Business Gifts − a Bibliographic Analysis

Nadya MURAD
Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria
nadyak866@gmail.com

Abstract. *Gift-giving has always been an essential part used to build rapport, negotiate deals, and create trust in all business interactions. This paper analyzes the implications of corporate gift-giving on culture, law, and ethics. The analysis also used bibliometric methods through Web of Science and VOSviewer on the existing literature on business gifting to establish patterns of key research focus areas, subject aspects and their spatial distribution. The analysis looks into the purposes that business gifts serve in corporate diplomacy in relation to economic activity and morality and how multinational companies deal with the compliance issues arising from international regulations on business gifting using the insights. Evidence shows a steady interest by scholars with a distribution of 30-40 papers per year across various journals and academic institutions at any point in time. The prominent scholars from the United States, United Kingdom, China, Australia emerged as the most prolific authors representing active and cross disciplinary participation in this topic.*

Keywords: Business gift-giving, corporate diplomacy, cultural differences, ethical implications, bribery laws.

Introduction

Exchanging presents has been a vital aspect of human interactions since ancient times, serving to express kindness, consolidate relationships, and honor others. In the realm of economics, gift-giving is significant, acting as a means of appreciation, enhancing business contacts, negotiating, and building trust. Business gifts intersect cultural habits, legal provisions, and moral reasoning, making them a complex and controversial phenomenon in modern social relations.

The distinction between gifts and business courtesy can blur, potentially leading to abuse of power or misguided altruism. Different societies categorize corporate gifts differently, with laws like the FCPA and the UK Bribery Act complicating the practice. This creates a conflict between building strong business relationships and adhering to global compliance standards, requiring a clear understanding of what constitutes an ethical gift versus bribery.

This paper analyzes the phenomenon of business gifts through a bibliometric review of academic literature, using the Web of Science database and VOSviewer. The research explores the diplomatic, economic, and ethical aspects of corporate gifting and how multinational corporations comply with international gifting regulations.

The study delves into the sociocultural, governance, and ethical dimensions of business gift-giving, addressing key issues such as the role of gifts in business deals, the interpretation of corporate gifts across economic and legal jurisdictions, and the politics surrounding gift exchange laws. Through bibliometric indicators, the study tracks the evolving scholarly focus on this issue.

Findings show consistent research activity in business gift-giving, with approximately 30-40 papers published annually in indexed journals. Scholars from the USA, UK, Australia, and China significantly contribute to this field, highlighting its growing importance in global business, especially with new legal policies and ethical oversight.

DOI: 10.2478/picbe-2025-0207

This interdisciplinary research examines business gift-giving from the perspectives of economic sociology, business ethics, and corporate law, aiming to understand how corporations can practice ethical gift-giving without cultural insensitivity or legal inflexibility in a globalized world.

Methodology

This research applies a bibliometric analysis to the business gift-giving literature, focusing on cultural, ethical, and economic aspects. A bibliometric analysis quantitatively evaluates publication patterns, citation impact, and thematic evolution within a specific academic field.

The study suggests that interest in business gift-giving has remained relatively stable over time, with some shifts due to changes in laws and globalization. It also highlights variations in corporate gift-giving across cultures, influenced by ethical considerations, particularly anti-bribery compliance.

The bibliometric data was collected from the Web of Science, which covers peer-reviewed business and management articles. Searches were conducted using predefined keywords, including "business gift-giving" and "corporate gifting," from 1990 to 2024, resulting in an initial dataset of 699 academic sources. Inclusion criteria focused on peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and books that addressed the cultural, ethical, and economic dimensions of business gifting, including international compliance issues like the FCPA and UK Bribery Act.

Publications on personal or religious gifts, non-constructive studies, or those not in English were excluded, along with duplicates and non-scholarly sources. The data was processed using VOSviewer.

The study's limitations include its focus on Web of Science, which may exclude relevant publications from other databases like Scopus or Google Scholar, and the omission of grey sources such as white papers and corporate reports. Citation-based metrics also tend to favor well-known studies, potentially underrepresenting newer work.

According to the analysis, business gift-giving remains an ongoing topic, with around 35 papers published annually. The research is international, with the U.S. contributing 32% of studies, followed by the UK and China (9% each), and significant contributions from Australia, Canada, Germany, France, and Spain. Xin and Pearce's (1996) study on guanxi and corporate gifting in China remains the most cited, emphasizing the cultural impact on business relations.

