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Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility, Career Planning Support and Talent Stability: Evidence from A Large Chinese Enterprise Group

Lyu Xiaojing
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Tanjong Malim, Perak, Malaysia

Kesavan Nallaluthan
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Tanjong Malim, Perak, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT: Retaining competent employees has become a strategic challenge for large enterprise groups in China, yet the micro-level mechanisms through which corporate social responsibility (CSR) shapes talent stability remain under-specified. Drawing on social exchange and signaling logics, this study examines whether employee-perceived CSR promotes talent stability (TS) directly and indirectly through employee career planning support (ECP). Survey data were collected from 632 employees of a diversified enterprise group in Henan, China. The model was estimated using covariance-based structural equation modeling in AMOS 29, and the indirect effect was additionally checked with PROCESS 5.0 using 5,000 bias-corrected bootstrap resamples. Confirmatory factor analysis supported the measurement structure (RMSEA = .014; CFI = .996), with satisfactory reliability (CR = .887–.907) and broadly acceptable discriminant validity. Structural results indicate that CSR positively predicts ECP (β = .733) and TS (β = .504), and that ECP positively predicts TS (β = .380). A supplementary bootstrap analysis supported a significant indirect effect of CSR on TS through ECP (indirect = .2384; 95% CI [.1938, .2875]), indicating partial mediation. Overall, CSR appears to function as an employee-visible investment that strengthens perceived career support and, in turn, stability-oriented attachment.

KEYWORDS: corporate social responsibility; employee career planning support; talent stability; micro-CSR; mediation; structural equation modeling

INTRODUCTION

Large enterprise groups in China increasingly face retention and stability challenges as labor-market visibility, skill renewal cycles, and external mobility opportunities accelerate. Recent turnover and retention scholarship emphasizes that employees' staying decisions are shaped not only by immediate job satisfaction but also by perceived future opportunities, relational attachment, and the broader quality of the employment relationship (Hom & Kiazad, 2025; Jena & Nayak, 2024; Lu, Guo, Qu, Lin, & Lev, 2023). At the same time, CSR and ESG reporting expectations are rising globally, with sharper disclosure requirements and broader sustainability-reporting standards (IFRS Foundation, 2023; European Parliament and Council of the European Union, 2022; Global Reporting Initiative [GRI], 2021). In people-management terms, CSR can operate as an internal signal that the employment relationship is credible, fair, and development-supportive, thereby shaping employees' stability-oriented attitudes. However, CSR-retention evidence is often presented as a direct association, leaving intervening employee perceptions and process mechanisms under-specified.

This study addresses that gap by modeling CSR at the employee-perception level and testing a mechanism-based pathway: perceived CSR → employee career planning support (ECP) → talent stability (TS), while allowing a remaining direct CSR → TS path. This positioning fits organizational behavior, human resource management, and social-science research because it examines how employees interpret organizational responsibility cues and convert those interpretations into stability-oriented attachment. The focal contribution of this article is therefore narrower than the full thesis model: it reports the mediation logic (H1–H4) and its empirical test using covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM), while reserving additional boundary-condition analyses for separate work.

This focused article is also designed to strengthen the link between CSR and internal talent management. Prior micro-CSR studies show that employee-perceived CSR is associated with attitudes such as organizational identification, organizational pride, organizational commitment, work engagement, and turnover intention (Schaefer, Cunningham, Diehl, & Terlutter, 2024; Manzoor et al., 2023; Paruzel, Klug, & Maier, 2021). Nevertheless, the specific career-support route remains less directly examined. By positioning ECP as a development-relevant mediator, the present study explains how responsible organizational conduct may become personally meaningful to employees as a signal of future employability and career continuity.

