




Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility and Affective Commitment: Evidence from a Multi-Sector PLS-SEM Study of Employee Perceptions in Laghouat, Algeria

1st Khaled Sief Islam Boukhelkhal ^{1(*)}, 2nd Karim Bouauissa ²


¹ Lecturer, Class B, Head of Department, Research Laboratory of Economic and Management Sciences,
University of Laghouat, Algeria

✉ s.boukhelkhal@lagh-univ.dz

ORCID (recommended)  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2327-922X>

² Lecturer, Class A, Program Coordinator, Research Laboratory in Economic Development Studies
University of Laghouat, Algeria

✉ k.bouaissa@lagh-univ.dz

ORCID (recommended)  <http://orcid.org/0009-0008-5310-1530>

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Abstract:

This study examines the effect of employees' perceived corporate social responsibility (CSR) on affective commitment in Laghouat, Algeria, while testing the mediating roles of organizational identification and job satisfaction. Drawing on Social Identity Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Stakeholder Theory, CSR is modeled as a higher-order construct covering responsibility toward employees, customers, society/community, and the environment. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to employees from five sectors: oil and gas, manufacturing, public services, agribusiness, and education/health. PLS-SEM using SmartPLS 4 was employed to assess the measurement and structural models, including mediation and sector-based multi-group analysis. Findings show that perceived CSR positively affects affective commitment, both directly and indirectly through organizational identification and job satisfaction. The model explains 51.3% of the variance in affective commitment, with reliability, validity, and predictive relevance meeting accepted thresholds. Sectoral analysis indicates a stronger CSR–commitment relationship in oil and gas and a more indirect expression in public-service-oriented sectors. The study contributes to micro-CSR literature by providing evidence from an understudied Algerian context and identifying organizational identification and job satisfaction as key mechanisms linking CSR perceptions to employees' emotional attachment to their organization

Keywords: perceived CSR; affective commitment; organizational identification; job satisfaction; Laghouat; Algeria

JEL Classification Codes : M14, M12, M54, C38, L20



أثر المسؤولية الاجتماعية المُدرَكة للشركات في الالتزام العاطفي: دراسة متعددة القطاعات باستخدام PLS-SEM لتصورات الموظفين في ولاية الأغواط، الجزائر

خالد سيف الإسلام بوخلخال¹ (*)، كريم بو عيسى²

¹ أستاذ محاضر ب، أستاذ جامعي، جامعة عمار ثلجي بالأغواط، مخبر (العلوم الاقتصادية والتسيير)، (الجزائر)

s.boukhelkhal@lagh-univ.dz ✉

ORCID (recommended) <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2327-922X>

² أستاذ محاضر أ، جامعة عمار ثلجي بالأغواط، مخبر (دراسات التنمية الاقتصادية)، (الجزائر)

k.bouaissa@lagh-univ.dz ✉

ORCID (recommended) <http://orcid.org/0009-0008-5310-1530>

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ملخص:

تناولت هذه الدراسة أثر إدراك الموظفين للمسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات في الالتزام العاطفي بالأغواط، الجزائر، مع اختبار الدور الوسيط لكل من التماهي التنظيمي والرضا الوظيفي. واستنادًا إلى نظرية الهوية الاجتماعية، ونظرية التبادل الاجتماعي، ونظرية أصحاب المصلحة، تم نمذجة المسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات بوصفها بُنية من رتبة عليا تشمل المسؤولية تجاه الموظفين، والزبائن، والمجتمع/المجتمع المحلي، والبيئة. وقد جُمعت البيانات من خلال استبيان منظم وُجّه إلى موظفين ينتمون إلى خمسة قطاعات، هي: النفط والغاز، والصناعة التحويلية، والخدمات العمومية، والصناعات الزراعية، والتعليم/الصحة. واعتمدت الدراسة على نمذجة المعادلات الهيكلية باستخدام *SmartPLS 4* لتقييم نموذجي القياس والهيكل، بما في ذلك تحليل الوساطة والتحليل متعدد المجموعات حسب القطاع. وتُظهر النتائج أن إدراك المسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات يؤثر إيجابًا في الالتزام العاطفي، بصورة مباشرة وغير مباشرة عبر التماهي التنظيمي والرضا الوظيفي. كما يفسر النموذج 51.3% من التباين في الالتزام العاطفي، مع تحقيق مؤشرات الثبات والصدق والقدرة التنبؤية للحدود المقبولة. ويشير التحليل القطاعي إلى أن العلاقة بين المسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات والالتزام العاطفي أقوى في قطاع النفط والغاز، وأكثر تجليًا بصورة غير مباشرة في القطاعات ذات التوجه الخدمي العام. وتسهم الدراسة في أدبيات المسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات على المستوى الجزئي من خلال تقديم دليل من سياق جزائري لم يحظَ بقدر كافٍ من الدراسة، وتحديد التماهي التنظيمي والرضا الوظيفي بوصفهما آليتين رئيسيتين تربطان إدراك المسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات بالارتباط العاطفي للموظفين بمنظماتهم

