

# Navigating remote work: the role of corporate social responsibility in boosting employee engagement

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## Navegando por el trabajo a distancia: El papel de la responsabilidad social corporativa en el fomento del compromiso de los empleados

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### Abstract

**Purpose** – This paper investigates the relationship between teleworkers' perceptions of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and employee engagement (EE) in remote work.

**Design/methodology/approach** – A quantitative research approach was used, involving a questionnaire distributed via convenience sampling. Data from 205 valid responses from teleworking employees in Spain were analysed using structural equation modelling to test the hypothesis regarding the association between CSR and EE.

**Findings** – The study found that CSR's social and environmental dimensions positively impact EE among teleworkers. However, the economic dimension of CSR only partially influences EE in a telework setting.

**Practical implications** – The findings suggest organisations can enhance EE during telework periods by focusing on social and environmental CSR initiatives. This approach can mitigate the reduced EE associated with remote work, improving organisational performance, productivity, satisfaction and employee well-being.

**Originality/value** – This study provides empirical evidence on the positive effects of CSR's social and environmental dimensions on EE in a telework context, offering valuable insights for organisations navigating the post-pandemic landscape. Also, specific CSR strategies can establish a competitive advantage by fostering a motivated and engaged remote workforce.

**Keywords** Employee engagement, Corporate social responsibility, Telework, Human resource management, Structural model

**Paper type** Research paper

### Resumen

**Propósito** – Este artículo investiga la relación entre las percepciones de los teletrabajadores sobre la responsabilidad social corporativa (RSC) y el compromiso de los empleados (EE) en el trabajo remoto.



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**Diseño/metodología/enfoque** – Se utilizó un enfoque de investigación cuantitativa, mediante un cuestionario distribuido a través de un muestreo por conveniencia. Se analizaron datos de 205 respuestas válidas de empleados teletrabajadores en España utilizando modelos de ecuaciones estructurales para probar la hipótesis sobre la asociación entre RSC y EE.

**Hallazgos** – El estudio encontró que las dimensiones sociales y ambientales de la RSC impactan positivamente en el EE entre los teletrabajadores. Sin embargo, la dimensión económica de la RSC solo influye parcialmente en el EE en un entorno de teletrabajo.

**Implicaciones prácticas** – Los hallazgos sugieren que las organizaciones pueden mejorar el EE durante los períodos de teletrabajo al enfocarse en iniciativas de RSC social y ambiental. Este enfoque puede mitigar la reducción del EE asociada con el trabajo remoto, mejorando el rendimiento organizacional, la productividad, la satisfacción y el bienestar de los empleados.

**Originalidad/valor** – Este estudio proporciona evidencia empírica sobre los efectos positivos de las dimensiones sociales y ambientales de la RSC en el EE en un contexto de teletrabajo, ofreciendo valiosas ideas para las organizaciones que navegan el paisaje post-pandémico. Además, estrategias específicas de RSC pueden establecer una ventaja competitiva al fomentar una fuerza laboral remota motivada y comprometida.

**Palabras clave** Compromiso de los empleados, Responsabilidad social corporativa, Teletrabajo, Gestión de recursos humanos, Modelo estructural

**Tipo de papel** Trabajo de investigación

## 1. Introduction

In recent decades, employee engagement (EE) has been considered an essential resource for the organisation's success (Malik *et al.*, 2023; Gómez-Chacón *et al.*, 2020; Chinelato *et al.*, 2020). EE can be defined as employees' degree of attachment and loyalty towards their organisation (Harter *et al.*, 2002). EE multiplies the likelihood of corporate success by fostering organisational and individual performance, productivity and employee well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to the workforce (Wood *et al.*, 2022), compelling numerous employees worldwide to engage in part (or full-time) remote work (Chin *et al.*, 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic has established remote work as the new normal (Ng *et al.*, 2022), and this shift towards remote work brought by the pandemic affects work engagement (Prodanova and Kocarev, 2021; Tsang *et al.*, 2023). With the rise of remote workplaces, employees and management are located in different areas during work hours, and the challenge is to keep the employees engaged and motivated (Chanana and Sangeeta, 2021).