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The article therefore responds to two practical and theoretical concerns at the same time. Practically, many organizations invest in CSR and sustainability reporting, yet employees may not experience these investments as relevant to their own career future. Theoretically, CSR research benefits from specifying intermediate employee perceptions that explain why responsible conduct is associated with retention-proximate outcomes. By linking CSR to ECP and then to TS, the model treats career planning support as a proximal mechanism rather than a background HR condition. This is useful for a social-science journal because the emphasis is on employee interpretation, relational exchange, and stability-oriented behavior rather than on CSR disclosure alone.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Micro-level CSR and employee interpretations

Micro-level CSR treats CSR as an employee-perceived pattern of responsible organizational actions and cues that are observable in everyday work, enter employee sensemaking, and shape relational evaluations of the employment exchange. Compared with firm-level CSR indices, a perception-based specification safeguards level-of-analysis alignment for individual outcomes (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Gond, El Akremi, Swaen, & Babu, 2017). Under social exchange logic, CSR can signal organizational benevolence and integrity, increasing employees' willingness to reciprocate through longer-term attachment and stability-oriented attitudes (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Blau, 1964). This employee-level framing is consistent with recent CSR research showing that employees respond not only to the presence of CSR practices, but also to how they interpret the authenticity, relevance, and internal consequences of those practices (Schaefer et al., 2024; Shaikh et al., 2022; Paruzel et al., 2021).

Signaling logic further clarifies why CSR can matter inside the organization (Connelly, Certo, Ireland, & Reutzel, 2011). Employees cannot fully observe senior-management motives, the durability of developmental commitments, or the organization's long-term employment orientation. CSR cues therefore provide information from which employees infer whether the organization is likely to sustain fair, responsible, and future-oriented employment relationships. When these cues are visible and consistent, they can reduce uncertainty about whether the organization will invest in employees beyond immediate work demands.

This argument is also consistent with studies in which CSR is linked to employee attitudes through identity, pride, commitment, and perceived organizational support. Such findings imply that CSR is not automatically converted into retention, but becomes influential when employees interpret it as relevant to the employment relationship. The present article narrows this broader evidence base by focusing on a career-development mechanism. Career planning support is a particularly suitable mediator because it reflects the organization's willingness to invest in the employee's future, and this future-oriented resource is closely aligned with stability-oriented attachment.

Employee career planning support as a development-relevant mechanism

ECP is conceptualized as employees' perception that the organization provides credible and usable support for long-term career planning and development, including guidance, developmental opportunities, transparent pathways, mentoring, and supportive career conversations. CSR practices that are experienced as consistent and employee-inclusive should increase employees' inferences that the organization will invest in their long-term employability and career progress, thereby strengthening perceived career planning support (Jena & Nayak, 2024; Sturges, Guest, Conway, & Mackenzie Davey, 2002; Turker, 2009). In this sense, ECP is not merely an additional HR practice; it is a concrete employment-relevant channel through which broad CSR perceptions can become personally meaningful.

This mediating logic is especially relevant because employees often evaluate responsible organizations through the practical resources that affect their own employment future. A firm may communicate CSR externally, but employees are more likely to translate CSR into attachment when they perceive that the organization also supports internal development, training access, career information, and fair opportunities for growth. Prior research on career development and retention shows that organizational career-development practices are closely connected to employees' willingness to remain and invest effort in the organization (Jena & Nayak, 2024; Sturges et al., 2002). Therefore, the CSR → ECP path specifies how responsible organizational cues can be converted into a career-support evaluation.

Talent stability

TS is treated as a stability-oriented psychological attachment outcome capturing employees' intention and inclination to remain with the organization and sustain their employment relationship over time. In the present study, this construct was operationalized through the affective commitment dimension because affective attachment is conceptually closest to stability-oriented staying tendencies (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Allen & Meyer, 1990). This operational choice avoids conflating different reasons for staying. Employees may stay because they want to, because they have to, or because they feel obliged to; the present article focuses on the positive attachment-based form of stability that is most theoretically compatible with CSR and career-support mechanisms.

The mediation hypothesis follows directly from this construct logic. If CSR increases employees' perception that the organization supports their career planning, and if career planning support strengthens attachment-based stability, then ECP should transmit part of the CSR effect on TS. At the same time, the model retains a direct CSR → TS path because CSR may influence stability through additional routes, such as organizational pride, identification, trust, and perceived legitimacy (Schaefer et al., 2024; Shaikh et al., 2022). The expected pattern is therefore partial mediation rather than full mediation.