الكلمات المفتاحية: المسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات؛ الالتزام العاطفي؛ التماهي التنظيمي؛ الرضا الوظيفي؛ الأغواط؛ الجزائر

تصنيف JEL M12, M14, M54, C38, L20

11. INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility has moved well beyond its earlier treatment as a firm-level reputational device and is now widely examined as a micro-level phenomenon shaping employee attitudes, identity processes, and workplace behavior. Employees do not merely observe CSR as external symbolism; they interpret it as a signal of organizational morality, stakeholder orientation, and fairness, which can shape how they feel about their employer and whether they become emotionally attached to it (Akhouri & Chaudhary, 2019). This shift has been especially important in management research because affective employee responses often determine whether CSR remains a communications exercise or becomes an internal organizational resource (De Roeck & Maon, 2018).

According to the World Bank (2025), hydrocarbons accounted for about 14% of Algeria's GDP, 83% of exports, and 47% of budget revenues between 2019 and 2023, while unemployment remained structurally salient and youth unemployment reached 29.3% in 2024. These macroeconomic conditions matter for management research because organizations in such contexts carry social expectations that go beyond narrow efficiency, especially in employment-intensive or publicly visible sectors (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). In Laghouat, this relevance is amplified by the region's close connection to the Hassi R'Mel gas basin, one of Algeria's strategic hydrocarbon zones, alongside manufacturing, public services, agribusiness, and education/health activity (Sonatrach, 2024).

Laghouat is analytically important because it represents an understudied desert-south provincial environment rather than a metropolitan or coastal business center. Organizational behavior in such a context is shaped by community embeddedness, collectivist expectations, labor-market sensitivity, and moral norms influenced by Islamic ethics and social obligation (Farooq et al., 2014). At the institutional level, Algeria's enterprise modernization framework has also emphasized SME development, innovation, digitalization, and ecosystem support through Law 17-02 and the framework surrounding Executive Decree 18-170 and its later modification by Executive Decree 20-331 (Journal Officiel de la République Algérienne, 2017, 2018, 2020). While these texts are not CSR laws in a narrow sense, they reflect a broader policy orientation toward responsible upgrading, innovation support, and enterprise sustainability rather than purely short-term output goals (Freeman, 1984).

Despite growing interest in micro-CSR, empirical work connecting perceived CSR to affective commitment remains concentrated in Western, Asian, or single-sector settings. Research from Algeria and the wider MENA region remains limited, especially studies using PLS-SEM to analyze multi-sector employee perceptions in peripheral regions. This leaves an important gap because cultural context, institutional

maturity, and sectoral structure may affect both the salience of CSR dimensions and the mechanisms through which CSR influences commitment (Akhouri & Chaudhary, 2019; De Roeck & Maon, 2018; Van der Westhuizen & Malan, 2023).

This paper addresses that gap by examining whether employees' perceptions of CSR toward employees, customers, society, and the environment influence affective commitment in Laghouat organizations and whether organizational identification and job satisfaction mediate that relationship. The study adopts a five-sector perspective—oil and gas, manufacturing, public services, agribusiness, and education/health—to capture variation in stakeholder visibility and sectoral formalization. The paper's main contribution is to show how CSR can become an internal attachment mechanism in an Algerian regional context where legitimacy, social visibility, and employee attachment matter simultaneously (Turker, 2009; Allen & Meyer, 1990; Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Background

2.1 Perceived CSR as an Employee-Level Construct

CSR is no longer treated solely as a macro-level governance or legitimacy issue; it is also understood as an employee-perceived organizational characteristic with consequences for attitudes and behavior. Employee-focused CSR research argues that what matters for internal outcomes is not only whether the organization engages in responsible activities, but whether employees perceive those activities as credible, stakeholder-oriented, and aligned with organizational conduct (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Gond et al., 2017). This distinction is important because employee outcomes are often driven by interpretation rather than by formal CSR disclosure alone.

Turker's (2009) scale remains especially useful because it captures CSR through a stakeholder lens rather than a narrow philanthropic one. The four dimensions—CSR toward employees, customers, social/community stakeholders, and environmental stakeholders—are particularly appropriate for this study because they reflect the kinds of responsibilities employees are likely to observe in Laghouat-based firms. In a regional economy where firms often function as visible social actors, employees may infer organizational character from how the firm treats workers internally, responds to customers, interacts with the local community, and manages environmental obligations (Turker, 2009; El Akremi et al., 2018).