Literature review

Gift-giving has long been a core part of human culture, serving as a tool for goodwill, social bonding, and respect. In business, it is a strategic practice used for relationship building, negotiating, and trust creation. Marcel Mauss's work, *The Gift*, highlights that gifts are never free; they carry obligations that help form societal bonds. He identifies three interwoven obligations of gift-giving: to give, to receive, and to return the favor, emphasizing the delicate balance between self-interest and collective society.

In the corporate world, different cultures have distinct practices for gift-giving, influenced by cultural norms. Some societies view gift-giving as essential for business, symbolizing goodwill and a desire to build long-lasting partnerships. In contrast, other cultures restrict it due to concerns about transparency, bribery, and ethics, creating challenges for multinational corporations navigating diverse and regulated environments.

Identifying Gaps in the literature

Business ethics has faced stagnation in thought and paradigm shifts in recent decades. Bibliometric studies in business ethics often aim to map the intellectual territory of the field, highlighting major publications and suggesting future research directions. For example, bibliometric analyses of corporate social responsibility (CSR) have shown a shift from philanthropy to strategic business integration, while corporate governance studies reveal trends in executive remuneration and stakeholder participation.

Despite the extensive research in business ethics, gaps remain, particularly regarding the practice of gift-giving and whether it (when also being a bribe) is a substitute of being connected (Yalamov, 2012) or on the contrary – facilitates the guanxi connection. While gift-giving has been studied in anthropology and sociology, its application in modern business contexts is underexplored. There is a lack of research on how corporate gift-giving intersects with contemporary phenomena like globalization, digital communication, and changing legal policies.

Additionally, the impact of corporate gift-giving on stakeholder relationships, reputation, and ethics requires more empirical research. Much of the existing literature is culture-specific, focusing on theoretical or case study analyses without considering the complexities of modern international business.

This study aims to fill these gaps with a bibliometric analysis of corporate gift-giving, identifying dominant and neglected themes to improve understanding and help develop ethical standards for multicultural and multi-regulated business environments.

Historical Context of Business Gift-Giving

Cutler (2021) pointed out that the Byzantine and Arab business systems are perfect adduction to show how gift exchanges were and still are structured during periods of diplomacy and commerce. Byzantine Emperors and Arab Caliphs, for example, cut trade deals through gifted exchanges that aided their diplomatic relations and state agreement. Ceremonial gifting took other forms too, such as imperial signifying exploitation, which functioned as a custom of economic domination. A case in point is, between the Islamic world and European during the Abbasid period, European rulers were no sprats regarding textiles and precious metals.

The medieval European economy also practiced gift giving for a term known as business networking. Merchant guilds, nobles and monarchs exchanged gifts to strengthen business ties and demonstrate their economic power. That practice was even stronger in the Hanseatic League, where merchants used gift giving for dealing with intricate political and economic systems (Hilsdale, 2021). This well-documented practice also known as corporate gifting was used in early capitalism for business relationship marketing. People had an obligation towards each other in business and trade, which increased continuity in commercial relationships.

China too used gifts as marketing tools during the pre-modern epoch, overwhelmingly aided by Confucian values. Presents to subordinates were implemented to exhibit economic, cultural, and political dominance offering tremendous goodwill for self. With the required practices for issuing trade papers mirroring the dominance in trade, it was common for the imperial court to send gifts to vassal states and offer trade to self-aligned states (Steidlmeier, 1999). As in many other civilizations, China imposed a tributary system whereby foreign merchants and states were required to pay tribute and trade allowing the emperor to extract considerable amounts of wealth. Such gift exchange practices reinforced and maintained the economics and political dominations internationally, akin to contemporary gifting norms that reinforce relationships and biographies amongst the parties.

