

Sustainable Business as a Strategy for Peacebuilding

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Abstract

This study analyzes the underexplored nexus between sustainable business and peacebuilding, revealing critical gaps and opportunities through bibliometric analysis (2018–2023). While sustainable business research dominates in volume (4,115 publications in 2023 vs. 298 for peacebuilding) and influence (15.6 vs. 5.1 citations/article), its focus on environmental and economic metrics often overlooks conflict dynamics. Conversely, peacebuilding studies prioritize post-conflict governance but neglect integration with inclusive economic models, with only 2% of sustainable business literature addressing “conflict.” Colombia exemplifies this divide: a global leader in peacebuilding research (9.7% of global output) but a marginal contributor to sustainable business (0.7%), despite its potential to pioneer hybrid models like conflict-sensitive agroindustry. The authors identified seven transdisciplinary research priorities to advance the joint field. These address systemic gaps, including the marginalization of Africa/Middle East in both fields and the disconnect between global sustainability frameworks and grassroots realities. The findings advocate for South-South collaboration, context-sensitive adaptations of ESG standards, and structural reforms. While technology and education are enablers, sustainable peace requires centering marginalized communities in business models and policy design. For Colombia, aligning renewable energy projects with ancestral knowledge and victim reintegration programs emerges as a critical pathway.

Keywords: *Cross-Sector Alliances, Environmental Peacebuilding, Inclusive Economies, Glocal Innovation, Comprehensive Sustainability.*

Introduction

In a historical context marked by environmental crises, persistent inequalities, and recurring sociopolitical conflicts, developing innovative strategies to construct a stable and lasting peace has acquired global urgency (Löhr et al., 2022; Mora Pontiluis et al., 2023). Analyzing the approach underlying traditional efforts, the authors found peacebuilding processes focused on diplomatic agreements or humanitarian interventions, presenting multiple weaknesses and gaps (Tellez, 2019).

In this sense, these platforms, although necessary, were characterized by not sufficiently addressing the relationship between the economic, ecological, and symbolic roots of violence (Pérez Gamboa et al., 2023). However, since adopting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, social justice, environmental stability, and inclusive economic growth have been recognized as not parallel goals but rather interdependent dimensions of everyday challenges.

Based on this determination, the authors observed in the literature that the academic background reveals a significant shift toward the need to integrate social, political, environmental, and economic categories into complex conceptual frameworks (Afanador Cubillos, 2023; Johnson et al., 2021). Recently, research such as that by Ide (2020) and Ide et al. (2021) indicates that ecosystem degradation, from deforestation to water scarcity, is crucial in understanding why conflicts are exacerbated and limits opportunities for reconciliation in post-conflict societies. Furthermore, social economy studies show that equity-centered business models can transform historical dynamics of exclusion and exploitation of natural resources (Ferreira et al., 2022; Jaiswal et al., 2022; Leach et al., 2018; Vázquez Vidal & Martínez Prats, 2023). This evidence is especially relevant in marginalized communities facing the impact of climate change and climate variability on their worldviews (González Vallejo, 2023; Mohamed Shaffril et al., 2020). However, the authors of this article identified that these two lines of research, environmental and socioeconomic, have advanced in a

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fragmented manner, resulting in limited disciplinary dialogue on how to integrate them into a cohesive strategy.

This theoretical disconnect has theoretical and practical implications for peacebuilding studies. According to studies on peace treaties, a high percentage of initiatives fail in their first decade due to the lack of sustainable mechanisms that address basic needs, such as decent employment or access to natural resources. Specifically, Vogel (2022) asserts that academia has approached conflicts, ignoring that peacebuilding and transitional justice must be understood as a process that also unfolds in everyday life. Furthermore, this finding is consistent with other studies that identify that the essential level of analysis is political, and its focus tends to be state-centric. In contrast, informal and sub-state levels are often overlooked (Gómez-Suárez, 2023; Young, 2020).

In this context, the central question that motivates this article emerges: How can sustainable businesses, designed to be profitable and regenerative, contribute to defusing cycles of violence and fostering social cohesion in conflict-affected territories? Although there is no direct answer to this question a priori, specialized studies in different regions also address related doubts, mainly because current approaches reproduce disciplinary isolation (Barakat & Milton, 2020; Gómez Cano et al., 2022).

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, the topic's relevance is heightened by current processes such as the energy transition, labor automation, and climate migration. New trends in scientific production also reveal a reconfiguration of global tensions in a context where artificial intelligence and ethical supply chains open up unprecedented possibilities for scaling solutions (Pérez Guedes & Arufe Padrón, 2023; Toniolo et al., 2020; Sipola et al., 2023). However, without analytical frameworks that explore these intersections, there is a risk of replicating extractivist or superficial models, incapable of generating the structural changes necessary to support peacebuilding, especially in long-standing conflicts.