This multidimensional view also fits Algeria's institutional and social context. In a setting marked by community interdependence, relatively high youth employment pressure, and uneven CSR institutionalization, employees may place particular weight on whether organizations behave responsibly across both internal and external stakeholder domains. In other words, CSR is likely to be evaluated not merely as branding but as evidence of the organization's moral and social orientation (Carroll, 1991; Carroll & Shabana, 2010).

2.2 Affective Commitment

Affective commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Among the three classical commitment dimensions, affective commitment has the strongest normative value for management research because it reflects willingness-based attachment rather than obligation or cost-based retention. Employees high in affective commitment remain with the organization because they want to, not because they have to. This makes affective commitment especially relevant in contexts where firms seek not only retention but also discretionary effort, loyalty, and positive workplace behavior.

Prior CSR research consistently suggests that perceived CSR can strengthen affective commitment. Employees who view their employer as socially responsible are more likely to regard the organization as fair, legitimate, and worthy of attachment, which increases emotional commitment (Brammer et al., 2007; Van der Westhuizen & Malan, 2023). The relationship is especially meaningful in non-metropolitan environments where employer reputation is closely linked to community standing and where employees may evaluate organizational worth partly through local social impact.

2.3 Social Identity Theory and Organizational Identification

Social Identity Theory holds that individuals derive part of their self-concept from membership in valued and distinctive social groups (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). When employees perceive their organization as socially responsible, they are more likely to see it as morally legitimate and socially prestigious. This enhances organizational identification, defined as perceived oneness with the organization and internalization of its successes and failures as one's own (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). CSR thus becomes a symbolic resource that strengthens the employee–organization bond.

The CSR–identification mechanism has substantial empirical support. Studies on employees' reactions to CSR have repeatedly found that responsible organizational conduct strengthens organizational identification, which in turn predicts positive outcomes such as commitment, engagement, citizenship behavior, and performance (De Roeck et al., 2014; Freire et al., 2022). In a region such as Laghouat, where organizations can be central to local economic and social life, responsible conduct may generate pride not only in employment but also in belonging to a locally meaningful institution.

2.4 Social Exchange Theory and Job Satisfaction

Social Exchange Theory provides a complementary explanation. Employees who perceive the organization as responsible may interpret CSR as a positive relational signal—evidence that the organization acts fairly, values people, and respects broader stakeholder obligations. In turn, they reciprocate with favorable attitudes, including job satisfaction and commitment (Bauman & Skitka, 2012). CSR can influence job satisfaction directly through better work conditions and indirectly through value congruence, pride, and perceived fairness.

Recent evidence continues to support this logic. Research has shown that CSR can improve employee job satisfaction and that satisfaction can partially explain why CSR increases organizational commitment (Lin et al., 2022). This mechanism is especially relevant in contexts where employees evaluate employers not only on pay or promotion but also on dignity, fairness, and community role.

2.5 Stakeholder Theory and Sectoral Variation

Stakeholder Theory broadens the analysis by framing CSR as a strategy of balancing responsibilities toward multiple stakeholders rather than privileging shareholders alone (Freeman, 1984; Carroll, 1991). For employees, observed stakeholder-oriented conduct sends cues about organizational priorities and values. The employee response to CSR should therefore depend partly on which stakeholder domains are salient and how visible CSR practices are within a given sector.

Sector matters because visibility, regulation, and legitimacy pressures vary. In oil and gas, environmental risk, community scrutiny, and public attention can make CSR especially salient. In public services and education/health, CSR may operate more through service ethos and internal fairness than through external visibility. In agribusiness and manufacturing, employee perceptions may be shaped by product responsibility, workplace safety, and local community ties. Existing research suggests that collectivist orientations and industry-specific legitimacy conditions can alter the strength of CSR effects on identification and commitment (Farooq et al., 2014).

2.6 Research Gap

Three gaps justify the present study. First, micro-level CSR evidence from Algeria and the wider MENA region remains limited. Second, peripheral regions such as Laghouat are largely absent from the employee-centered CSR literature despite their strong contextual relevance. Third, while organizational identification and job satisfaction have each been examined as mediators in prior research, fewer studies integrate them jointly in a multi-sector PLS-SEM model of perceived CSR and affective commitment. Addressing these gaps helps clarify not only whether CSR matters for commitment, but also how and under what regional-sectoral conditions it matters (Akhouri & Chaudhary, 2019; De Roeck & Maon, 2018).