The historical practice of gift exchange in business is exemplified within the Middle Eastern and North African regions as well. Within this region, gifting served to secure trade alliances and as a diplomatic tool during the Islamic era from the Umayyad to the Ottoman Empire (Miller, 2002). Trade networks were established as rulers and merchants exchanged gold coins, unique spices, and manuscripts with each other. These exchanges showcase a combination of religion, commerce, and politics which was essential to maintaining economic relationships across regions. With the expansion of the European colonial empire, gifts have further institutionalized, particularly in business. Business gifts were a vital part of negotiations with native tribes by European traders and colonial officials. For instance, in the expansion of Biritsh East India company in south Asia, company's officials made frequent gift presentations to local rulers to ensure them politically and economically bound to them (Camerer, 1988). This practice anticipated misguided expectations of allegiance, demonstrating early steps of corporate diplomacy. In the same manner, relations of transatlantic trade were established as European merchants in West Africa exchanged materials for access to local resources.

Examining the gift varying practices among numerous cultures regarding business interactions will reveal the patterns accompanying the ratio strategies deployed. Table 1 presents an overview of key historical contexts where gift-giving played a pivotal role in economic and diplomatic interactions.

Table 1. Key historical contexts of gift-giving role in economic and diplomatic interactions

Civilization	Purpose of Business Gift-Giving	Examples of Gift Items	Impact on Trade Relations
Byzantine Empire	Diplomatic statecraft, securing alliances	Gold, silk, rare artifacts	Strengthened alliances, facilitated trade treaties
Hanseatic League	Merchant reciprocity, economic networking	Fine textiles, spices	Established trust among merchant guilds, promoted long-term trade
Imperial China	Hierarchical affirmation, international diplomacy	Jade, tea, porcelain	Reinforced tributary relationships, regulated foreign trade
Islamic Empires	Trade facilitation, diplomatic negotiations	Gold coins, spices, manuscripts	Created sustainable trade networks across regions
British Colonial Expansion	Securing trade privileges, political influence	Firearms, textiles, luxury goods	Expanded European economic dominance in colonies

Source: Author.

Gift-giving in the corporate setting exemplifies a longstanding custom that evolves but maintains its core motives: reciprocity, social prestige, and relationship nurturing. Modern corporations, particularly those in ethnically diverse contexts, must understand the social implications and historical significance of gifting.

Historically, gift-giving in business has evolved from a diplomatic tool to a strategic corporate practice. It has long served as a means of expressing cordial relations and continues to be widely used today.

The cultural context of gift-giving in economic settings highlights its importance in establishing commercial and diplomatic relationships. For example, Byzantine and Arab economies used gifts to demonstrate wealth, rank, and goodwill (Cutler, 2001). These practices persist in modern business cultures, particularly in hierarchical and relational contracting economies.

Gift-giving is most impactful in environments with weak formal regulatory frameworks, where social capital and trust play key roles. Scholars suggest that business relationships thrive when mutual expectations are met non-monetarily (Camerer, 1988). This justifies corporate gifting as a means of promoting relational stability and long-term engagement, aligning with economic signaling theory.

However, ethical concerns arise when gift-giving blurs the line between culturally sanctioned gestures and corrupt practices, particularly in light of globalization and differing regulations. In China, for example, gift-giving is rooted in Confucian culture and relational harmony (guanxi), but Western anti-bribery laws like the FCPA often view such exchanges as corruption (Steidlmeier, 1999). This creates a challenge for multinationals to balance universal ethics with cultural acceptance.

Business gifting has sociological implications, as it conveys messages related to power, status, and indebtedness. For example, among the Anishinaabeg people of North America, gifts were used to win political favors, a practice similar to modern corporate gift-giving. The acceptance or refusal of a gift can reflect loyalty and business partnerships.

Corporate gift-giving is sensitive to legal, cultural, and economic factors, as illustrated by a comparative analysis of business cultures across the world's major economies (see Table 2).

Table 2. Comparative analysis of particular business cultures in the most economically spaced regions of the world

Region	Cultural Perception of Gift-Giving	Legal Framework	Business Implication
China	Integral to relationship-building (guanxi)	Ambiguous; FCPA constraints on foreign firms	Essential for trust and reciprocity
Japan	Formalized and seasonal gifting (oseibo)	Regulated but culturally significant	Enhances long-term partnerships
USA	Viewed with suspicion in corporate settings	Strict anti-bribery laws (FCPA)	Often discouraged to avoid legal implications
Middle East	Embedded in honor and social obligation	Varies by country, some anti-corruption laws	Strengthens business networks

Source: Author.

