


## Article

# Examining the Mediating Role of Work Engagement in the Relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and Turnover Intention: Evidence from Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The subject of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has drawn the attention of many scholars and practitioners in the administrative sciences field. However, few studies have been carried out on Nigerian employees' perspectives on CSR and on how CSR affects their attitudes and behaviors at work. The present study sought to contribute to narrowing this gap by examining how CSR perceptions, work engagement, and turnover intention are related in a sample of Nigerian workers. More specifically, this study had triple aims: first, describe employees' perceptions of their employers' involvement in different CSR domains; second, examine how CSR perceptions were related to employees' levels of work engagement and turnover intention; third, analyze work engagement intervention as a mediator in the relationship between CSR perceptions and turnover intention. The sample included 118 employees from different organizations who voluntarily participated in an online survey. The findings revealed that respondents consider that their employer organizations have relatively high involvement in CSR activities, especially activities towards customers, employees, and stockholders. Findings also revealed that employees' perceptions of CSR are related to diminishing levels of turnover intention, via increased work engagement. Therefore, organizations can invest in CSR activities to foster positive employee outcomes in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** corporate social responsibility; work engagement; turnover intention; Nigeria



**Citation:** Bayode, Olubanke Tolulope, and Ana Patrícia Duarte. 2022. Examining the Mediating Role of Work Engagement in the Relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and Turnover Intention: Evidence from Nigeria. *Administrative Sciences* 12: 150. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci12040150>

Received: 30 September 2022

Accepted: 27 October 2022

Published: 29 October 2022

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## 1. Introduction

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) involves addressing social, environmental, and economic issues concurrently in business activities (Aguinis and Glavas 2012; Duarte et al. 2010) to maximize the creation of shared value for society while mitigating potential negative impacts (European Commission 2011; Turker 2009). Organizations' adherence to socially responsible business practices, their antecedents, and outcomes have been examined from different levels of analysis (Aguinis and Glavas 2012; Onkila and Sarna 2022; Wang et al. 2020), with the literature providing evidence of positive outcomes regarding several stakeholders. Overall, business successes have been traceable to organizations that target CSR (Lee et al. 2013; Zhang and Ahmad 2022).

As one of the primary stakeholders of any organization, employees' perceptions and responses to CSR have been capturing the attention of researchers (Onkila and Sarna 2022; Wang et al. 2020) on what has been called a micro-level CSR or employee-centered perspective (El Akremi et al. 2018; Gond et al. 2017). As a result, the literature has been providing cumulative evidence of a significant link between CSR and diverse job-related attitudes and behaviors, such as job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, or individual performance (Duarte et al. 2019; Freire et al. 2022; Onkila and Sarna 2022; Pérez et al. 2018; Santini et al. 2021; Scholten et al. 2022; Wisse et al. 2018). In addition, a link between employees' CSR perception and outcomes, such as work engagement and turnover intention, has been drawn (Albasu and Nyameh 2017; Ali et al. 2021; Chaudhary 2017; Glavas and

Piderit 2009; Nejati et al. 2021; Virador and Chen 2022). Ideally, employee perception of meaningful CSR engagement births intrinsic reward on the employee, and that promotes work engagement and decreased turnover intention.

Although a handful of work in the literature exists regarding CSR influence on employees' attitudes and behaviors (Onkila and Sarna 2022; Wang et al. 2020), continual research findings remain necessary in broadening the extant knowledge. This is especially important as research shows that, apart from the fact that CSR practices are far from being global, developed countries get more attention on the subject than developing ones (Gharleghi et al. 2018; Pisani et al. 2017). Moreover, few studies have been carried out on the African context, particularly on employees' perspectives on CSR and how CSR perceptions affect their attitudes and behaviors (Onyishi et al. 2020). Hence, the present study sought to contribute to narrowing this gap by examining how CSR perceptions, work engagement, and turnover intention are related in a sample of workers from the most populous African nation—Nigeria. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first study to address the relationship between the variables in the unique Nigerian context. More specifically, this study's aims were: (i) to unveil the awareness of employees regarding their employer organizations' involvement in different CSR domains; (ii) to analyze how CSR perceptions were related to employees' levels of work engagement and turnover intention; and (iii) to examine work engagement intervention as a mediator in the relationship between CSR perceptions and turnover intention. The study's main findings indicate that most organizations where participants work are perceived to be substantially engaged in CSR activities, with workers' perceptions of increased investment in CSR activities being significantly related to lower levels of turnover intention via increased work engagement.

## 2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

### 2.1. CSR

There is no universally accepted definition of CSR. It denotes responsible corporate behavior towards those having one form of stake or another in a business, whether the organization in question is private or public, large or small. European Commission (2011) defines CSR as management's consideration of the impact of its operational decisions on stakeholders. This denotes concerns that may range from social to economic to environment (European Commission 2001). In McWilliams and Siegel (2001), CSR was defined as actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law. Ferreira and Real de Oliveira (2014) defined CSR as policies and practices in which organizations engage with a view to creating a positive social or environmental impact on stakeholders. They further posit that it is a voluntary approach that proves to have a link with human resources management. Though a voluntary approach, it is accepted that CSR is context-specific (Duarte et al. 2010), and it considers the expectations of stakeholders (Glavas 2016).