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Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a way of thinking where businesses actively incorporate social and environmental issues into their business decisions and interactions with stakeholders (Jang and Ardichvili, 2020; Nazir *et al.*, 2021). CSR is used as a mechanism to influence the licenses that society grants to companies to develop their business (Cuesta-Valiño *et al.*, 2019). CSR mainly aims for excellence in the organisation, with particular attention paid to employees, with the addition of three facets or dimensions of CSR: economic, social and environmental (Briones Peñalver *et al.*, 2018). Recent references on the link between CSR and EE exist in previous literature. Employees' perceptions of CSR in their workplaces are positively related to EE, and the strength and drivers of this relationship may vary depending on the cultural, social and economic context (Farrukh *et al.*, 2019). For example, research on the effects of CSR in EE appears to be a topic of particular interest in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many workers carry out their activity in the teleworking modality (Núñez-Sánchez *et al.*, 2021). In the telework context, EE research can be especially challenging in understanding the complex mechanism by which CSR develops (Bapuji *et al.*, 2020). Then, determining how teleworkers perceive and react to CSR initiatives is essential to implementing and increasing EE (Aguinis *et al.*, 2020; Bapuji *et al.*, 2020).

The present study analyses the effects of CSR on EE in a telework environment, which has yet to be answered in the previous literature. For this purpose, a structural model has been built based on the information obtained from 205 teleworkers of Spanish companies in

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2022. The results show essential contributions to the literature on CRS and EE, confirming that EE may be fostered in telework times by implementing actions that improve CSR's social and environmental dimensions.

This work is organized as follows: After this introduction, the previous literature on CSR and EE is analysed, and the research hypotheses are formulated. Secondly, data and methodology are detailed. Finally, the results obtained, the main conclusions, future lines of research and management implications are presented.

## 2. Literature review and hypotheses research

### 2.1 Employee engagement

According to [Schaufeli et al. \(2002\)](#), EE refers to a satisfactory cognitive-affective state of the work carried out in the company. In this sense, EE is an employee's level of attachment and loyalty to their company, and the consistent behavioural performance helps the company meet its objectives ([Harter et al., 2002](#)). The tendency of engaged workers to exert extra effort in all areas of their work is a crucial competitive advantage for firms ([Chinelato et al., 2020](#); [Harter et al., 2013](#); [Truss et al., 2013](#)). Additionally, motivated staff members are more dependable and flexible ([Van Allen, 2013](#)). A disengaged workforce is expensive for businesses worldwide ([Harter et al., 2010](#)). However, having a high EE can be advantageous for companies due to the rise in productivity, the well-being of their workers ([Shuck and Reio, 2014](#)) and their loyalty ([Nguyen and Ha, 2023](#)). Therefore, organisations are implementing actions to improve their workforce's health and quality of life, enhancing the employees' five strengths: EE, resilience, self-efficacy, optimism and hope ([Gómez-Chacón et al., 2020](#)).

Different strategies can be found to enhance EE. First, top-down strategies try to implement human resource management systems to facilitate the work commitment of employees. Second, proactive approaches are based on self-management, work elaboration, strengths and the mobilization of employee resources ([Bakker and Leiter, 2017](#)). Human resource management and transformational leadership initiatives can significantly impact EE through an enriched work environment. At the same time, employees can also influence their own EE levels by being proactive. In any case, higher EE is more likely to be found in organisations with a clear strategy of providing resources to their employees and in which employees, in turn, engage in proactive behaviours daily, such as creating assignments and using strengths.

The telework processes have driven essential changes in the work and social environment, creating challenges for organisations, particularly human resource management ([Carnevale and Hatak, 2020](#)). Telework and new workplace procedures affect workers and companies ([Chawla et al., 2020](#)). For example, workers face increased workloads, reduced rest periods, layoffs and pay cuts, which increase levels of uncertainty in the workforce ([International Labour Organization, 2020](#)). Companies must also face fundamental challenges related to new protocols and health measures to protect physical and mental health ([Parker, 2020](#)). Telework implies many physical, social, and psychological changes to working life, such as greater autonomy, reduced social support, blurred boundaries between work and personal life and greater intensity in using ICT tools ([Larte and Randall, 2021](#); [Nguyen and Tran, 2021](#)).