Gift exchange influences and is influenced by legal, cultural, and tactical factors, with businesses navigating ethical boundaries and relational expectations. In relationship-driven economies, the benefits of gift exchange are evident, but international anti-corruption regulations must still be considered.

Business gifts help build trust and goodwill, extending beyond their tangible value. This chapter will explore the psychology of gift exchanges, their impact on negotiations, and the ethical and strategic aspects of corporate gifting.

Cultural norms shape how gifts are understood in business contexts. In collectivist countries like Japan and China, gifting is an integral part of business dealings, while Western nations, such as the United States and Europe, impose strict regulations to promote workplace ethics. This creates challenges for multinational corporations trying to operate across cultures.

In China, gift-giving is linked to the Confucian concept of guanxi, which emphasizes reciprocity, hierarchy, and mutual obligation. Gifts facilitate trust-building and relationship development, essential in Chinese business culture. In contrast, Western cultures rely on contracts and regulatory laws to foster business relationships, with the FCPA and UK Bribery Act governing corporate gift-giving to prevent undue influence on decisions. The complexity of business gift-giving in a multicultural context is highlighted by varying perceptions and regulations across cultures. Companies must develop strategies that respect local customs while complying with global statutes.

The appropriateness of gifts differs by culture. For instance, Chinese culture avoids gifting clocks due to negative symbolism, while tea or fine liquor is acceptable. In Japan, the wrapper's color and style convey the level of respect for the occasion. In Middle Eastern cultures, gifts are seen as an addition to hospitality but require caution to avoid misinterpretation. In the West, particularly the U.S. and Northern Europe, corporate gifts are typically limited to branded items that promote ethical transparency.

Business gift exchanges exist within two parameters: a legitimate business gift or a bribe. In gift-oriented cultures, like China, the line between the two is often blurred. A gift may be seen as customary in China but viewed as manipulation under Western regulatory frameworks. This creates a paradox where adherence to one set of norms may violate another.

To address this, businesses should implement internal guidelines specific to each region. Value limits on gifts and requiring disclosure of anything above a set threshold can help. Some companies opt for corporate hospitality and shared activities as alternatives to traditional gift-giving.

As globalization connects markets, understanding local gift-giving customs is crucial. Companies must create culturally sensitive, legally compliant strategies that foster goodwill without compromising ethics. The next chapter will discuss the ethical and legal boundaries of business gift exchanges, balancing compliance with ethical responsibility. Globalization also complicates gift-giving practices, particularly in China, where relationship-based cultures view gift-giving as integral to building trust, while Western cultures regulate it more strictly.

Ethical Boundaries: When Does a Gift Become a Bribe?

The difference between a reasonable gift to a business partner and an unscrupulous bribe is a question that remains disputed in international trade. Gift-giving is an important element in most business practices especially in a gift-oriented culture, but it can lead to unethical practices gaining illegitimate benefits and, so, is the subject of much legal and regulatory attention. As MNCs operate in different cultural environments, they are bound by international anti-bribery regulations, but at the same time must consider local business practices. As noted by (Raoof & Butt, 1997), global business practices are made easier because corruption can occur through the informal processes that disguise appreciation for a job well done as significant coercive payments. Due to unethical provisions associated with gift-giving, many international structures have complied to reduce the risk of corruption. The FCPA of the USA and the OECD Anti-Bribery convention remain at the frontline of international law in supporting business activities on an international scale.

The Psychological Principles That Influence Gift-Giving and Decision-Making

Studies have shown that gift-giving in the realm of business pushes boundaries and moves past the norm. The theory of the undetected obligation coined by Cialdini (2001) states that when a gift is received, an unrecognized obligation to reciprocate emerges. This expectance is powerful, especially within the realm of business negotiations, where favorable outcomes for the giver leads to the increase in indebtedness.

Undetected obligation theory does tie into social exchange theory, which states that every human interaction can be broken down to cost and benefit (Blau, 1964). When using gifts for bribery in business, it is a social currency that has the ability to fast-track trust and ensure a cooperative foundation. Gifts create a well-knit environment of trust and along with it social obligation to achieve certain goals by lowering the perceived social distance. Kahneman & Tversky (1979) lend insights with regard to how gifts offer leverage to negotiate multifaceted risk perception.