Several theories have been used to explain the basis of why organizations engage in CSR, including the stakeholder theory (Freeman 1984). This posits that businesses engage in CSR in order to manage the perception of stakeholders who could exert adverse impacts on the organization (Ugwunwanyi and Ekene 2016). Some of these adverse impacts include the variables selected for this study, such as (reduced) work engagement and (increased) turnover intention. Relevant stakeholders under the conception of the stakeholder theory include, but are not limited to, the community, the environment, the employee, the supplier, the customer, and the shareholder (Carroll and Buchholtz 2003). The scope of CSR is, thus, very comprehensive, and its dimensions are numerous (Dahlsrud 2008). For instance, Turker (2009) proposed four CSR dimensions: CSR to social and non-social stakeholders, CSR to employees, CSR to customers, and CSR to government. Duarte et al. (2010) identified three dimensions encompassing socially responsible practices towards employees, the community, and the environment, and in the economic arena. More recently, El Akremi et al. (2018) proposed the existence of six specific dimensions, namely community-oriented CSR, environment-oriented CSR, employee-oriented CSR, supplier-

oriented CSR, customer-oriented CSR, and shareholder-oriented CSR. Given its larger scope, this was the model adopted in the present study. The first research aim was to unveil the awareness of Nigerian employees regarding their employer organizations' involvement in the latter six CSR domains.

The importance and relationship between overall CSR and its dimensions are deducible from the concept of CSR. Thus, businesses generally operate to realize profit in accordance with a predetermined vision and mission. However, in the process of maximizing profits, certain persons and resources annexed or utilized in the process are either impacted positively or negatively (Ugwunwanyi and Ekene 2016). These include, but are by no means limited to, suppliers in the company's value chain, utilization of human resources, harnessing of the environment and its resources, amongst others (Ugwunwanyi and Ekene 2016). The impact of business operations on these resources and the idea of rendering social services as a way of paying back explain the concept of CSR (Ugwunwanyi and Ekene 2016). In view of the foregoing, giving back respectively to these persons and resources annexed or utilized by businesses in the process of maximizing profits account for the various dimensions of overall CSR obligations that may be performed.

CSR can have several consequences on the organization based on their stakeholders' perceptions and reactions to organizations' stands in the CSR realm. Regarding what concerns employees, the literature reveals that it has been related to attitudinal variables, such as organizational commitment (Santini et al. 2021; Shaikh et al. 2022; Turker 2009) or job satisfaction (Duarte et al. 2019; Pérez et al. 2018; Scholten et al. 2022) as well as work behaviors, including individual performance (Scholten et al. 2022; Story and Neves 2015) or organizational citizenship behaviors (Freire et al. 2022; Manimegalai and Baral 2018; Onyishi et al. 2020; Ouakouak et al. 2020). As mentioned above, this study utilizes employees' perceptions to analyze the relationship between CSR and employees' attitudes (i.e., work engagement) and behaviors (i.e., turnover intention) using Nigeria as a case study. Employees' perception over management's engagement in meaningful CSR is important, as it infers the moral judgment of the management's discretionary responsibility which influences employees' work attitudes and behavior (Aguinis and Glavas 2012). Employees, just as other stakeholders, would normally expect management or the employer to conduct its affairs ethically or act in a right or transparent way beyond a legal minimum of social responsibility. A 2008 study on the world's 250 largest businesses by KPMG revealed ethical consideration as the lead reason for CSR, the view that it is in the company's best interest to contribute to people, society, and ecosystems (as cited by Ugwunwanyi and Ekene 2016). Focusing on turnover intention and work engagement, the second research aim for the current study was to analyze how CSR perceptions were related to these constructs. The next sections provide support for the proposed relationships.

## 2.2. CSR and Turnover Intention

Turnover is the rate at which employees leave an organization or the rate at which organizations lose employees, with excessive turnover rate being a costly problem (Lee et al. 2008; Nejati et al. 2021). Leading costs associated with turnover include indirect costs, such as loss of productivity or service quality, and direct costs of replacement and training (Mobley et al. 1979; Ribeiro et al. 2020; Tracey and Hinkin 2010; Virador and Chen 2022).

Turnover intention is the nursing of intention to voluntarily leave an organization (Ribeiro et al. 2020; Rosse and Hulin 1985). Whether an employee leaves the organization or continues to nurse turnover intention is a situation that has triggers (Rubenstein et al. 2018). From the existing literature, it is noted that engaging in CSR generally allows the employee to perceive an employer as trustworthy, and this improves employee's commitment to the organization and, thereby, the desire to remain a member (Farooq et al. 2019; Onyishi et al. 2020; Shaikh et al. 2022). CSR perceptions seems also to have a negative influence on turnover intention because they increase organizational reputation and pride, which operate as mediating factors that reduce turnover intent once felt by the employees (Castro-González et al. 2021). In Arikan et al. (2016), organizational reputation was found

to be a mediating factor between CSR and variables related to decreased turnover intention, namely job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The failure to act in accordance with employees' expectations of being responsible corporate citizens can lead to high turnover (Gharlegghi et al. 2018; Onyishi et al. 2020; Virador and Chen 2022).