Hypotheses

H1: Perceived CSR positively predicts employee career planning support (CSR → ECP).

H2: Perceived CSR positively predicts talent stability (CSR → TS).

H3: Employee career planning support positively predicts talent stability (ECP → TS).

H4: Employee career planning support mediates the relationship between perceived CSR and talent stability (CSR → ECP → TS).

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METHODOLOGY

Research setting and sample

The empirical context is a diversified enterprise group in Henan Province, China. A stratified random sampling approach was used to ensure representation across business divisions and job levels. A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed; 729 were returned; after data-quality screening, 632 valid responses were retained for analysis. Stratification was appropriate because divisions and job layers may differ in HR implementation intensity, career-path visibility, and exposure to CSR-related practices; it therefore helped reduce the risk that one organizational segment would dominate the sample (Lohr, 2021). The final valid sample also provided adequate stability for CFA and CB-SEM with three latent constructs and 24 retained indicators.

Procedure and ethics

Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent. Respondents were informed of the study purpose, confidentiality arrangements, and their right to withdraw without penalty before submitting the questionnaire. No personally identifying information was collected in the questionnaire, and data were analyzed only in aggregate form. Because the survey was conducted in an organizational setting, the procedure emphasized that participation was for academic research rather than internal evaluation. This separation was intended to reduce perceived pressure, protect response authenticity, and support ethical handling of employee survey data.

Measures

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was measured with eight items adapted from Turker's (2009) stakeholder-based perceived CSR scale. Turker's original instrument contains 17 items spanning multiple stakeholder domains. For the present study, eight items were retained because they capture responsibility cues that employees can more directly observe and evaluate in day-to-day organizational life, including sustainability orientation, legal and ethical compliance, fair treatment of employees, and socially responsible participation. Items that were more strongly oriented toward external stakeholder domains less continuously accessible to employees were not retained, which helped maintain level-of-analysis consistency between the perceived CSR measure and employee-level outcomes.

Employee Career Planning Support (ECP) was measured with eight items adapted from the organizational career management item pool reported by Sturges et al. (2002). The original item pool includes 10 items covering organizational support such as training provision, mentoring, career information, and advice. In the present study, eight items were retained to emphasize forms of career support that employees can stably perceive across work settings, including training opportunities, mentoring support, developmental assignments, performance feedback, network support, and the availability and objectivity of career advice. This adaptation preserves the construct's career-support domain while aligning item content with the present organizational context.

Talent Stability (TS) was operationalized using the eight affective commitment items from the three-component organizational commitment scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). The original full instrument comprises 24 items covering affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Only the affective commitment items were retained because they more directly reflect employees' emotional attachment, identification, and willingness to remain psychologically connected to the organization, which is conceptually closest to the stability-oriented outcome examined here. Reverse-coded items were retained sparingly to reduce acquiescence bias while limiting comprehension burden; CSR8, ECP8, and TS8 were reverse-coded prior to analysis.

All constructs used the same five-point agreement response format. The adaptation strategy followed a construct-preservation principle: each construct was anchored in a single established measurement tradition, and item selection was guided by theoretical fit, employee interpretability, and contextual relevance. The purpose was not to maximize the number of indicators, but to retain indicators that represented the focal construct cleanly and could be validated empirically through CFA, reliability assessment, and discriminant-validity checks.

The retained measurement design also helped keep the article suitable for journal submission. The reduced item set made the questionnaire manageable for working employees while preserving theoretically central content from established instruments. The use of CFA was therefore essential, because item adaptation and reduction require empirical evidence that the shortened measures still represent the intended constructs. In the present study, the strong standardized loadings and reliability estimates indicated that the retained indicators performed coherently in the focal context, while the discriminant-validity checks addressed whether CSR, ECP, and TS could be interpreted as related but separable constructs.