Maréchal & Thöni (2019) studied a case of small gifts effect on business negotiation with a field experiment in mind. Their results indicate that even simple gifts such as branded gifts or food increase the chances of agreement and collaboration by a large fraction. The phenomena of social influence have been termed as "cognitive load" by this particular investigation as they claim the aforementioned phenomenon occurs through social pressure from the expectation of reciprocity.

In a business negotiation the need to establish trust is particularly paramount where it is highly sensitive. An appropriate gift is a visible sign of benevolence that helps to establish trust in the parties dealing with each other. Yet, unlike restriction increase gift giving impact as all such actions does not go unnoticed. To illustrate, while gift giving improves business relationships in collectivist societies, in individualistic societies, it is looked at suspiciously as an attempt to manipulate negotiations.

Strategic gift giving has proven effective in altering business outcomes, as many empirical studies have shown. Businesses that employed the technique of giving small, personalized gifts at the start of negotiations recorded an increase of 25% in agreement rates when compared to their peers Maréchal & Thöni (2019).

A different study in the retail sector shows that clients were more inclined to complete the purchases and show brand loyalty after receiving some unexpected gifts. The psychological explanation for this behavior stems from the Endowment Effect, where people tend to regard more value to items placing a personal connection to its value (Thaler, 1980).

Gift giving is a traditional way to build goodwill between nations and this has been around for a very long time. An example would be the giving of branded state gifts between world leaders, which usually happen in conjunction with trade agreements and other deals. The practice of diplomacy is founded on an exchange of gifts which is much more than a custom because it can strengthen relations between countries.

With the objective of customer retention, retailers have been successfully practicing the technique of gift giving as a marketing strategy. Top tier brands like Louis Vuitton and Chanel gift valued VIP clientele to build loyalty towards the brand. This is inline with the concept of exclusivity, which says that the higher a client's social status, the more they appreciate the brands that reward them in a personalized manner for their loyalty.

Results and discussions

Business gift-giving practices vary significantly across the world, influenced by cultural norms, legislation, and corporate practices. Approximately 35 articles on business gift-giving are published annually in science-indexed journals. The United States is the leading contributor with 32%, followed by China and the UK with 9% each. Other major contributors include France (5%), Spain (5%), Germany (6%), Canada (6%), and Australia (7%) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Bibliometric Analysis of Business Gift-Giving

Country	Publication Share (%)	Average Citations per Paper
USA	32	25
UK	9	18
China	9	22
Australia	7	15
Canada	6	14
Germany	6	17
France	5	16
Spain	5	13

Source: Author's calculations based on Web of Science.

The analysis reveals discrepancies in citation counts across countries: Chinese papers average 22 citations, UK papers 18, German papers 17, Australian papers 15, and US papers lead with 25 citations. The prominence of US studies is attributed to a strong focus on corporate ethics and compliance, particularly the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, emphasizing the role of business gift-giving in trust-building and guanxi networks.