The extant literature thus suggests that companies that carry out CSR practices generally create positive perceptions of themselves to employees. These internal stakeholders hold the organization with pride and repute, which triggers positive results for employees. One of these positive results is the continued intention to remain a member of the company. Consistent with the foregoing research, the following hypothesis was proposed:

**H1.** *Employees' perceptions of their organization's involvement in CSR activities are negatively related to their turnover intention.*

### 2.3. CSR and Work Engagement

Work engagement refers to the emotional, cognitive, and physical behavior an employee presents when carrying out an organizational function (Kahn 1990). Schaufeli et al. (2006) defined work engagement as "a positive work-related state of fulfillment that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 1). Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy, mental resilience, and willingness to invest effort during work, allowing persistence in the face of difficulties. Dedication is described as the sense of meaning, pride, challenge, enthusiasm, and inspiration that comes from work, and involves strong identification with one's work (González-Romá et al. 2006). Finally, absorption refers to a state of deep involvement and concentration at work, which is reflected in a rapid passage of time and difficulty in distancing oneself from work (Schaufeli and Bakker 2004).

Employees' degree of engagement at work tends to be a response to the resources received from the organization (Saks 2006). These may include several organizational practices, such as the ones in the social responsibility domain (e.g., fostering work–family balance, offering training and development opportunities, and practicing fair wages). Accordingly, one of the ways to reinforce employee engagement is through CSR, as has been tested in a number of nations (Ali et al. 2021; Manimegalai and Baral 2018; Pisani et al. 2017; Gharlegghi et al. 2018). The level at which an organization is committed to CSR can affect the way employees perceive management's sincerity of purpose not only externally but internally, as well as the support received from the company. Several authors reported a positive and statistically significant relationship between CSR and work engagement (Ali et al. 2021; Gao et al. 2018; Glavas 2016; Glavas and Piderit 2009; Gürlek and Tuna 2019; Manimegalai and Baral 2018). Rupp et al. (2018) found a positive relationship between the two constructs in a cross-cultural study. Ferreira and Real de Oliveira (2014) showed that employees whose organizations expose them to internal CSR are more engaged than employees whose companies do not address CSR activities. Jia et al. (2019) showed how CSR influences work engagement by increasing both pride in the organization and perceived organizational support. In view of these considerations, the following hypothesis was proposed:

**H2.** *Employees' perceptions of their organization's involvement in CSR activities are positively related to work engagement.*

### 2.4. CSR, Work Engagement, and Turnover Intention

Social exchange theory is especially relevant to this study as it illustrates the basis for some of the consequences of the presence or absence of CSR activities on work engagement and turnover intention. As a theory, social exchange originates from the social sciences to explain a cost–benefit analysis between parties in an economic relationship (Blau 1964). According to this theory with an economic analysis credited to Blau (1964), it is the exchange of commensurate costs and rewards that sustain a relationship. When one is higher than the other, the unfavored party may not be encouraged to sustain the relationship (Emerson 1976). It can, therefore, be contended, with respect to this study, that an increase

or decrease in CSR activities may positively or negatively affect employee work engagement and turnover intention as the consequential trade-off explained by the assumptions of the proponents of social exchange theory.

The relevance of this theory to this study is further strengthened, given the fact that the relationships to which the social exchange theory is well-known to apply include employment relationships. In the employment or work context, these exchanges occur between the primary parties, which are the employer and employees. Costs that an employer or business may trade-off include, but are not limited to, economic rewards and financial incentives as well as socio-emotional rewards, which may be considered as CSR. It may be intrinsically or emotionally rewarding for employees to perceive their employer as meaningfully engaging in CSR, thus affecting their engagement or turnover intention. Employees who perceive their organizations as acting in a socially responsible way, providing support, trust, and other tangible and intangible benefits develop a feeling of obligation to “repay” these by exhibiting desirable and appropriate work attitudes (e.g., enhanced work engagement) and behaviors (e.g., decreased turnover intention).

In addition to proposing employees’ perceptions of CSR activities as significantly linked to both work engagement and turnover intention, the current study proposes that work engagement might serve as a mediating variable of the relationship between CSR perceptions and turnover intentions. Prior literature indicates that work engagement has been linked to diminished turnover intention (Schaufeli et al. 2006). When vigor, absorption, and dedication are lacking in an employee, it is reasonable to assume that that employee may be nursing an intention or option of leaving the organization (Schaufeli et al. 2006). Halbesleben (2010) found empirical support for this in the meta-analytic research on work engagement and several outcomes including turnover intention. Also interesting for the current study are previous indications that work engagement intervenes in the relationship between employees’ CSR perceptions and their turnover intentions. Evidence of this was provided by Chaudhary (2017) and Lin and Liu’s (2017) research. Accordingly, it seems that perception of CSR activities implemented by their employer organizations leads employees to feel more engaged at work, which results in a lower desire to abandon the organization. Based on the above findings, the following hypotheses were proposed:

**H3.** *Work engagement is negatively related to turnover intentions.*

**H4.** *Work engagement mediates the relationship between employees’ perceptions of their organization’s involvement in CSR activities and their turnover intention.*

### 3. Methods

#### 3.1. Procedures and Sample

The method of this research was quantitative and survey-based. Data collection was facilitated by Qualtrics Survey Solutions, an online survey software/service. The survey was distributed within the researchers’ network with the help of email, social media channels (WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook) as well as professional and business social networking sites (e.g., LinkedIn) to maximize the number of participations. The ethical guidelines of Portugal’s Order of Psychologists were followed in the study. Data anonymity and confidentiality were assured. The participation was entirely voluntary, and participants could stop the survey without providing explanations.