These changes brought about by workplace transitions, in turn, influence EE. [Sardeshmukh et al. \(2012\)](#) found that remote work is negatively associated with EE. However, the previous literature needs to have consistent results regarding the impact on EE. For example, [Mutha and Srivastava \(2021\)](#) showed that leaders play an essential role in EE in virtual environments. Their findings emphasize that trust between team members affects EE and that trust mediates the relationship between leadership communication effectiveness and EE of virtual employees. [Kandil and Moustafa \(2021\)](#) examined the effect of virtual leadership practices, finding that some virtual leadership practices significantly affected dimensions of EE. [Galanti et al. \(2021\)](#) investigated the impact of work-family conflicts, social

isolation, job autonomy, and self-leadership on productivity and EE during telework. An online questionnaire of 209 employees determined that family–work conflict and employee social isolation were negatively related to EE, while self-leadership and autonomy were positively correlated. Recently, a study on public teleworkers pointed out that autonomy and collaboration are two main factors influencing EE. However, no change in the EE level was found before or during the virtual work period (Giauque *et al.*, 2022). Similarly, a crossover study could not find effects over time on EE from digital communication and collaboration competencies during the COVID-19 period (Oberländer and Bipp, 2022).

### *2.2 Corporate social responsibility and employee engagement*

CSR is a way of thinking where businesses actively incorporate social and environmental issues into their business decisions and interactions with stakeholders (European Commission, 2011). CSR can also be treated as a multidimensional construct (Baumgartner and Ebner, 2010; Bansal and Roth, 2000; Chen *et al.*, 2008), since companies must develop an acceptable behaviour closely related to the principles of sustainability to make decisions based not only on economic factors such as profit (economic dimension) but also based on the social (social dimension) and environmental (environmental dimension) impacts of their activities (Singh and Singh, 2013; Baumgartner and Ebner, 2010; Ness *et al.*, 2007). These CSR activities have become increasingly prevalent in companies (Lawrence *et al.*, 2024), as CSR is also an opportunity for economic management to generate new incomes through innovation, differentiation and the distribution of products to new customers. Environmental management reduces costs and improves productivity. In addition, keeping social causes in mind makes it possible to anticipate new regulations and avoid reputational risks that damage the company's image (Waldman *et al.*, 2006; Opoku-Dakwa *et al.*, 2018).

In the past, a company's CSR programmes had a strategic goal of using its environmental and social practices to improve its standing with its external stakeholders while emphasizing organisational-level outcomes (for example, corporate image, financial performance and competitiveness). However, companies are starting to realize that some of these same CSR initiatives can also affect internal stakeholders, which in turn could affect the corporation (Aguinis and Glavas, 2013; Gond *et al.*, 2017; Jang and Ardichvili, 2020; Jones *et al.*, 2017; Nazir *et al.*, 2021). In this sense, recent references to the link between CSR and EE can be found. Some of the research examined how employees felt about the CSR efforts of their employers and whether employee involvement in CSR is related to EE. For instance, Glavas and Piderit (2009) discovered a favourable relationship between EE and employees' opinions of their employers' CSR. The relevance of CSR to the employee improved this relationship. Similarly, Rupp and Mallory (2015) discovered that employee views of a company's CSR initiatives are connected to higher EE. However, they contend that the strength and drivers of this relationship may range across different cultural regions. For their part, Gullekson *et al.* (2021), Glavas and Kelley (2014), Glavas (2012), Gond *et al.* (2017) and Nazir and Islam (2020) have also contributed to research on CSR programmes by linking them to individual-level outcomes, such as the EE. In this context, some studies have focused on why CSR could increase EE since CSR can involve part of the workforce. Studies by Christian *et al.* (2011) and Grant (2007) found that many employees describe their job purpose in terms of making a positive difference in the lives of others and that this prosocial difference (e.g. through CSR initiatives) becomes essential for motivation and EE. Glavas (2016) finds a link between CSR and EE. Still, that link is positively and considerably mediated by authenticity (i.e. being able to show the whole of oneself at work). Nazir and Islam (2020) reached similar conclusions on hospitality workers, discovering an excellent correlation between CSR activities and EE.