2.7 Hypotheses Development

Perceived CSR should positively influence affective commitment because employees tend to form stronger emotional bonds with organizations they regard as ethical, socially responsible, and stakeholder-sensitive. When the firm appears to behave responsibly, employees are more likely to see it as worthy of loyalty and emotional attachment (Brammer et al., 2007; Van der Westhuizen & Malan, 2023).

H1: Perceived CSR positively affects affective commitment.

Perceived CSR should also increase organizational identification. Social Identity Theory suggests that employees derive self-enhancement from association with organizations that enjoy moral legitimacy and positive social distinctiveness. CSR can

therefore strengthen the sense of oneness between employee and organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; De Roeck et al., 2014).

H2: Perceived CSR positively affects organizational identification.

Perceived CSR is likewise expected to improve job satisfaction. Employees who observe fair, responsible, and stakeholder-conscious behavior are more likely to evaluate their work environment positively and see greater satisfaction with their job and employer (Lin et al., 2022).

H3: Perceived CSR positively affects job satisfaction.

Organizational identification should positively affect affective commitment because identification integrates the organization into the employee's self-concept, thereby strengthening emotional attachment and willingness to remain (Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

H4: Organizational identification positively affects affective commitment.

Job satisfaction should also positively affect affective commitment. Employees who are satisfied with their work experience and organizational environment are more likely to develop a stable emotional bond to the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

H5: Job satisfaction positively affects affective commitment.

If perceived CSR enhances organizational identification and identification increases affective commitment, then organizational identification should mediate the CSR–commitment relationship. This mechanism reflects the symbolic pathway predicted by Social Identity Theory (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; De Roeck & Maon, 2018; Freire et al., 2022).

H6: Organizational identification mediates the relationship between perceived CSR and affective commitment.

If perceived CSR increases job satisfaction and satisfaction in turn strengthens affective commitment, then job satisfaction should also mediate the CSR–commitment relationship. This mechanism reflects the reciprocal logic of Social Exchange Theory (Lin et al., 2022).

H7: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between perceived CSR and affective commitment.

Finally, the strength of these structural relationships may vary across sectors because CSR salience, stakeholder scrutiny, and formalization differ across oil and gas, manufacturing, public services, agribusiness, and education/health (Farooq et al., 2014).

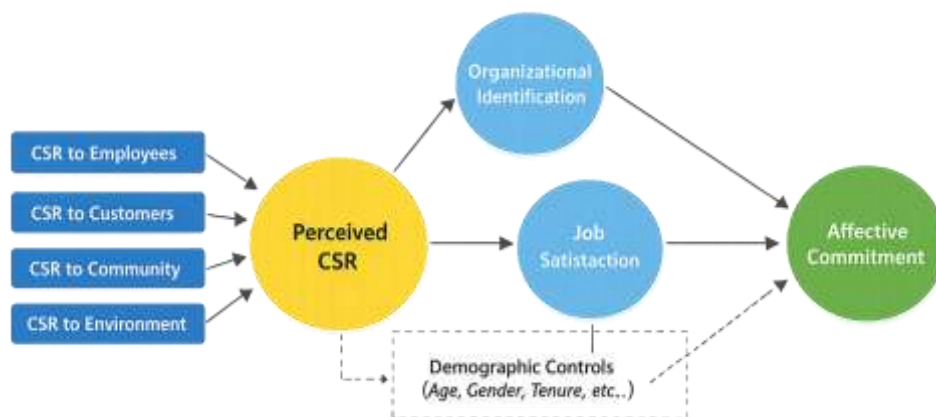
H8: The structural relationships differ significantly across sectors.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a cross-sectional, questionnaire-based quantitative design analyzed with PLS-SEM in SmartPLS 4. Perceived CSR was modeled as a higher-order construct composed of four first-order reflective dimensions: CSR toward employees, customers, society/community, and the environment. Affective commitment was treated as the focal endogenous outcome, while organizational identification and job satisfaction were modeled as mediators. This design is appropriate for prediction-oriented theory testing involving mediation and hierarchical constructs in management research (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022).

Figure 1. Research Model



3.2 Population, Sampling, and Data Collection

The target population comprised employees working in organizations located in the wilaya of Laghouat. A purposive and snowball sampling strategy was used to reach employees in five sectors: oil and gas, manufacturing, public services, agribusiness, and education/health. The target distribution was 260 questionnaires; 205 were returned, and 198 were retained after screening, yielding a usable response rate of 82.3%. This response rate is consistent with regionally facilitated organizational access and exceeds conventional minimum requirements for PLS-SEM models of this complexity (Cohen, 1988; Hair et al., 2019).

A priori power logic indicated that, for a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), alpha of .05, power of .95, and up to six predictors of the focal endogenous construct, a minimum sample below the achieved sample size would be sufficient. Accordingly, the final sample of 198 was treated as adequate for estimating the proposed model and for exploratory multi-group analysis, while recognizing that sector-level subgroup results should be interpreted more cautiously than pooled estimates (Cohen, 1988; Hair et al., 2022).