The population targeted for purposes of this survey were Nigerian employees who have spent at least 12 months with their organization. It was irrelevant whether they were employees in the private or public sector, or worked with national or multi-national, or large or small size organizations. There were 195 respondents who opened the survey, but only 118 participants completed the questionnaire (60% response rate). G\*Power software was used to calculate the sample size based on statistical power (Faul et al. 2009) and to certify the collected sample’s adequacy. A sample size of 107 was recommended to achieve a statistical power of 0.95 in the model-testing phase. Since the present study’s modest sample size exceeded this number, it was deemed sufficiently large to test the model.

The respondents for the survey were entirely Nigerian workers who have completed education at the tertiary level. In this regard, approximately 34.48% held a Bachelor's degree, while 19.83% held an equivalent of Bachelor's degree. Approximately 22.41% held Associate or professional degrees, 20.69% had a Master's degree, while 2.59% had Doctorate degree. Most respondents held a permanent employment contract (84.6%), while the remainder were in other forms of employment, such as casual employment (4.27%), fixed term contract (8.55%), and others (2.56%). A larger percentage of the respondents for the survey (60%) appear to be employees of large-size organizations with a staff strength of 499 and above, and 58.97% of the entire respondents either held a managerial or supervisory role.

Respondents from the healthcare sector were in the majority at 40.87%, followed by professional services, information and communication technology, and manufacturing at 16.09%, 14.78%, and 4.35%, respectively, while other sectors' share was 0.1–2%. The survey was also dominated by employees in the public sector (53%). While 33.04% of the respondents worked for multinationals, the larger percentage (67%) were local employees either in private or public service.

### 3.2. Instrument and Measures

The constructs were measured with validated scales selected from the relevant literature. Informed consent was provided on the first page, followed by the selected constructs measurements. A set of questions about socio-professional characteristics were presented at the end of the survey.

#### 3.2.1. Perception of CSR

Employees' perceptions of CSR were assessed using El Akremi et al.'s (2018) scale. The said scale measures individuals' perceptions of organizations' engagement in six CSR dimensions, namely local community-oriented CSR (e.g., "Our company invests in humanitarian projects in poor countries"); natural-environment-oriented CSR (e.g., "Our company takes action to reduce pollution related to its activities (e.g., choice of materials, eco-design, and dematerialization)"); employee-oriented CSR (e.g., "Our company implements policies that improve the wellbeing of its employees at work"); supplier-oriented CSR (e.g., "Our company would not continue to deal with a supplier (or subcontractor) who failed to respect labor laws"); customer-oriented CSR (e.g., "Our company ensures that its products and/or services are accessible for all its customers"); and shareholder-oriented CSR (e.g., "Our company makes sure that shareholders exert effective influence over strategic decisions"). Seven items were measured each for F1–F3, while F4 and F5 had five items each, with F6 having four items, resulting in a total of 35 items represented (Table 1). The respondents indicated their level of agreement with each item on a six-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). All items had Cronbach's alpha of 0.85 or above. The overall CSR indicator had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.97.

**Table 1.** Employees' awareness of their organizations' involvement in CSR activities.

CSR Activities <sup>1</sup>	Mean	SD
Our company checks the quality of goods and/or services provided to customers.	5.08	1.36
... ensures that its products and/or services are accessible to all its customers.	4.91	1.42
... respects its commitments to customers.	4.88	1.57
... promotes the safety and health of its employees.	4.81	1.49
... avoids all forms of discrimination (age, sex, handicap, ethnic or religious origin) in its recruitment and promotion policies.	4.79	1.56
... supports equal opportunities at work (e.g., gender equality policies).	4.77	1.54
... is helpful to customers and advises them about its products and/or services.	4.75	1.49
... takes action to ensure that shareholders' investments are profitable and perennial in the long term.	4.64	1.38
... ensures that communication with shareholders is transparent and accurate.	4.64	1.48

Table 1. Cont.