Consequently, CSR enables companies to perform beyond what is written in value statements and translate it into practice. For example, employees can assimilate the valid

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values of the company, and CSR can be used as a guide to help employees achieve greater meaning at work (Christensen *et al.*, 2014). According to Rosso *et al.* (2010), businesses should use CSR to inspire people to pursue loftier goals. Similarly, Grant *et al.* (2008) noted that workers feel better knowing their impact on society. This enhances their perception of themselves and makes them more conscious of the company's identity.

Social exchange theory can also explain the relationship between the perception of CSR and EE. Employees feel obligated to contribute through strong organisational citizenship and pro-environmental and participative behaviours when they believe organisations plan and implement various economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic actions. A psychological connection to the company is formed in this situation, enabling workers to engage more passionately in their jobs and organisational tasks (Michailides and Lipsett, 2013). Managers show that employees' well-being is essential by implementing CSR practices to improve society, the environment, customers and other stakeholders (Ferreira and Real de Oliveira, 2014). In these circumstances, the reciprocity rule encourages employees to try to fulfil their obligations and aid in achieving organisational objectives due to their desire to contribute to the accomplishment of collective goals, which enables individuals to have more dependable and high-quality relationships with the firm; their EE level increases significantly (Saks, 2006).

Another relevant perspective to explain the relationship between CSR and EE is the theory of social learning (Bandura, 1977), proposing that behavioural expectations and norms are learnt through observing role models. Thus, when organisations implement CSR policies aimed at uplifting society and caring for the environment, they make employees feel responsible and tend to show intentions to engage in behaviours that can improve everyone's lives (Afsar *et al.*, 2020). In a company where socially accountable actions are valued, emphasized and regarded as standards of conduct, employees will model the behaviours shown by leaders and thus increase their EE levels (Klimkiewicz and Oltra, 2017).

Research focusing on the positive impact of CSR on EE is more crucial than ever in the context of new work environments, such as that resulting from telework (Bapuji *et al.*, 2020). However, conducting this type of research can be challenging when trying to make sense of the intricate body of CSR work. Differentiating the types of CSR policies that companies could apply in response to telework and their corresponding impact on employees is a first step to understanding the implications of CSR from an EE perspective (Aguinis *et al.*, 2020).

### 2.3 Hypotheses development

With the rapid increase of CSR practices, a question about how CSR affects employees' attitudes and behaviours has become crucial (Farooq *et al.*, 2014). Recent references to the link between CSR and EE are found in previous literature. Bikefe *et al.* (2020) understand that companies must consider their employees' perceptions before making decisions about CSR implementation since employees are the drivers of this CSR (Davies and Crane, 2010; Sendlhofer, 2020). Some of the previous research also found that employees' perceptions of their organisations' CSR are positively related to EE but that the extent and motivations of this relationship may vary across different cultural values (Gullekson *et al.*, 2021; Gond *et al.*, 2017; Nazir and Islam, 2020). Furthermore, research on the impact of CSR on EE seems to be of essential importance in the context of telework. Still, this type of research can be challenging in understanding the complex mechanism through which it develops CSR (Bapuji *et al.*, 2020). In this regard, previous literature proposes that the first step in understanding the effects of CSR using an EE perspective is to distinguish the types of CSR policies companies can implement and their respective impacts on employees. Likewise, CSR is useful and necessary, especially in the wake of remote work, and how employees perceive and react to CSR initiatives is crucial in implementing and increasing EE (Aguinis *et al.*,

2020). Specifically, new studies are required to identify each effect of the different dimensions of CSR to see if these dimensions have similar or other impacts on the EE (Afsar *et al.*, 2020). In these business activity changes due to telework, the economic dimension of CSR may not be enough to maintain the level of EE. It would be necessary to understand and communicate to the staff the superior benefits companies offer in all their activities and areas of action, including social and environmental aspects (Mani and Mishra, 2020).