Data-quality control and common method bias

Responses were screened for data quality prior to model estimation. Following survey-quality guidance, cases with excessive missing data, implausibly rapid completion, or patterned responding such as straight-lining were removed, yielding 632 usable questionnaires for analysis (Meade & Craig, 2012). Given the single-source, self-report design, common method bias was mitigated through procedural controls, including anonymity, voluntary participation, neutral wording, construct-level separation in the questionnaire, and a limited number of reverse-keyed items. As post hoc diagnostics, the well-fitting multi-factor CFA and discriminant validity evidence reduced concern that a single common factor dominated the covariance structure (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003; Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015; Kline, 2023).

These checks were interpreted cautiously. Contemporary method-bias scholarship warns that common method bias cannot be ruled out by a single statistical test, especially in cross-sectional self-report research (Podsakoff et al., 2024; Kock, Berbekova, & Assaf, 2021). Therefore, the purpose of these procedures was not to claim that method effects were absent, but to show that the theorized multi-factor measurement structure was sufficiently defensible for mechanism testing.

Analytical strategy

Analyses were conducted using SPSS 27, AMOS 29, and PROCESS 5.0. Descriptive statistics were computed in SPSS, while CFA and CB-SEM were estimated in AMOS using maximum likelihood. Because multivariate normality was violated, Bollen–Stine bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was applied to obtain corrected model-fit inference (Bollen & Stine, 1992; Kline, 2023). AMOS was used for latent-variable model estimation, whereas PROCESS was used only as a supplementary observed-variable check to report explicit bootstrap confidence intervals for the

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indirect effect. A supplementary observed-variable mediation analysis was estimated in PROCESS Model 4 using composite scores and 5,000 bias-corrected bootstrap resamples (Hayes, 2022; MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004).

This two-step strategy followed the logic that structural conclusions should be interpreted only after the measurement model has been evaluated. CFA assessed item loadings, composite reliability, AVE, and discriminant validity, whereas the structural model tested the hypothesized direct paths. The supplementary PROCESS result was included for transparent reporting of the indirect-effect confidence interval, not as a replacement for the latent-variable SEM evidence.

The analytical design also separated the roles of AMOS and PROCESS. AMOS was used to estimate the latent measurement and structural models, which is appropriate because the constructs were measured by multiple indicators. PROCESS was used only as a supplementary mediation check based on composite scores, primarily because it reports the indirect-effect confidence interval in a transparent and familiar format. This division avoids overstating the PROCESS result while still giving readers a clear decomposition of direct, indirect, and total effects.

RESULTS

Measurement model evaluation

Global model fit

Following the two-step SEM procedure, CFA was conducted to evaluate the measurement model prior to structural-path interpretation. Model adequacy was evaluated using complementary fit indices and measurement-quality evidence rather than a single cutoff rule (Gaskin et al., 2025; Cheung, Cooper-Thomas, Lau, & Wang, 2024; Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Brown, 2015; Kline, 2023).

The CFA measurement model showed strong fit: $\chi^2(249) = 279.085$ ($p = .092$), $\chi^2/df = 1.121$, RMSEA = .014 (90% CI [.000, .022], PCLOSE = 1.000), CFI = .996, TLI = .996, IFI = .996, NFI = .965, GFI = .965, AGFI = .957, with small residual misfit (RMR = .031). The Bollen–Stine bootstrap did not reject the model (bootstrap $p = .191$; 5,000 resamples), supporting robustness under distributional violations. These fit results were interpreted together with item loadings, reliability, and discriminant-validity evidence because good global fit alone does not automatically establish measurement quality.

Table 1. Model fit indices for CFA and structural models.