CSR Activities <sup>1</sup>	Mean	SD
... encourages employees' diversity in the workplace.	4.56	1.61
... invests in innovations which are to the advantage of customers.	4.50	1.59
... would not continue to deal with a supplier (or subcontractor) who failed to respect labor laws.	4.48	1.64
... implements policies that improve the well-being of its employees at work.	4.47	1.49
... respects the financial interests of all its shareholders.	4.44	1.53
... makes sure that its suppliers (and subcontractors) respect justice rules in their workplaces.	4.42	1.50
... encourages its members to adopt eco-friendly behavior (sort trash, save water and electricity) to protect the natural environment.	4.33	1.59
... endeavors to ensure that all its suppliers (and subcontractors), wherever they may be, respect and apply current labor laws.	4.28	1.56
... cares that labor laws are applied by all its suppliers (and subcontractors) wherever they may be.	4.25	1.56
... assists populations and local residents in case of natural disasters and/or accidents.	4.19	1.77
... helps its employees in case of hardship (e.g., medical care, social assistance).	4.19	1.57
... makes investments to improve the ecological quality of its products and services.	4.18	1.58
... invests in clean technologies and renewable energies.	4.18	1.54
... respects and promotes the protection of biodiversity (i.e., the variety and diversity of species).	4.16	1.50
... takes action to reduce pollution-related to its activities (e.g., choice of materials, eco-design, and dematerialization).	4.09	1.69
... supports its employees' work and life balance (e.g., flextime, part-time work, flexible working arrangements).	4.06	1.68
... makes sure that shareholders exert effective influence over strategic decisions.	4.06	1.55
... helps its suppliers (and subcontractors) to improve the working conditions of their workers (e.g., safe working environment, etc.).	4.02	1.61
... contributes toward saving resources and energy (e.g., recycling, waste management).	3.99	1.69
... contributes to improving the well-being of populations in the areas where it operates by providing help for schools, sporting events, etc.	3.97	1.66
... provides financial support for humanitarian causes and charities.	3.96	1.64
... measures the impact of its activities on the natural environment (e.g., carbon audit, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, global warming).	3.92	1.70
... invests in the health of populations of developing countries (e.g., vaccination, fight against AIDS).	3.91	1.80
... helps NGOs and similar associations such as UNICEF, the Red Cross, and emergency medical services for the poor.	3.86	1.69
... gives financial assistance to the poor and deprived in the areas where it operates.	3.86	1.64
... invests in humanitarian projects in poor countries.	3.49	1.81

Note: <sup>1</sup> Items are presented in descending order of the mean values.

### 3.2.2. Work Engagement

The assessment of employees' levels of work engagement was conducted using the shortened version of the Utrecht WE Scale (UWES-9) by [Schaufeli and Bakker \(2004\)](#). This scale is composed of nine items (e.g., "Time flies when I am working"; Cronbach's alpha of 0.88) with a response scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always).

### 3.2.3. Turnover Intention

The assessment on intention to leave the organization was based on 5 items from [Bozeman and Perrewé \(2001\)](#). A sample item is "I will probably look for a new job in the near future". The respondents indicated their level of agreement with each item on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The set of items had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.74.

### 3.3. Common Method Bias

Common method bias results from collecting data from the same source at a single moment for all variables ([Bozionelos and Simmering 2022](#); [Podsakoff et al. 2012](#)). In the present study, the risk of potential bias was reduced by using different rating scales. In addition, Harman's single factor test was performed for common method bias on data ([Podsakoff et al. 2012](#)). The results indicate that the first factor accounts for 32.68% of the total variance explained (69.93%;  $KMO = 0.838$ ,  $Bartlett's\ test = 3812.92$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), showing that the data are robust to significant common method bias errors.

## 4. Results

All analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26 software and PROCESS Macro (Hayes 2018).

### 4.1. Employees' Awareness Regarding Their Employer Organizations' Involvement in Different CSR Domains

Workers' perceptions of their companies' involvement in the set of CSR activities assessed in this study are provided in Table 1. The descriptive statistics show that for most Nigerian employees, there is some awareness of the CSR activities that their organizations are involved in one way or the other, since the mean values are near or above the mid-point of the response scale.

For the 35 items, from which the six dimensions of CSR were coded on a scale of 1–6, the item with the highest mean score was whether the participants' employer organizations check the quality of goods and/or services provided to customers ( $M = 5.08$ ;  $SD = 1.36$ ). In fact, the three items with higher mean values are related with CSR activities directed at customers (i.e., ensuring that its products and/or services are accessible for all its customers; respecting its commitments to customers).

As for the item with the least score, it was the item related to whether the participants' employer organizations invest in humanitarian projects in poor countries ( $M = 3.49$ ;  $SD = 1.81$ ). The other two items with lower averages are also related with organizations' involvement in socially responsible practices towards community (i.e., helping NGOs and similar associations for the poor; giving financial assistance to the poor and deprived in the areas where it operates).

Furthermore, looking at CSR and its different dimensions (Table 2), it was observed that the overall CSR perception is relatively high, with a mean score of 4.35 ( $SD = 1.13$ ), and that some dimensions are more salient than others. The mean score for customer-oriented CSR was 4.82 ( $SD = 1.24$ ). Given that the items included in this dimension were in the top three of the most salient activities (Table 1), it is not surprising that this is the dimension that Nigerian employees perceived as being addressed more by organizations. The mean score for community-oriented CSR was lower, i.e., 3.89 ( $SD = 1.34$ ), which again is not surprising given the lower awareness of its set of items. The results of  $t$  tests for paired samples reveals that the six dimensions' mean values are statistically different (all  $p < 0.05$ ), except employee-oriented and stockholder-oriented CSR ( $t(117) = 1.17$ , n.s.). Accordingly, participants consider that their organizations are involved mostly in community-oriented CSR practices, then employee- and stockholders-oriented practices, and in third place, supplier-oriented practices, followed by environmental-CSR practices being the dimension with lower perceived investment from organizations community-oriented CSR, as mentioned before.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics, correlations, and Cronbach's alpha values.