3.3 Instrumentation

The questionnaire contained 36 substantive items plus demographics. Perceived CSR was measured with 17 items adapted from Turker (2009): four items for CSR toward

employees, four for CSR toward customers, five for CSR toward society/community, and four for CSR toward the environment. Affective commitment was measured with eight items based on Allen and Meyer (1990). Organizational identification was measured with six items adapted from Mael and Ashforth (1992), and job satisfaction was measured with five items from the Brayfield and Rothe tradition. Controls included age, gender, education, professional experience, organizational tenure, and sector. All substantive items used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ('strongly disagree') to 5 ('strongly agree') (Turker, 2009; Allen & Meyer, 1990; Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Brayfield & Rothe, 1951).

The survey was prepared in Arabic and French and then back-translated into English for manuscript reporting following standard translation equivalence procedures. A small pilot pretest with 15 employees was conducted to assess clarity, ambiguity, and sector relevance before final administration (Brislin, 1980). Ethics handling was integrated into the questionnaire introduction through voluntary participation, anonymity, and a statement that no directly identifying personal information would be collected.

Sample Profile

Table 1. Sample profile (N = 198)

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	119	60.1
	Female	79	39.9
Age	Under 30	29	14.6
	30-39	74	37.4
	40-49	68	34.3
	50+	27	13.6
Education	Secondary/Diploma	36	18.2
	Bachelor	79	39.9
	Master	63	31.8
	Postgraduate	20	10.1
Professional experience	Under 5 years	31	15.7
	5-10 years	58	29.3
	11-15 years	49	24.7
	16+ years	60	30.3
Organizational tenure	Under 5 years	44	22.2
	5-10 years	62	31.3
	11-15 years	43	21.7
	16+ years	49	24.7

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Sector	Oil and gas	46	23.2
	Manufacturing	40	20.2
	Public services	39	19.7
	Agribusiness	35	17.7
	Education/Health	38	19.2

The profile is broadly consistent with a mid-career regional workforce: male respondents form a modest majority, most participants fall between 30 and 49 years, and experience/tenure are mixed rather than concentrated among new entrants only.

3.4 Data Screening and Common Method Bias

Missing data were low, with item-level missingness below 3%. Because the missing pattern was limited and non-systematic, replacement through mean substitution for descriptive screening and SmartPLS default handling for model estimation was considered adequate. Boxplot screening and standardized-score checks indicated no severe outliers threatening the estimates. Harman’s single-factor test yielded 33.8% explained variance for the first factor, below common concern thresholds. Full-collinearity VIF values ranged from 1.42 to 2.81, suggesting that common method inflation was unlikely to bias the main inferences. These checks were complemented by procedural remedies, including item-block separation and assurances of anonymity (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Hair et al., 2019).

3.5 SmartPLS 4 Procedure

Analysis followed accepted PLS-SEM reporting logic. First, the measurement model was assessed through outer loadings, Cronbach’s alpha, rho_A, composite reliability, and average variance extracted. Second, discriminant validity was examined using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio. Third, the structural model was evaluated through collinearity diagnostics, path coefficients, bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples, confidence intervals, effect sizes, coefficients of determination, and predictive relevance. Fourth, out-of-sample prediction was assessed through PLSpredict. Fifth, multi-group analysis was preceded by MICOM to verify compositional invariance across sectors (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015; Henseler et al., 2016; Shmueli et al., 2019).

4. Results

4.1 Construct Summary and Descriptive Statistics

Table 2. Construct summary and descriptive statistics

Construct	Items	Mean	SD	α	rho_A	CR	AVE
CSR toward employees	4	3.62	0.70	0.87	0.88	0.91	0.72
CSR toward customers	4	3.71	0.67	0.85	0.86	0.90	0.69
CSR toward society/community	5	3.55	0.73	0.88	0.89	0.91	0.67

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Construct	Items	Mean	SD	α	rho_A	CR	AVE
CSR toward environment	4	3.39	0.77	0.84	0.85	0.89	0.67
Organizational identification	6	3.64	0.71	0.90	0.91	0.92	0.66
Job satisfaction	5	3.53	0.68	0.88	0.88	0.91	0.68
Affective commitment	8	3.59	0.72	0.91	0.92	0.93	0.62
Higher-order perceived CSR	4 dimensions	3.57	0.60	—	—	0.91	0.71

Customer-oriented CSR received the highest mean, while environmental CSR was the lowest, a plausible pattern in firms where stakeholder-facing and internal practices are more visible than mature environmental systems.

