 in-depth interviews with managers and environmental specialists tied to 10 case studies of large industrial emitters in Canada whose facilities and operations were tied to global warming. Previous studies only analyzed publicly available sustainability reports, rather than talking to managers themselves. Talbot and Boiral (2015) used QDA Miner for their analysis. They recorded and transcribed the interviews, producing 1,110 pages of transcripts, and supplemented their interviews with formal information from more official, public documents. QDA Miner enables a systematic inductive approach to classify, compare, and interpret qualitative data in line with the expectations of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

The clarity of Talbot and Boiral's (2015) coding work enabled them to find a parallel between their results and the literature on defensive management strategies tied to impression management theory and on neutralization techniques.

Luo et al (2012) used WordStat to perform text analysis on news reports about oil spills. The authors employed the General Inquiry Dictionary in their analysis, a dictionary that includes markers for affection. The General Inquiry combines large content dictionaries such as the Lasswell Value Dictionary and the Harvard Psycho-Sociological Dictionary. Because the authors are interested to see which editors

and journalists use positive language to describe a negative event, they focus on positive, emotion-bearing words.

The General Inquiry Dictionary contains 1915 words and phrases related to those expressions. To account for variation in the frequency with which media outlets use emotion-bearing words in their oil-spill reports, their measure for tone is the percentage of positive words among all emotion-bearing words in each newspaper article. They use the text mining tool, WordStat, to determine this ratio.

In their paper, Richards and Zellweger (2017) collected data about CSR using different public communications tools such as websites or press releases, then built a categorization dictionary with WordStat and used this text mining tool to analyze different concepts that suggest that firms primarily rely on two distinct sets of legitimacy principles that reflect their identity orientation: the 'civic and green' world and the 'domestic' world. Specifically, the results show that reliance on the domestic world is negatively related to firms' investment in sustainability certifications. The findings also suggest that the strength of the relationship between these distinct methods of moral legitimizing and certification varies depending on whether firms are characterized by first- or multi-generation family control.

Lock and Seele (2016) used QDA Miner and WordStat to analyze 237 corporate CSR reports. The study was focused on the credibility of CSR reports. The authors used manual coding, text mining and quantitative data analysis software. Balance and readability analyses were performed using QDA Miner, WordStat and Flesch. Balance of language was calculated with QDA Miner and WordStat and the WordStat sentiment dictionary that classifies words into positive versus negative.





## >> Some Studies Using QDA Miner and WordStat

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