Fit index	Measurement model (CFA)	Structural model (SEM)
χ^2 (df)	279.085 (249)	279.085 (249)
p-value	.092	.092
χ^2/df	1.121	1.121
RMSEA	0.014	0.014
RMSEA 90% CI	[.000, .022]	[.000, .022]
PCLOSE	1.000	1.000
CFI	0.996	0.996
TLI	0.996	0.996
IFI	0.996	0.996
NFI	0.965	0.965
GFI	0.965	0.965
AGFI	0.957	0.957
RMR	0.031	0.031
Bollen–Stine bootstrap p	0.191 (5,000)	0.191 (5,000)

Note. *RMR is reported from AMOS output. Fit heuristics such as RMSEA < .06 and CFI/TLI ≥ .95 were used for interpretive transparency rather than as strict pass-fail rules.*

Convergent validity and reliability

Standardized factor loadings were all statistically significant and exceeded 0.66, indicating adequate item-construct linkage. Composite reliability (CR) ranged from 0.887 to 0.907 and average variance extracted (AVE) ranged from 0.497 to 0.549. Given that all CR values exceeded common thresholds and all item loadings were substantial, convergent validity was considered acceptable. This judgment was made cautiously because one AVE value was slightly below .50, but the combination of strong standardized loadings, high CR, and theoretical item coherence supported retaining the construct (Cheung et al., 2024; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 2 summarizes CR and AVE evidence.

Table 2. Convergent validity and reliability evidence (CFA).

Construct	Items	Loading range	AVE	CR
CSR	8	0.666–0.741	0.509	0.892
ECP	8	0.715–0.773	0.549	0.907
TS	8	0.679–0.763	0.497	0.887

Note. AVE = average variance extracted; CR = composite reliability. Loading ranges reflect standardized CFA loadings.

Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and inspection of latent correlations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The Fornell-Larcker test was largely supportive, although the CSR-TS correlation (0.783) exceeded the square root of AVE for both CSR (0.713) and

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TS (0.705), indicating partial overlap between these theoretically proximate constructs. At the same time, all latent correlations were below 0.85. Taken together, the evidence suggests acceptable, though not perfect, discriminant validity given the theoretical proximity between CSR perceptions and stability-oriented psychological attachment.

Table 3. Discriminant validity: Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Construct	CSR	ECP	TS
CSR	0.713		
ECP	0.733	0.741	
TS	0.783	0.749	0.705

Note. Diagonal entries are square roots of AVE; off-diagonal entries are latent correlations. All latent correlations were below 0.85.

Structural model evaluation and hypothesis tests

Structural model fit

The hypothesized structural model, including the direct CSR → TS path, also demonstrated strong fit (Table 1). In the present specification, the measurement model and structural model yielded identical global fit indices, although the CFA and SEM were estimated as separate models. The Bollen–Stine bootstrap again did not reject the model (bootstrap p = .191; 5,000 resamples), supporting stable inference under multivariate non-normality.

Direct effects and explained variance

Consistent with the proposed mechanism, perceived CSR positively predicted ECP (β = .733, p < .001), supporting H1. CSR directly and positively predicted TS (β = .504, p < .001), supporting H2. ECP positively predicted TS (β = .380, p < .001), supporting H3. The model explained substantial variance in both ECP (R^2 = .537) and TS (R^2 = .679), indicating substantial explained variance for a micro-level CSR mechanism.

Table 4. Structural path estimates and hypothesis tests (SEM).

Hypothesis	Path	Standardized estimate (β)	p-value	Decision
H1	CSR → ECP	0.733	< .001	Supported
H2	CSR → TS	0.504	< .001	Supported
H3	ECP → TS	0.380	< .001	Supported
	R^2 (ECP)	0.537		
	R^2 (TS)	0.679		

Note. *β denotes standardized regression weights from AMOS. R^2 values are squared multiple correlations.*

Mediation test

Mediation (H4) was tested using PROCESS Model 4 with 5,000 bias-corrected bootstrap resamples on composite scores (Hayes, 2022). The indirect effect of CSR on TS through ECP was positive and statistically significant (indirect = 0.2384; 95% CI [.1938, .2875]). The direct effect remained significant (0.4307; 95% CI [.3643, .4972]), indicating partial mediation. The total effect was 0.6691 (95% CI [.6150, .7233]), and the proportion mediated was approximately 0.356.

Table 5. Bootstrapped decomposition of CSR effects on talent stability.

