

# Pathways explaining patterns of CSR engagement: A novel configuration-based approach

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## **Abstract**

Contrary to previous researchers, who mainly approach Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with a uniform conceptualization in mind, this study contributes to the broader CSR literature by offering the first reported attempt of an empirical typology, motivated by the assertion that firms may simultaneously engage in unique and often multifaceted sets of voluntary behaviours. Drawing on five established CSR dimensions of the existing literature, we empirically identify and validate a set of sufficiently heterogeneous types of CSR engagement. Further, we compile an exhaustive and theoretically relevant “ingredient list” of fifteen CEO-, firm-, and contextual-related characteristics, with the overall aim to investigate causal recipes explaining the proposed constellations of CSR engagement. Our findings confirm that the effect of each characteristic on CSR engagement is not only contingent on the combinations of additional characteristics that synergistically occur in the given causal recipe, but also on the unique CSR constellation considered each time.

**Keywords:** *Corporate Social Responsibility; CSR engagement typology; causal configurations*

**Track:** Social Responsibility & Ethics