Taking into account that the effect of the perception that employees have of their company's CSR on the EE is a topic of particular relevance (Aguinis *et al.*, 2020; Bapuji *et al.*, 2020) and that this perception can be conditioned by the new working contexts (Rupp and Mallory, 2015), it is essential to know how this perception of CSR is constructed and what is the mechanism by which its effects are propagated in a more extensive EE. Finally, the present study attempts to answer the research question related to the perception of CSR by employees and its repercussions on EE in the telework context, which has not been answered in previous literature as it may not comprehensively capture the intricacies associated with remote work amidst the pandemic (Tsang *et al.*, 2023). CSR literature has broadly demonstrated the effects of CSR on employees' behaviour but has mostly been limited to employees' behaviour within the work domain (Koch-Bayram and Biemann, 2024) and not in the telework domain. It is all about knowing if, in the telework context, employees perceive the three dimensions of CSR equally. On the contrary, this environment causes changes that imply that some dimensions acquire particular importance in EE. To answer this research question, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

First, to test whether the social dimension of CSR has a significant relationship with EE, it postulates the first research hypothesis as follows:

*H1.* The social dimension of CSR perceived by teleworkers positively influences EE.

Second, to test whether the economic dimension of CSR perceived by teleworkers has positive effects on EE levels, the second research hypothesis is formulated in the following terms:

*H2.* The economic dimension of CSR perceived by teleworkers positively influences EE.

Finally, the third research hypothesis refers to the environmental dimension of CSR and its effects on EE. This hypothesis is postulated as follows:

*H3.* The environmental dimension of CSR perceived by teleworkers positively influences EE.

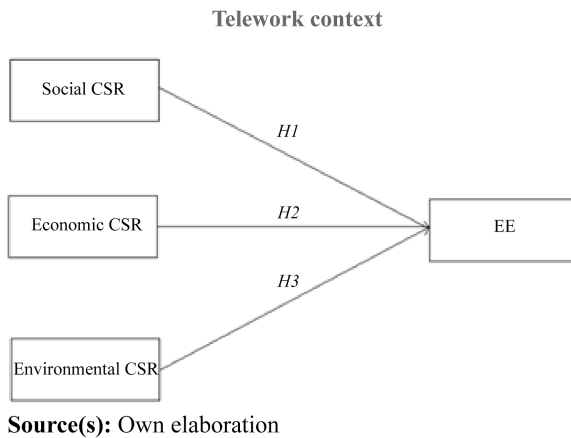
Consequently, researchers proposed the research model shown in Figure 1.

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### 3. Methodology and data analysis

#### 3.1 Data and sample

A quantitative research approach was employed for this study, involving the systematic distribution of a structured questionnaire. The sampling technique was convenience sampling of Spanish companies selected according to geographic quota and gender criteria. The convenience method is often used in social research (Sirakaya *et al.*, 2003). In order not to exclude or limit the scope of the investigation too much, both remote work and telework have been included because although one refers to an utterly off-site employee and the other refers to a partially off-site employee, both are exposed to the challenges of the new work context (Parris, 2018). The information was collected from a structured online questionnaire during September and October 2022. A total of 205 questionnaires were obtained. The data collection process resulted in a sampling error of 6.8% and a confidence level of 95%. The profile of the interviewees was 48.8% women and 51.2% men; 46.3% are technicians, 35.1% are managers or middle managers and 18.5% hold managerial positions. Regarding



**Figure 1.**  
Research hypotheses

the company's size, 19.6% are microenterprises, 19.1% are small, 20.1% are medium-sized and 41.2% are large companies. In addition, regarding work experience, 10.2% have 0–3 years, 13.7% 4–10 years, 38.5% 11–20 years and 37.6% more than 20 years. The mean age of the respondents is 42.81 years (with a standard deviation of 8.61).

### 3.2 Study measures

The EE measurement tool used in this research was the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-9 (UWES-9), developed by [Schaufeli et al. \(2003\)](#). This tool contains 12 items grouped into three measurement aspects (vigour, dedication and absorption). For their part, the three constructs that refer to the dimensions of CSR are reflective because they are very suitable for understanding people's behaviour ([Mercadé-Melé et al., 2017](#)). According to [Bansal \(2005\)](#), the first construct (Social CSR) comprises six items. The second (Economic CSR) is made up of four items and the third (Environmental CSR) is made up of ten items, all of them adopted from the previous literature on CSR and EE ([Farrukh et al., 2019](#); [Afsar et al., 2020](#)). The questions were formulated on a Likert-type scale with five positions, where 1 indicates totally disagree and 5 totally agree ([Table 1](#)).