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Overall CSR	4.35	1.13	(0.95)								
2. Community-oriented CSR	3.89	1.34	0.87 **	(0.89)							
3. Environment-oriented CSR	4.12	1.30	0.93 **	0.83 **	(0.91)						
4. Employee-oriented CSR	4.52	1.20	0.91 **	0.75 **	0.83 **	(0.88)					
5. Supplier-oriented-CSR	4.29	1.24	0.89 **	0.77 **	0.78 **	0.75 **	(0.85)				
6. Customer-oriented CSR	4.82	1.24	0.86 **	0.61 **	0.73 **	0.74 **	0.74 **	(0.85)			
7. Shareholder-oriented CSR	4.44	1.23	0.92 **	0.72 **	0.81 **	0.83 **	0.77 **	0.82 **	(0.89)		
8. Work Engagement	5.17	1.08	0.52 **	0.44 **	0.42 **	0.53 **	0.45 **	0.46 **	0.52 **	(0.88)	
9. Turnover Intention	2.80	0.99	-0.20 *	-0.16	-0.23 *	-0.26 **	-0.17	-0.09	-0.20 *	-0.42 **	(0.74)

Notes: \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; Cronbach's alphas in parenthesis.



#### 4.2. Relationship between CSR, Work Engagement, and Turnover Intention

Regarding the relationship among the variables of interest, this study proposed that employees' perceptions of their employer organizations' involvement in CSR activities have a negative relationship with their turnover intention (H1), but a positive one with work engagement (H2). In addition, it was proposed that work engagement is negatively related to turnover intention (H3) and mediates the relationship between this latter variable and CSR perceptions (H4). This simple mediation model was examined using model 4 from PROCESS Macro for SPSS (Hayes 2018). An overall indicator of CSR resulting from the average of the 35 items were used.

Before testing the hypotheses, the variables' descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlations coefficients were observed (Table 2). Average work engagement levels are high and turnover intention levels tend to be low, although some variation exists in the sample ( $SDs = 1.08$  and  $0.99$ , respectively). The results indicate that there is a negative correlation between employees' perceptions of overall CSR involvement with turnover intention ( $r = -0.20, p < 0.05$ ), indicating that higher levels of CSR perceptions are related to lower levels of intention to quit the organization. The results also indicate that there is a positive and moderate correlation with work engagement ( $r = 0.52, p < 0.01$ ), indicating that higher levels of CSR perceptions are related to stronger levels of work engagement. Work engagement and turnover intention's levels are also significantly related ( $r = -0.42, p < 0.01$ ). As the correlation is negative, higher levels of one variable correspond with lower levels of the other.

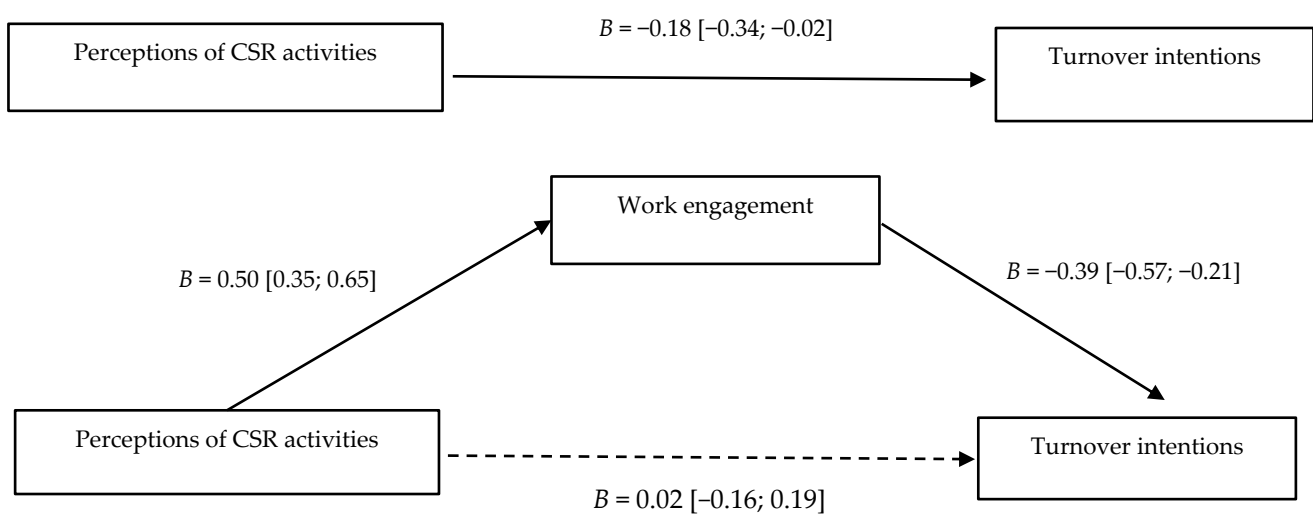
Next, the values of variance inflation factor (1.375) and tolerance (0.727) were checked, with results indicating that multicollinearity is not an issue in the present data (Daoud 2017).