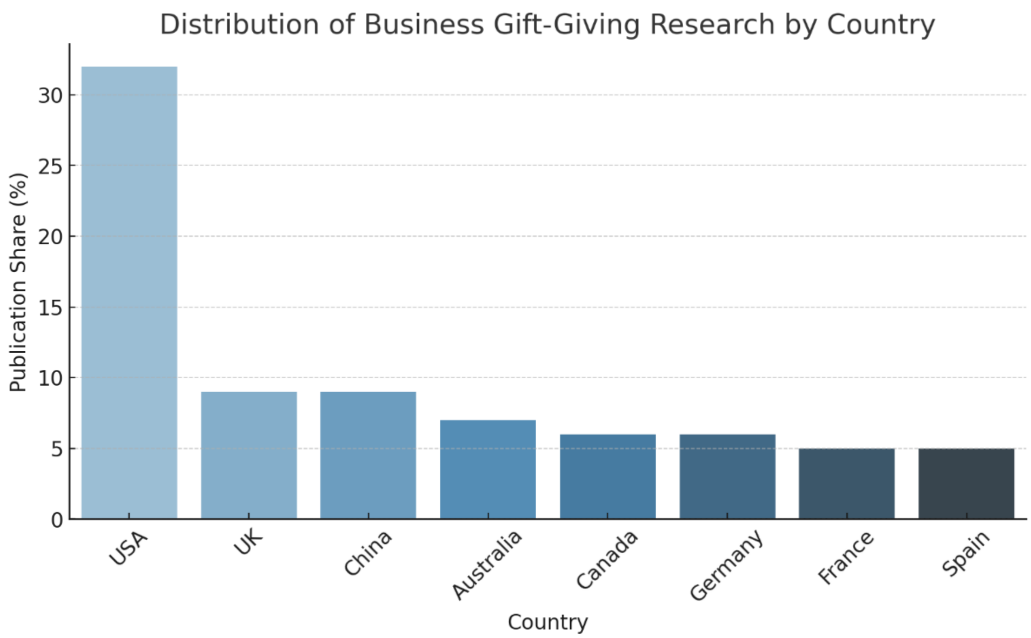

Figure 1 Analysis by country

Source: Author's calculations based on Web of Science.

Different organizational cultures and legal stipulations govern corporate gift-giving. In China, gift exchanges, known as "guanxi," play a significant role in social networking despite anti-bribery laws. Similarly, Japan's traditions like oseibo and chugen strengthen business relationships. In contrast, corporate gift-giving in the U.S. is seen as bribery and is regulated by the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, which prohibits gifts influencing business decisions. The UK Bribery Act enforces ethical transparency in business, with similar restrictions.

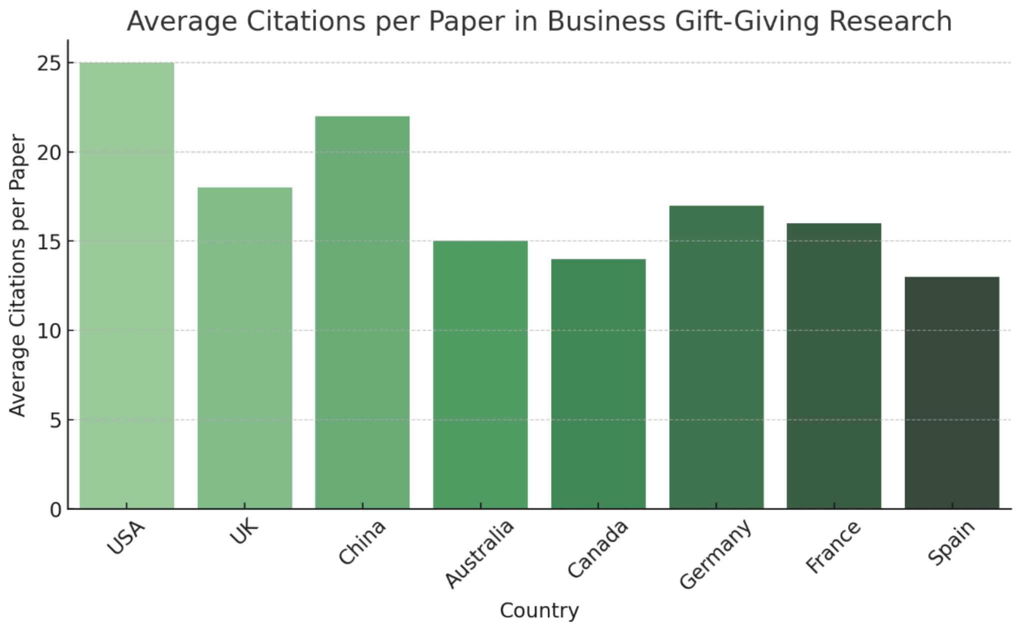

Figure 2 Citations per country

Source: Author's calculations based on Web of Science.

VOSViewer detects a total of 3074 keywords in the database of 699 papers on business-gifts. We apply a minimum threshold of 5 occurrences to be included in the map and only 131 meet the criteria. The interest gradually shifts from business ethics and networking to guanxi, reciprocity and corruption to engagement and sharing economy. In author-generated keywords dominate guanxi, corruption, gift, bribery, reciprocity and only then comes ethics and trust.