Effect	Estimate	95% CI lower	95% CI upper	Inference
Direct effect (CSR → TS)	0.4307	0.3643	0.4972	Significant
Indirect effect (CSR → ECP → TS)	0.2384	0.1938	0.2875	Significant
Total effect	0.6691	0.6150	0.7233	Significant
Proportion mediated	0.356			

Note. Estimates are from PROCESS Model 4 with 5,000 bias-corrected bootstrap resamples using composite scores. CI = confidence interval.

DISCUSSION

The findings support a mechanism-based interpretation: perceived CSR is associated with talent stability partly because it shapes employees' perceptions of internal career planning support. The remaining direct CSR → TS path suggests that CSR may also signal relationship qualities beyond career support alone, including organizational benevolence, legitimacy, fairness, and longer-term employment credibility. This interpretation is consistent with micro-CSR evidence showing that employees respond to CSR through attitudinal and relational outcomes, including commitment, identification, and reduced turnover intention (Schaefer et al., 2024; Manzoor et al., 2023; Lu et al., 2023; Paruzel et al., 2021).

The mediation result is important because CSR is a broad organizational signal, whereas career planning support is a concrete employment-relevant resource. Employees may not convert abstract responsibility claims into stability-oriented attachment unless they can see how the organization supports their future inside the firm. ECP therefore helps explain why CSR can become personally meaningful: it connects organizational responsibility to employees' expectations of development, internal opportunity, and career continuity.

The partial mediation pattern also deserves attention. The significant indirect effect indicates that ECP carries part of the CSR association with TS, while the remaining direct path suggests that CSR may operate through other psychological routes, such as organizational pride, perceived

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authenticity, and organizational identification (Schaefer et al., 2024; Shaikh et al., 2022). The results therefore support a mechanism-based interpretation without claiming that ECP is the only possible pathway linking CSR to stability.

From an applied perspective, the indirect pathway is substantively meaningful. The proportion mediated indicates that more than one-third of the total CSR association with TS was carried through ECP in the supplementary analysis. This suggests that career planning support is not a peripheral explanation, but a substantial route through which CSR perceptions appear to be connected with stability-oriented attachment. Managers who invest in CSR but neglect career support may therefore miss an important internal benefit of responsible management.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical implications

The study advances micro-CSR research by specifying a development-focused mediator and clarifying partial mediation in a large enterprise-group setting. Rather than treating CSR as an undifferentiated retention antecedent, the results show that employees' interpretation of CSR can be connected to a specific career-support mechanism that is theoretically consistent with social exchange and signaling logics. This contributes to a more precise explanation of how CSR becomes relevant to employee stability: responsible organizational conduct strengthens career-support perceptions, and those perceptions help sustain attachment to the organization.

The findings also refine the use of social exchange theory in CSR-retention research. Instead of assuming that employees reciprocate CSR in a general way, the model identifies career planning support as a specific exchange-relevant resource. When employees perceive CSR as credible, they may infer that the organization will provide developmental support and protect longer-term employment value. This resource-based interpretation helps connect broad CSR perceptions to more proximal HR experiences.

Practical implications

CSR is more likely to support stability-oriented attachment when it is implemented consistently and linked to concrete career planning mechanisms, including career pathways, mentoring, internal mobility, developmental assignments, and feedback-based development planning. Organizations can therefore treat internal CSR and career planning support as mutually reinforcing levers for retention-oriented stability. In practice, CSR should not remain detached from HR systems: employees are more likely to respond when responsibility is experienced through fair access to development, transparent career information, and credible support for future growth.

For large enterprise groups, the implication is operational as well as symbolic. CSR communication may strengthen reputation, but employees evaluate CSR through the quality of daily employment practices. Managers should therefore align CSR commitments with training access, supervisor career conversations, internal recruitment transparency, and mentoring arrangements. Such alignment makes CSR visible as part of the employment relationship rather than only as an external stakeholder message.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Cross-sectional self-report data limit causal inference; future studies could use longitudinal or multi-source designs and track actual turnover behavior. This limitation is particularly important for mediation, because cross-sectional indirect effects should be interpreted as evidence consistent with a proposed mechanism rather than proof of temporal causality (Schuler et al., 2025; Maxwell & Cole, 2007). Replication across industries and institutional settings is also recommended. In addition, the present study operationalized talent stability through the affective commitment dimension; future research could examine whether this pattern generalizes to broader behavioral and multi-motive indicators of staying. Additional boundary-condition measures collected in the broader survey are reserved for separate analyses and are not examined in this mediation-focused article.