Mediation analysis was then performed, and total, direct, and indirect effects were interpreted. The first hypothesis focused on the expected negative relationship between employees' perceptions of CSR activities and their turnover intention. The results confirm that CSR perceptions significantly predicts employees' intentions to quit the organization ( $B = -0.18$ ; 95% confidence interval [CI] =  $(-0.34, -0.02)$ ), thus supporting H1. The higher the employees' perceptions of their organization's involvement in CSR activities, the lower their desire to leave them.

The results also indicate that CSR perceptions significantly predicts employees' work engagement ( $B = 0.50$ ; 95% CI =  $(0.35, 0.65)$ ), as proposed by H2. Accordingly, the stronger the perceptions of CSR activities, the higher the energy, absorption, and dedication at work.

As for H3, findings support the claim that work engagement is negatively related to employees' intention to leave the organization ( $B = -0.39$ ; 95% CI =  $(-0.57, -0.21)$ ). Hence, the higher the levels of work engagement, the lower the desire to quit the organization.

Finally, regarding H4, the results indicate that employees' perceptions of CSR activities' indirect effect is statistically significant, which provides evidence of a mediation effect ( $B = -0.20$ ; 95% CI =  $(-0.32, -0.10)$ ). To determine if the mediation effect was full or partial, the total and direct effects of CSR perceptions on turnover intention were compared. As mentioned above, the CSR perceptions' total effect on PEBs was significant ( $B = -0.18$ ; 95% CI =  $(-0.34, -0.02)$ ), suggesting that organizations' involvement in CSR practices directly contributes to employees' desire to remain in the organization. This involvement's direct effect, however, is not statistically significant ( $B = 0.02$ ; 95% CI =  $(-0.16, 0.19)$ ), confirming that this relationship is fully mediated by work engagement. The results, therefore, indicate that employee's perceptions of organizations' involvement in CSR activities enhances employees' work engagement. This engagement, subsequently, generates a lower willingness to leave the organization. The model explains 17% of the unique variance of turnover intention ( $F [2,115] = 12.05, p < 0.01$ ). Figure 1 depicts the research model supported by results.



**Figure 1.** Research model supported by results. Notes:  $B$  = non-standardized coefficients; confidence intervals in parenthesis.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

### 5.1. Main Findings

The purpose of this study was to ascertain employees' awareness of how much organizations have been involved in CSR in the Nigerian context and its influence on both work engagement and turnover intention. By focusing its attention on the Nigerian case, the present study contributes to advance knowledge regarding CSR and its outcomes in an overlooked African context (Gharleghi et al. 2018; Onyishi et al. 2020; Pisani et al. 2017).

The findings indicate that most organizations where participants work are perceived to be substantially engaged in CSR activities. A similar positive appreciation of organizations' CSR activities by employees in Nigeria was reported by Onyishi et al. (2020). Considering Nigeria's unusual business environment, including poor infrastructures and policies that support business, the cited authors argue that any attempt to engage in CSR activities can easily be seen by employees. Therefore, results regarding CSR should be interpreted with reasonable prudence. With respect to the various dimensions of CSR analyzed here, customer-oriented CSR had the highest average, followed by employee-oriented CSR, with environment-oriented CSR and community oriented-CSR having the lower averages. The differences between dimensions, although relatively small, are statistically significant and, therefore, can be interpreted as signaling organizations' priorities in CSR strategies. The literature reviewed for the present study did not provide results directly comparable to the current ones (e.g., Onyishi et al. 2020 reported only results for overall CSR). Nevertheless, a study by Amaeshi et al. (2006) based on interviews with business leaders from the financial services sector presents a distinct CSR focus, with emphasis being put on "community involvement, less on socially responsible employee relations and almost none existent in relation to socially responsible products and processes" (p. 10). These differences might be attributable to informers' status (employees vs. business leaders) or business sectors under analysis (mainly healthcare vs. financial services), amongst other motives, but support the idea that CSR is context-specific, and stakeholders might have different perceptions of organizational activities. Further studies are needed to obtain a more comprehensive picture of CSR activities in the country.

Regarding the relationship between employees' perceptions of organizations' activities in the CSR realm and their levels of turnover intention and work engagement, findings are aligned with what has been reported in other countries. As employees' perceptions of their employer organizations' involvement in CSR increase, their levels of turnover intention decrease (Castro-González et al. 2021; Farooq et al. 2019; Lin and Liu 2017; Nejati et al. 2021; Ouakouak et al. 2020; Virador and Chen 2022), and work engagement gets stronger (Ali et al. 2021; Ferreira and Real de Oliveira 2014; Gao et al. 2018; Glavas and Piderit 2009;

Gürlek and Tuna 2019; Jia et al. 2019; Manimegalai and Baral 2018; Rupp et al. 2018), thus supporting the present study's first two hypotheses. Findings also provide support for the last two hypotheses, as work engagement is negatively related to turnover intentions and, more interestingly, it seems to fully mediate the relationship between CSR perceptions and turnover intention. Accordingly, Nigerian employees' perceptions of organizations' involvement in CSR activities enhance their levels of work engagement, thereby promoting lower willingness to quit the organization (Chaudhary 2017; Lin and Liu 2017). While the level of organizational involvement in CSR activities might vary across contexts, its significant relationship with employees' attitudes and behaviors seems to be transversal. Empirical evidence from Nigeria reported here thus shows that engaging in CSR activities qualifies as one strategic way of engaging the workforce and reducing negative turnover cognitions. CSR is, thus, beyond the conception of merely giving back to the society, as such involvement affects an employees' emotional connection with the organization, which can either spur their engagement or influence the thoughts of staying or leaving the workplace.