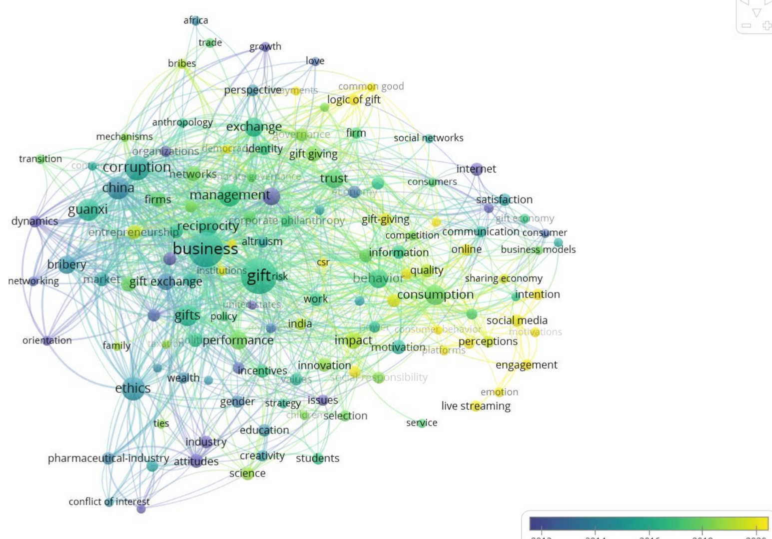

Figure 3 Overlay co-occurrence of keywords in papers on business gifts, VOSviewer

Middle Eastern culture places great emphasis on gift giving out of hospitality, respect, and even business etiquette. However, laws vary across borders, with some jurisdictions having implemented anti-corruption laws to curb unethical behavior. Germans are also rich in culture;

however, gift giving is much more conservative as dictated by the EU anti-bribery laws – emphasis is just made on fairness and transparency. The cultural scope alongside legislation surrounding corporate gifting across different geographical locations is depicted in the table below.

The growing scrutiny of corporate gift-giving is reflected in increased research on business ethics and compliance. Laws like the FCPA (USA), the UK Bribery Act, and the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention have shaped corporate policies, while China's Anti-Bribery Law restricts excessive gifting, focusing on intent. These legal frameworks are compared in Table 4.

Table 4: Comparative Overview of Anti-Bribery Laws

Regulation	Key Provisions	Applicability
FCPA (USA)	Prohibits bribing officials; allows small facilitation payments	Applies to US firms globally
UK Bribery Act	Outlaws all bribery, including facilitation payments	Applies globally to UK entities
OECD Convention	Criminalizes bribery in international transactions	Enforced across member states
Chinese Anti-Bribery Law	Restrictions on excessive gifting; focus on intent	Domestic and foreign businesses

Source: Author's compilation.

These implications underscore the need for multinational corporations to align their compliance programs with local cultural expectations and global regulations. Firms must ensure corporate gift policies comply with international anti-corruption laws while maintaining culturally appropriate relationships.

Beyond legalities, business gifts foster trust, cooperation, and reciprocity, improving goodwill in negotiations. However, they can backfire if perceived as manipulative, leading to reputational damage or legal consequences. Insights to the rationale behind corporate gifting has been investigated under behavioral economics. Camerer (1988) refers to gifts as social signals, bonds between business partners are strengthened by commitments. Likewise, Maréchal & Thöni (2019) showed that small business gifts increase a negotiator's chance of success by 25% in business driven economies. Many corporations suffer from poor public images after giving non-compliant gifts. The extent of losses multinationals incurred for non-compliant gifting practices is summed up in Table 5.

Table 5 Case Studies of Corporate Gift-Giving Compliance Violations

Company	Incident	Outcome
Siemens AG (2008)	Alleged bribery disguised as corporate gifts	Fined $1.6 billion under FCPA
GlaxoSmithKline (2014)	Accusations of excessive gifting in China	$540 million fine; compliance reforms
Walmart[1] (2019)	Gifts allegedly used to secure contracts in Mexico	$282 million in penalties

Source: Author's compilation.

These instances underscore the necessity for corporate compliance programs since compliance lapses in supervising business gift exchanges could result in serious legal and financial

[1] https://www.sec.gov/news/press-release/2019-97

repercussions. To manage the nuances of corporate gifting, clear ethical and compliance policies must be incorporated at the organizational level. Some practices of ethical gift-giving include:

- Creating training sessions to inform staff about the local customs regarding business gifting and legal restrictions associated with it.
- Creating internal guidelines that stipulate minimum and maximum gift values and specify occasions when gifting is appropriate.
- Establishing ethical compliance boards that ensure compliance with local regulations as well as international ones.
- Promoting the use of non-controversial gifts, including financial donations, sponsorships, or experience gifts which mitigate ethical concerns while enhancing business relations.