T1 The model was estimated with the STATA 14 software, and the recommendations of [Anderson and Weitz \(1992\)](#) have been followed for its analysis. The psychometric properties and causal relationships of the hypotheses under study have been analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM).

### 3.3 Psychometric properties of the measurement model

T2 [Table 2](#) shows the psychometric properties of reliability, goodness and validity measures. All measures of reliability are met. The average variance extracted (AVE) is greater than 0.5 in all the constructs ([Fornell and Larcker, 1981](#)), the composite reliability index (CRI) is higher than 0.7 ([Fornell and Larcker, 1981](#)), and the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) is suitable as it is higher than 0.7 ([Cronbach, 1951](#)). Regarding the validity measures, the coefficients of standardized loadings and their averages are adequate, higher than 0.5 and 0.7, respectively ([Hair et al., 2005](#)). Therefore, the convergent validity is satisfied. Likewise, the measures of goodness, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is less than 0.08 ([Steiger, 1990](#)) and the comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) are close to 1 ([Hu and Bentler, 1999](#)). On the other hand, [Table 3](#) shows the discriminant analysis results, proving that none

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Factor	Item	Description
Social dimension of CSR (Social CSR)	CSR1	Considered interests of stakeholders in investment decisions by creating a formal dialogue
	CSR 2	Communicated the firm's environmental impacts and risk to the general public
	CSR 3	Improved employee or community health and safety
	CSR 4	Protected claims and rights of aboriginal peoples or local community
	CSR 5	Showed concern for the visual aspects of the firm's facilities and operations
	CSR 6	Recognized and acted on the need to fund local community initiatives
Economic dimension of CSR (Economic CSR)	CSR 7	Worked with government officials to protect the company's interests
	CSR 8	Differentiated the process or product based on the marketing efforts of the process/products environmental performance
	CSR 9	Created spin-off technologies that could be profitably applied to other areas of the business
	CSR 10	Reduced costs of inputs for the same level of outputs
Environmental dimension of CSR (Environmental CSR)	CSR 11	Mined/manufactured products that have a less environmentally harmful impact than in previous years or than its competitors
	CSR 12	Mined/manufactured products with less environmentally damaging inputs than in previous years or than its competitors
	CSR 13	Choose inputs from sources that are remediated or replenished
	CSR 14	Reduced environmental impact of production processes or eliminated environmentally damaging processes
	CSR 15	Eliminated or reduced operations in environmentally sensitive locations
	CSR 16	Attempted to reduced likelihood of environmental accidents through process improvements
	CSR 17	Reduced waste by streamlining processes
	CSR 18	Used waste as inputs for own processes
	CSR 19	Disposed waste responsibly
	CSR 20	Handle and store toxic waste responsibly
Employee engagement (EE)	EE1	In my work, I feel full of energy
	EE 2	My work is full of meaning and purpose
	EE 3	Time flies when I am working
	EE 4	I am excited about my work
	EE 5	When I am working, I forget everything that happens around me
	EE 6	My work inspires me
	EE 7	When I get up in the morning, I want to go to work
	EE 8	I am happy when I am absorbed in my work
	EE 9	I am immersed in my work
	EE 10	I can continue to work for long periods
	EE 11	My job is challenging
	EE 12	I am very persistent in my work

**Table 1.**  
Questionnaire

**Source(s):** Own elaboration

Factor	Item	Loads	Average loads	$\alpha$	AVE	IFC
Social CSR	CSR1	0.8044	0.815	0.9241	0.666	0.923
	CSR 2	0.8406				
	CSR 3	0.8509				
	CSR 4	0.8583				
	CSR 5	0.7543				
Economic CSR	CSR 6	0.7831	0.742	0.8439	0.554	0.832
	CSR 7	0.6844				
	CSR 8	0.7898				
	CSR 9	0.7982				
	CSR 10	0.6965				
Environmental CSR	CSR 11	0.8612	0.877	0.9704	0.771	0.970
	CSR 12	0.9162				
	CSR 13	0.9028				
	CSR 14	0.9439				
	CSR 15	0.8966				
	CSR 16	0.9083				
	CSR 17	0.9104				
	CSR 18	0.7826				
	CSR 19	0.8162				
	CSR 20	0.8287				
EE	EE1	0.7242	0.793	0.9510	0.634	0.954
	EE2	0.8091				
	EE3	0.8413				
	EE4	0.9178				
	EE5	0.7461				
	EE6	0.8819				
	EE7	0.8137				
	EE8	0.8288				
	EE9	0.8307				
	EE10	0.7575				
	EE11	0.6946				
	EE12	0.6721				