A second limitation concerns context. The single-enterprise-group design strengthens internal consistency and allows the mechanism to be tested within a common institutional environment, but it limits generalizability. Future studies should examine whether the CSR → ECP → TS pathway holds across ownership forms, industries, regions, and HR governance systems. Comparative work could also test whether the mechanism is stronger in knowledge-intensive settings where career planning is highly salient, or in organizations where CSR is tightly integrated with internal employee-development practices.

Future research could also compare alternative mediators. For example, organizational identification, perceived organizational support, CSR authenticity, and organizational pride may operate alongside ECP. Testing these mediators in parallel or sequential models would clarify whether career planning support is a unique channel, a complementary channel, or part of a broader chain through which CSR shapes stability. Such studies would also help determine whether the direct CSR → TS effect observed here represents unmeasured identity-based routes, exchange-based routes, or other organizational-credibility mechanisms.

CONCLUSION

Perceived CSR is associated with higher talent stability, partly through employee career planning support, and CSR retains a meaningful direct association with stability beyond the mediated pathway. The study therefore supports a micro-level CSR explanation in which responsible organizational conduct becomes relevant to employees when it is translated into credible career-development support. In this article, talent stability was captured as a stability-oriented psychological attachment grounded in affective commitment. The findings should be interpreted as correlational evidence consistent with the proposed mechanism and as a basis for future longitudinal and multi-source research.

DECLARATIONS

Data availability

The anonymized dataset can be made available by the author(s) on reasonable request, subject to ethical approval conditions and organizational confidentiality constraints.

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Ethics approval and consent to participate

The study was reviewed and approved by the relevant human research ethics committee before data collection. Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent. No personally identifying information was collected in the questionnaire, and all results are reported in aggregate form.

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Declaration: This title page contains author-identifying information and is intended to be uploaded separately from the anonymized manuscript for double-blind peer review.

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APPENDIX A. CONSENT STATEMENT AND MEASURE PROVENANCE

Consent-to-proceed wording

The online questionnaire used a consent-to-proceed design. Respondents could enter the substantive survey only after confirming a statement equivalent to the following: "I have read the study information, understand that participation is voluntary and confidential, and agree to participate in this academic research survey. I understand that I may withdraw before submitting the questionnaire without penalty."

Measure provenance and item-selection rationale

For transparency and replication, the full adapted questionnaire instrument can be provided as supplementary material where permitted. The following summary documents the provenance of the adapted measures, the size of the original item pools, the number of items retained in the present study, and the rationale used for retaining or excluding items.

CSR (Turker, 2009): Turker's stakeholder-based perceived CSR scale contains 17 items. Eight items were retained (CSR1–CSR8), including one reverse-coded item (CSR8R). The retained items capture responsibility cues employees can directly observe in daily work, including sustainability orientation, compliance and tax responsibility, fair treatment of employees, and socially responsible participation. More externally oriented stakeholder items were not retained because employees may not continuously and stably observe them, and exclusion also reduced questionnaire burden.

ECP (Sturges et al., 2002): The organizational career management/career support item pool reported by Sturges et al. contains 10 items. Eight items were retained (ECP1–ECP8), including one reverse-coded item (ECP8R). The retained items emphasize forms of career support employees can stably perceive across settings, including training provision, mentoring support, developmental assignments, performance feedback, network support, and the availability and objectivity of career advice.

TS (Allen & Meyer, 1990): Allen and Meyer's three-component organizational commitment scale contains 24 items, including 8 affective, 8 continuance, and 8 normative commitment items. The present study retained the 8 affective commitment items (TS1–TS8), including one reverse-coded item (TS8R), because they most directly reflect emotional attachment, identification, and willingness to remain psychologically connected to the organization.

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