### 5.2. Theoretical Contributions and Implications for Management

The main findings of this study have interesting theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical perspective, the present study contributes to a deeper understanding of Nigerian employees' awareness of their employer organizations' involvement in different CSR dimensions, as well as how CSR perceptions can decrease their intention to leave the organization via increased work engagement. The existing literature has reported a significant relationship between CSR and diverse job attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Freire et al. 2022; Turker 2009; Wang et al. 2020), but few studies have been done in the Nigerian (Onyishi et al. 2020) or other African countries' contexts (Duarte et al. 2019). To the best of authors' knowledge, this is the first research study examining the relationship between CSR, work engagement, and turnover intention with Nigerian workers. On the basis of the results, it can be concluded that CSR activities are relevant for Nigerian employees' relationship with their employer organizations, helping them to improve their desire to stay as well as their energy, absorption, and dedication at the workplace. Thus, micro-level CSR outcomes seem to be transversal to different geographical contexts.

From a practical perspective, the study's findings indicate that organizations should invest in CSR activities relevant to their stakeholders. Some of these activities are listed in Table 1, based on El Akremi et al.'s (2018) research, but other activities more tailored to the region or community where businesses operate should be considered. Considering that communication practices are a relevant way of stimulating strong and fruitful relationships between organizations and their workforce (Gomes et al. 2021), it is important also to implement transparent and effective communication programs to increase stakeholders' awareness of organizational practices. Regarding what concerns employees, this will avoid losing key members in organizations and foster a more engaged workforce. The mentioned communication programs are also key to increasing workers' participation on CSR activities (Collier and Esteban 2007) and fostering their desire to serve as CSR ambassadors in daily work routines. Considering that employee-oriented CSR activities have the strongest correlation with the two employees' outcomes analyzed here—work engagement and turnover intention—organizations can also adopt more contemporary approaches to personnel management, namely socially responsible human resource management (Barrena-Martinez et al. 2018; Omididi and Dal Zotto 2022) or sustainable human resource management (Aust et al. 2020; Macke and Genari 2019) strategies to promote positive outcomes.

### 5.3. Limitations and Future Research

As in all research, these results need to be interpreted considering the study's limitations. One of these limitations is convenience sampling, which, among other factors, limits the generalizability of the findings. Although the modest sample size was deemed adequate

to proceed with data analysis, a larger and more representative sample of Nigerian workers would increase results robustness.

In addition, the data were collected at a single moment in time and through the same source (i.e., the respondents rated the predictor, mediating, and criterion variables), which can increase the potential risk of inflated relationships between the variables under study. Various precautions were taken in the questionnaire's construction to prevent common source bias, including ensuring anonymity, confidentiality, existence of no right or wrong answers, and using different response scales (Bozionelos and Simmering 2022; Podsakoff et al. 2012). Harman's single factor test was also performed, and the results suggest that common method bias is not a serious threat to the validity of the present findings. Even so, future studies could avoid cross-sectional designs and collect data at different points in time. Given the correlational design of the study, the results do not allow for any firm conclusions regarding causal relationships, and, thus, other possible causal directions between variables can be assumed to exist.

As future research, it will be interesting to investigate CSR in specific business sectors, as the results reported here are different from previous studies on the Nigerian case (e.g., Amaeshi et al. 2006), as well as conduct research in other African countries. New variables related to the professional context, such as job satisfaction, well-being, and individual performance, can be examined to obtain a deeper understanding of CSR outcomes. Additionally, moderator variables can be considered, namely in terms of employees' characteristics, as not all employees may react equally strongly to CSR practices. Characteristics such as age can be considered, as African countries have a larger number of young workers than do developed countries, and previous research has pointed out generational differences (Wisse et al. 2018). The avenues for research on CSR are plentiful and the current study hopes to have contributed to advancing existent knowledge regarding how employees, as major stakeholders of any organization, react to organizational efforts in that realm.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, O.T.B. and A.P.D.; Methodology, O.T.B. and A.P.D.; Data collection, O.T.B.; Formal analysis, A.P.D.; Funding acquisition, A.P.D.; Supervision, A.P.D.; Writing—original draft, O.T.B. and A.P.D.; Writing—review & editing, O.T.B. and A.P.D. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** This research was funded by Portugal's Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia [Grant UID/03125/2020 and contract DL 57/2016/CP1359/CT0004].

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki. The study also followed the ethical standards guidelines of Portugal's Order of Psychologists and of the researchers' institution.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study.

**Data Availability Statement:** The data will be made available on a reasonable request by contacting the corresponding author.

**Acknowledgments:** The authors wish to thank the participants without whom this study would not have been possible.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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