Conclusions

The paper finds that business gift-giving remains vital in corporate culture, fostering trust and enhancing relationships. It is influenced by legal systems aimed at curbing bribery and corruption. About 35 articles are published annually on the subject in Web of Science and Scopus, primarily from the USA, UK, and China. The research shows that the topic is interdisciplinary, covering ethics, corporate governance, and international relations. We observe a shift in the thematic and geographical focus due to legal and ethical concerns. The most cited papers deal with cultures with strong interpersonal relationships, like Japan and China. Over the last 40 years there is a considerable change in corporate policies related to gifts giving and receiving shaped by FCPA, UK Bribery Act, and OECD Anti-Bribery Convention.

This paper fills an identified research gap by providing a quantitative bibliometric analysis of corporate gift-giving, a subject largely overlooked in the literature. It differs from prior qualitative studies by mapping research clusters, co-citation networks, and thematic evolution over time, contributing to the scholarship by identifying authors, publication outlets, and research gaps.

The study's reliance on the Web of Science limits the scope, excluding relevant research from Scopus or Google Scholar, as well as non-academic sources like business documents or policy reports. Citation-based research tends to favor well-known works, potentially overlooking new contributions. Future research could expand to include other databases and explore emerging areas like digital gifting, sustainable corporate gifts, and AI in monitoring compliance. Qualitative studies on how multinational corporations reconcile cultural norms and laws in gift-giving would also complement the bibliometric analysis.

This study confirms that corporate gift-giving is a dynamic practice influenced by cultural, legal, and ethical factors. With globalization and legal regulations increasingly shaping business relations, corporations must develop policies that balance cultural needs with international legal requirements. The growing interest in ethical and sustainable gifting encourages further research on incorporating eco-friendly and socially responsible gift-giving into corporate policies.

Acknowledgements: This paper benefited from Sofia University's Science Fund project N 15.80-10-178 European projects and innovations in agriculture.

References

Blau, P. (1964). Exchange and Power in Social Life. John Wiley & Sons.

Camerer, C. (1988). Gifts as Economic Signals and Social Symbols. American Journal of Sociology, S180-S214. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/2780246

Cialdini, R. (2001). Influence: Science and Practice. Allyn & Bacon.
Cutler, A. (2001). The Hand of the Master: Craftsmanship, Ivory, and Society in Byzantium (9th-11th. Princeton University Press.
Hilsdale, C. (2012). Gift. Studies in Iconography, 171-182. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/23924281
Hong, S. (2016). Chinese Anti-Bribery Laws. Shanghai: NRF. Retrieved from https://www.nortonrosefulbright.com/en/knowledge/publications/406af5db/business-ethics-and-anti-corruption-laws-china
Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1979). Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk. Econometrica, 263-291.
Maréchal, M., & Thöni, C. (2019). Hidden Persuaders: Do Small Gifts Lubricate Business Negotiations? Management Science, 3877-3889. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/48760820
Miller, C. (2002). Gifts as Treaties: The Political Use of Received Gifts in Anishinaabeg Communities, 1820-1832. American Indian Quarterly, 221-245. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/4128460
Raoof, A., & Butt, A. (1997). Corruption in International Business. Pakistan Economic and Social Review, 25-41. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/25825151
Steidlmeier, P. (1999). Gift Giving, Bribery and Corruption: Ethical Management of Business Relationships in China. Journal of Business Ethics, 121-132. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/25074125
Thaler, R. (1980). Toward a Positive Theory of Consumer Choice. Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, 39-60.
Xin, K. K., & Pearce, J. L. (1996). Guanxi: Connections as substitutes for formal institutional support. Academy of management journal, 39(6), 1641-1658.
Yalamov, T. (2012). Hiding, Circumvention, Public Procurement, and Shaping Laws: The Role of Networks and Bribery in Bulgaria. *Eastern European Economics*, *50*(5), 93-111.