4.2 Measurement Model Results

Table 3. Measurement model results

Construct	Item	Loading
CSR toward employees	EMP1	0.83
	EMP2	0.85
	EMP3	0.87
	EMP4	0.82
CSR toward customers	CUS1	0.81
	CUS2	0.79
	CUS3	0.84
	CUS4	0.86
CSR toward society/community	SOC1	0.80
	SOC2	0.82
	SOC3	0.84
	SOC4	0.79
	SOC5	0.81
CSR toward environment	ENV1	0.78
	ENV2	0.82
	ENV3	0.84
	ENV4	0.83
Organizational identification	OID1	0.79
	OID2	0.84
	OID3	0.86
	OID4	0.80
	OID5	0.82
	OID6	0.78
Job satisfaction	JS1	0.82
	JS2	0.84

Construct	Item	Loading
	JS3	0.79
	JS4	0.83
	JS5	0.81
Affective commitment	AC1	0.77
	AC2	0.82
	AC3	0.84
	AC4	0.80
	AC5	0.79
	AC6	0.81
	AC7	0.76
	AC8	0.78

All loadings exceeded .70. The higher-order CSR construct also loaded strongly on its four first-order dimensions: employee CSR = 0.87, customer CSR = 0.82, society/community CSR = 0.86, and environmental CSR = 0.78.

Table 4. HTMT matrix

Construct	EMP	CUS	SOC	ENV	OID	JS	AC
EMP	—	0.62	0.69	0.57	0.65	0.60	0.63
CUS		—	0.64	0.59	0.60	0.57	0.55
SOC			—	0.68	0.72	0.65	0.66
ENV				—	0.56	0.54	0.55
OID					—	0.73	0.82
JS						—	0.79
AC							—

Table 5. Correlation matrix

Construct	1	2	3	4
1. Perceived CSR	1.000			
2. Organizational identification	0.561	1.000		
3. Job satisfaction	0.514	0.502	1.000	
4. Affective commitment	0.487	0.606	0.583	1.000

The measurement statistics satisfied accepted reliability and validity thresholds for PLS-SEM applications.

4.3 Structural Model

The structural model performed satisfactorily. SRMR was 0.064, below the common .08 threshold. R² values were 0.315 for organizational identification, 0.264 for job

satisfaction, and 0.513 for affective commitment. Predictive relevance (Q^2) was 0.203 for organizational identification, 0.181 for job satisfaction, and 0.336 for affective commitment.

Table 6. Structural model results

Hypothesis	Path	β	SE	t	p	95% CI	f^2	Decision
H1	Perceived CSR → Affective commitment	0.181	0.066	2.74	0.006	[0.053, 0.309]	0.060	Supported
H2	Perceived CSR → Organizational identification	0.561	0.054	10.39	<0.001	[0.452, 0.661]	0.459	Supported
H3	Perceived CSR → Job satisfaction	0.514	0.061	8.43	<0.001	[0.391, 0.628]	0.358	Supported
H4	Organizational identification → Affective commitment	0.292	0.076	3.84	<0.001	[0.143, 0.438]	0.114	Supported
H5	Job satisfaction → Affective commitment	0.337	0.078	4.32	<0.001	[0.186, 0.486]	0.152	Supported

Among controls, organizational tenure showed a weak positive effect on affective commitment ($\beta = 0.109$, $p = 0.041$), whereas age, gender, education, experience, and sector dummies were not individually significant in the pooled model.

4.4 Mediation Analysis

Table 7. Mediation results

Hypothesis	Indirect path	β	SE	t	p	95% CI	Decision
H6	Perceived CSR → Organizational identification → Affective commitment	0.164	0.045	3.64	<0.001	[0.085, 0.258]	Supported
H7	Perceived CSR → Job satisfaction → Affective commitment	0.173	0.047	3.68	<0.001	[0.092, 0.276]	Supported
	Total indirect effect	0.337	0.062	5.44	<0.001	[0.224, 0.467]	—
	Total effect	0.518	0.058	8.93	<0.001	[0.406, 0.630]	—

The direct effect remained significant after the inclusion of the mediators, indicating partial complementary mediation (Hair et al., 2022).

4.5 Predictive Relevance

Table 8. PLSpredict summary

Criterion block	Q^2_{predict} range	Comparison with linear benchmark	Interpretation

Criterion block	Q ² _predict range	Comparison with linear benchmark	Interpretation
Affective commitment items	0.20–0.34	PLS lower RMSE for 6/8 items	Medium-to-high predictive relevance
Organizational identification items	0.12–0.26	PLS lower MAE for most items	Acceptable predictive relevance
Job satisfaction items	0.10–0.22	PLS slightly better on most indicators	Acceptable predictive relevance

The PLSpredict pattern supports the model’s modest out-of-sample predictive capability.