	CFI	Goodness of fit TLI	RMSEA
S-B $\chi^2 = 1005.78$ ( $p = 0.000$ )	0.923	0.916	0.069

Source(s): Own elaboration

**Table 2.**  
Psychometric analysis

Factor	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Social CSR (1)	0.816			
Economic CSR (2)	(0.862; 0.966)	0.774		
Environmental CSR (3)	(0.717; 0.859)	(0.833; 0.938)	0.878	
EE (4)	(0.403; 0.642)	(0.310; 0.571)	(0.309; 0.543)	0.796

Note(s): Diagonal indicates the root square of AVE. Confidence intervals ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) for correlations are reported below the main diagonal

Source(s): Own elaboration

**Table 3.**  
Discriminant analysis

of the confidence intervals of the correlations contains a value of 1 (Anderson and Weitz, 1992).

3.4 Hypotheses analysis

Table 4 shows the results of the research hypotheses analysis proposed in this study. Considering the standardized coefficients obtained for the causal relationships analysed, it is observed that there is a statistically significant causal relationship between Social CSR and EE, so hypothesis H1 is accepted. Likewise, the results indicate a statistically significant causal relationship between Environmental CSR and EE. Therefore, hypothesis H3 is also accepted. However, the causal relationship between Economic CSR and EE does not occur in a statistically significant way, and consequently, hypothesis H2 is not supported. In addition, the most substantial causal relationship is the one between Social CSR and EE ( $\beta = 0.4891$ ). Therefore, what generates the most engagement among employees is the social and environmental actions undertaken by companies rather than economic actions.

Finally, the structural model results are shown graphically in Figure 2.

4. Discussion

Telework has driven essential changes in the work environment and human resource management. In this context, a more outstanding commitment of employees to organisations seems critical. Previous literature indicates that employees' perceptions about CSR actions can determine corporations' success since they imply a higher EE. However, understanding this relationship between CSR and EE in telework times can be difficult because of the

Hypotheses	Structural relationships	Coefficients	t-value	Contrast
H1	Social CSR → EE	0.4891	7.760***	Supported
H2	Economic CSR → EE	-0.0890	-1.210	Not supported
H3	Environmental CSR → EE	0.1395	2.250**	Supported

**Note(s):** \* =  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\* =  $p < 0.05$  and \*\*\* =  $p < 0.01$   
**Source(s):** Own elaboration

Table 4. Evaluation of the model hypotheses

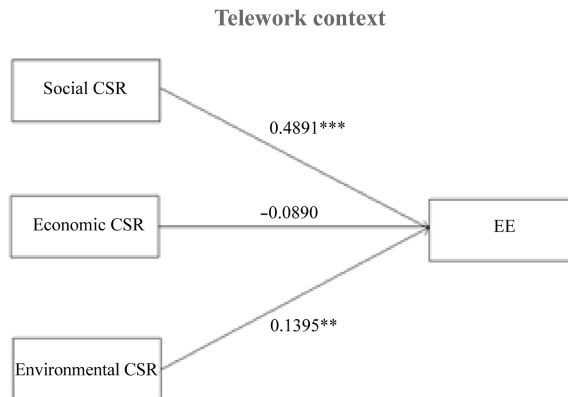


Figure 2. Structural model results

Source(s): Own elaboration

diverse body of CSR work. Thus, this study investigated the relationship between CSR and EE in the context of telework. With this objective, a structural model has been built based on CSR's Social, Economic and Environmental dimensions and their relationships with the EE.

The first hypothesis (the social dimension of CSR perceived by teleworkers positively influences EE) has been proved as the results show that employees' good perception of the Social and Environmental dimensions of CSR is positively and significantly related to a higher level of EE. The second hypothesis (the economic dimension of CSR perceived by teleworkers positively influences EE) has not been proved, as the perception of the Economic CSR developed by corporations does not significantly affect the EE levels. Finally, the third hypothesis (the environmental dimension of CSR perceived by teleworkers positively influences EE) has also been proved, as the results show that employees' good perception of the Environmental dimensions of CSR is positively and significantly related to a higher level of EE.