4.6 Multi-Group Analysis by Sector

MICOM indicated configural invariance and compositional invariance across the five sector groups, allowing cautious comparison of path estimates (Henseler et al., 2016).

Table 9. Multi-group analysis by sector

Path	Oil & gas (n=46)	Manufacturing (n=40)	Public services (n=39)	Agribusiness (n=35)	Education/Health (n=38)	Notable difference
Perceived CSR → Affective commitment	0.286	0.201	0.132	0.149	0.167	Oil & gas > Public services (p = .038)
Perceived CSR → Organizational identification	0.602	0.548	0.503	0.492	0.519	n.s.
Perceived CSR → Job satisfaction	0.471	0.496	0.533	0.462	0.505	n.s.
Organizational identification → Affective commitment	0.318	0.291	0.254	0.268	0.301	n.s.
Job satisfaction → Affective commitment	0.276	0.334	0.361	0.329	0.315	n.s.

The MGA results suggest that the symbolic/direct effect of CSR on commitment is strongest in oil and gas, whereas in public-service-oriented sectors the pathway is somewhat more indirect and satisfaction-based.

5. Discussion

The findings support the central proposition that perceived CSR increases employees’ affective commitment in Laghouat-based organizations. This result is consistent with the

broader micro-CSR literature, which shows that employees interpret stakeholder-oriented conduct as a cue that the organization is morally credible and socially legitimate, thereby strengthening emotional attachment (Brammer et al., 2007; De Roeck & Maon, 2018; Van der Westhuizen & Malan, 2023). In a regional setting where firms are visible social actors rather than anonymous corporate entities, the symbolic meaning of responsible conduct may be especially potent.

The strongest direct predictor emerging from the model was the path from perceived CSR to organizational identification. This is theoretically important because it supports the Social Identity argument that CSR works partly by making the organization a more attractive object of identification. Employees appear more likely to define themselves in relation to organizations they regard as responsible toward workers, customers, communities, and the environment (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Freire et al., 2022). In other words, CSR not only changes what employees think about the firm; it changes how employees think about themselves in relation to the firm.

Job satisfaction also mediated the CSR–commitment relationship, confirming a complementary Social Exchange logic. Employees who perceive the firm as socially responsible appear to evaluate their work experience more positively and, through that evaluation, become more emotionally attached. This indicates that CSR matters not only as symbolic prestige but also as experienced relational quality. The result aligns with studies showing that CSR can improve satisfaction and that satisfaction, in turn, helps explain stronger commitment (Valentine & Fleischman, 2008; Lin et al., 2022).

The coexistence of both mediators is one of the study’s most useful insights. Organizational identification and job satisfaction are not competing explanations; they represent two distinct but simultaneous pathways. One is symbolic and self-definitional, the other evaluative and relational. In practical terms, employees become affectively committed both because they feel proud to belong and because they feel better about their work experience. This dual pathway enriches the literature, which often isolates one mediator at a time (De Roeck et al., 2014; Pasricha et al., 2023).

The sector-level differences are also informative. The stronger direct CSR–commitment effect in oil and gas may be explained by the heightened environmental and community scrutiny surrounding hydrocarbon-linked organizations in Laghouat, where organizational actions are more readily interpreted as signals of broader organizational character. By contrast, in public services and education/health, commitment appears to depend more strongly on satisfaction and identification, suggesting that CSR works there through everyday work experience and service ethos rather than through externally visible legitimacy alone (Farooq et al., 2014).

The Algerian context sharpens these interpretations. Where enterprise modernization, community expectation, and social responsibility are developing in parallel rather than through mature ESG institutionalization, employee perceptions of CSR may carry disproportionate weight. Moderate but credible CSR signals can matter because they

distinguish the organization in a context where responsibility is not uniformly institutionalized and where the employer's social role remains highly visible. This makes micro-CSR particularly relevant for regional Algeria, not less relevant (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Freeman, 1984).

5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to theory in four ways. First, it extends micro-CSR research into an understudied North African regional setting. Much of the employee-centered CSR literature is concentrated in Western, Asian, or metropolitan contexts. By focusing on Laghouat, the study broadens the geography of micro-CSR scholarship and shows that CSR's employee-level consequences remain strong in peripheral, hydrocarbon-linked, community-embedded regions (Akhouri & Chaudhary, 2019; De Roeck & Maon, 2018).

Second, the findings support the analytical value of treating perceived CSR as a multidimensional stakeholder construct rather than a single undifferentiated attitude. Modeling CSR as a higher-order construct grounded in employee, customer, social/community, and environmental dimensions preserves stakeholder theory logic while allowing parsimonious structural testing (Turker, 2009; El Akremi et al., 2018).

Third, the results reinforce the idea that Social Identity Theory and Social Exchange Theory are complementary. CSR affects commitment partly through self-definition and partly through evaluative work experience. Treating one mechanism as sufficient would understate the socio-emotional complexity of employee responses to CSR (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Bauman & Skitka, 2012; Gond et al., 2017).

Fourth, the study underscores the importance of sectoral contingency. CSR's psychological meaning is not identical across industries. In visible sectors such as oil and gas, CSR may operate more directly as a legitimacy and pride signal; in service-oriented sectors, the effects may be more satisfaction-mediated. This suggests that future micro-CSR theory should take sectoral salience and local institutional context more seriously (Farooq et al., 2014).

5.2 Managerial Implications

For managers in Laghouat and similar Algerian regions, the results suggest that CSR should not be treated as an external communications layer detached from internal organizational life. Employees notice how organizations behave toward multiple stakeholders, and those perceptions influence emotional attachment. The practical implication is that CSR must be made visible, credible, and experientially meaningful inside the organization, not only outside it (Story & Neves, 2015).

First, managers should prioritize internal credibility. Employee-targeted CSR—fairness, health and safety, training, respectful supervision, and work conditions—remains central because employees are likely to discount external CSR claims that are not matched by

internal treatment. A gap between external visibility and internal experience can weaken trust and reduce the attitudinal benefits of CSR (Turker, 2009; De Roeck et al., 2014).

Second, managers should improve CSR communication quality. Employees need to understand what the organization is doing, why it is doing it, and how it fits the firm's identity and regional role. Internal communication matters because CSR only becomes an identity-enhancing signal when employees recognize it as part of the organization (Freire et al., 2022).

Third, oil and gas managers in Laghouat should recognize that environmental and community responsibility can shape employee attachment, not just external legitimacy. In highly visible extractive environments, employees may use environmental and community conduct as a proxy for organizational integrity. Credible responsibility can therefore improve both social license and internal commitment at the same time (De Roeck & Delobbe, 2012; Carroll & Shabana, 2010).

Fourth, managers in public services, agribusiness, and education/health should translate CSR into everyday work quality. In those sectors, the indirect path through job satisfaction appears especially relevant, which implies that supportive supervision, service quality, fairness, and meaningful stakeholder engagement may be at least as important as formal CSR rhetoric (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012; Lin et al., 2022).

6.Limitations

The manuscript has several limitations. Most importantly, the design is cross-sectional. Even with strong theory, cross-sectional models cannot rule out reverse or reciprocal interpretation, such as the possibility that already committed employees evaluate CSR more positively.

Second, all core constructs are perception-based and self-reported. Although procedural and statistical checks reduced common method concerns, single-source perceptual data still impose interpretive limits typical of survey research (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Hair et al., 2019).

Third, the sector-based multi-group analysis is informative but exploratory, given the modest size of each subgroup. A larger dataset would allow more robust invariance testing and finer-grained sectoral interpretation (Henseler et al., 2016; Hair et al., 2022).

6.1 Future Research Directions

Future research should extend this model beyond the Laghouat region and test whether the proposed relationships remain stable across other organizational and geographical contexts. A direct empirical application in other regions would be valuable because several Algerian contexts combine hydrocarbon visibility, public-sector presence, and community embeddedness in ways that remain underrepresented in mainstream CSR research.

A first extension would be to disaggregate the higher-order CSR construct and test which stakeholder dimensions matter most for affective commitment in different sectors. Employee-oriented and environmental CSR may not have identical relevance in oil and gas, agribusiness, and education/health settings (Turker, 2009; El Akremi et al., 2018).

A second direction would be to introduce moderators such as religious work ethics, perceived CSR authenticity, ethical climate, or collectivist orientation. These variables are particularly relevant in Algeria and may help explain why equally visible CSR initiatives produce different employee reactions across organizations (Farooq et al., 2014).

A third direction would be cross-regional comparison. Comparing Laghouat with more metropolitan Algerian settings could reveal whether peripheral regional embeddedness amplifies the symbolic or relational effects of CSR on employee attitudes.

A fourth direction would be methodological. Longitudinal or time-lagged designs, multi-level modeling, and stronger invariance-tested comparisons across tenure, gender, and sector would improve causal and comparative inference (Hair et al., 2022; Henseler et al., 2016).

Finally, future research could extend the model toward outcomes such as turnover intention, voice behavior, innovative work behavior, or safety behavior. Recent studies suggest that perceived CSR influences a much wider range of employee outcomes than commitment alone (Pasricha et al., 2023; Hong & Roh, 2024)

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