AQ: 8 These results align with those of different authors such as [Nazir and Islam \(2020\)](#) and [Glavas \(2016\)](#), who proved this positive relationship between CSR and EE but not in telework times. Therefore, it is suggested that in the telework context, EE depends on implementing actions that improve CSR's social and environmental within the [organisation](#). These CSR actions, as part of the [organisational](#) culture that are consistently applied, can strengthen work engagement ([Srimulyani and Hermanto, 2022](#)). Finally, following [Liang et al. \(2024\)](#), [organisations](#) and managers should adopt appropriate strategies to enhance employees' perceptions of CSR. For this purpose, communication strategies are of great importance. In this sense, [organisations](#) should communicate their CSR efforts to employees, particularly during times of crisis, as this can help improve employee impressions of the [organisation](#) ([Kakkar et al., 2023](#)) and, furthermore, their EE.

## 5. Conclusion, limitations and future directions

Remote work has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, establishing a new normal reflecting work life's current reality ([Ng et al., 2022](#)). In this context, EE has been affected, and this study suggests that CSR may contribute to increasing EE even in a working-from-home scenario. Remote work is becoming routine in the marketplace, and technological supports are needed to optimise employee productivity ([Ng et al., 2022](#)). This study also suggests that, apart from this technological support, CSR practices can be beneficial in increasing productivity by fostering EE. These conclusions align with [Koch-Bayram and Biemann \(2024\)](#), who stated that [organisations](#) must be well aware of the ethical responsibility that they bear toward both the environment and their employees. By implementing CSR practices, they can positively influence their employees. In conclusion, it can be stated that in a telework context, CSR strategies contribute to maintaining and improving EE when numerous studies have shown that engagement is reduced in this work-from-home scenario. Furthermore, by fostering EE, [organisational](#) and individual performance, productivity, satisfaction and employee well-being will also improve.

This study offers crucial contributions to the CRS and EE literature. Theoretically, it overcomes some limitations in previous EE studies by [analysing](#) their background under conditions resulting from telework. In addition, it examined the effects of CSR's social, economic and environmental dimensions in the EE. Likewise, this study presented empirical evidence from a sample of corporations covering many sociodemographic categories of employees. From an applied perspective, this research finding may help corporations improve their EE in post-pandemic times through their CSR strategies. The results suggest that managers of telework-based companies should now implement strategies to improve employees' perceptions of CSR initiatives, with a particular focus on social and environmental aspects. Such a strategy would improve EE and have positive effects on corporate results. The results could also be used to improve the communication actions of

corporations. On the one hand, develop campaigns that increase employee familiarity with the corporation's support for social causes and environmental sustainability. On the other hand, the communication of the CSR strategy should also be addressed to the rest of the stakeholders. By implementing CSR practices aimed at improving society and the environment, the corporation demonstrates that it cares about the well-being of all stakeholders. In these circumstances, the reciprocity rule encourages employees to fulfil their obligations and contribute to achieving organisational objectives. Finally, these findings show the positive relationship between social and environmental CSR and the EE, which encourages the development of these CSR actions in companies worldwide, thus contributing to achieving sustainable development goals and the well-being of their telework force. In this way, CSR allows environmental management to reduce costs and improve productivity.

The conclusions of the present study also suggest future lines of research. First, other studies should adopt a longitudinal strategy for data collection because this cross-sectional study may need to provide a substantial cause-and-effect relationship between factors. Second, cross-cultural comparisons are recommended to increase the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, the results should be cautiously interpreted and applied in different cultural settings.

Future research should be conducted across diverse cultural and geographical contexts to provide a more global perspective on the topic. This will improve the generalizability of the findings and offer a deeper understanding of how CSR and EE interact in various environments.

Third, future research should investigate outcomes such as job satisfaction, performance, commitment or happiness, as happy employees are more productive, enterprising and committed to organisations. Finally, the variables in this study were measured at the individual level. Although the authors are aware of the importance of the analysis from a personal perspective, future research could consider the organisation's perception, which would help a better psychological understanding of the problem studied.

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