Consequently, this article seeks to fill this gap by critically examining emerging trends and their theoretical foundations. To this end, the authors conducted a mapping to support the decision-making of academics, policymakers, and entrepreneurs through a thorough understanding of the transformative potential of businesses aligned with integral sustainability in peacebuilding contexts.

Methodology

Study Design

The study was structured as a mixed-method design that combined quantitative and network analysis to determine patterns in academic production on peacebuilding and sustainable business between 2018 and 2023, with a qualitative exploration of relevant auxiliary sources. The authors selected the Scopus database as the primary source due to its interdisciplinary coverage and rigorous indexing. The methodology was structured in three phases: data collection, statistical processing, and network visualization, which were aligned with the seven designed indicators.

This approach was based on previous studies indicating that combining these approaches allows for examining complex relationships between fields (Adegoriola et al., 2021; Díaz Guerra et al., 2023) Sánchez Suárez et al., 2023). This decision was also based on the initial review, which yielded few findings, making it necessary to disaggregate concepts and develop matrices better to represent the intersection between sustainable business and peacebuilding. In this way, progress was made in identifying potential strategies for development. Data Collection and Filtering

The search began with the concept of peacebuilding, running the search string TITLE-ABS-KEY (peacebuilding), restricted to articles (DOCTYPE "ar") published between 2018 and 2023. TITLE-ABS-KEY (sustainable AND business) was applied for the sustainable business field with identical time and typological filters. The results of both queries were exported in CSV format to preserve complete metadata (authors, affiliations, citations, keywords, and subject areas). This process ensured a homogeneous database for subsequent analysis.

Indicator Processing and Analysis

The first indicator analyzed was the total number of publications, where the annual volumes were quantified by category (peacebuilding vs. sustainable business). The objective was to reveal differences in the relative growth of both fields. In addition, the authors triangulated and analyzed relevant sources to explore possible correlations between scientific production patterns and global events. Next, the distribution of citations was analyzed, specifically the h-index, total citations, and citations per document. This analysis was conducted to assess the impact of scientific production and explore the debates associated with it.

At this point, a methodological variation was introduced to mitigate distortions related to the size of the fields and the selected samples. To this end, the 5,000 most relevant articles on sustainable business were selected. This decision was justified because Scopus indexed tens of thousands of articles on sustainable business during the period, and thus, by prioritizing these, the study focused on the contributions with the most significant impact. Thus, by analyzing only the 5,000 most cited articles, the intellectual core of the field, where paradigmatic contributions are concentrated, was prioritized. This course of action is valid because, in Scopus, 20% of articles typically accumulate 80% of citations (Pareto's Law).

Likewise, this decision was supported by the criteria of Zupic and Čater (2015), who argue that this type of procedure reduces the "noise" of marginal studies and focuses the analysis on the intellectual cores that define the field. Therefore, stratification by influence was carried out to ensure that the sample reflected the most significant trends.

Once this procedure was performed, the Scopus thematic classification was analyzed to clarify the disciplines with the most significant representation and thematic overlap between both fields. Furthermore, patterns of international collaboration were identified using the co-authorship between countries indicator in VOSviewer.

All keywords were analyzed through text mining after normalizing synonyms, which revealed distinct thematic clusters for each field. This procedure allowed the authors to examine co-occurrence networks and led to the final indicator, lines of research, which were oriented toward categorizing emerging approaches and identifying conceptual bridges between both domains.

Integration of Results

The quantitative findings were compared with the initial document review, which enriched the interpretation. Furthermore, theoretical gaps identified in previous literature were analyzed through a qualitative triangulation process to contextualize the geographic disparities in academic production and refine key aspects to consider when designing strategies.

Results

Temporal Trends and Comparative Growth

Academic production on peacebuilding registered moderate growth, albeit with notable fluctuations (Figure 1). Between 2018 and 2021, the number of publications increased by 73%, from 189 to 327 papers per year, with a record high in the latter year. However, starting in 2021, a 9% decline was observed, reducing the total to 298 articles in 2023. This decline could reflect stagnation in the field, while the search pointed to external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in international funding agendas (Clark & Alberti, 2021; Eufemia et al., 2020). Furthermore, studies by Tschunkert & Vogel (2023), Ernstorfer et al. (2023), and Darwish et al. (2023) suggest that in recent times there has been a paradigm shift regarding humanitarian aid and assistance in conflict contexts, which could have influenced academic production.

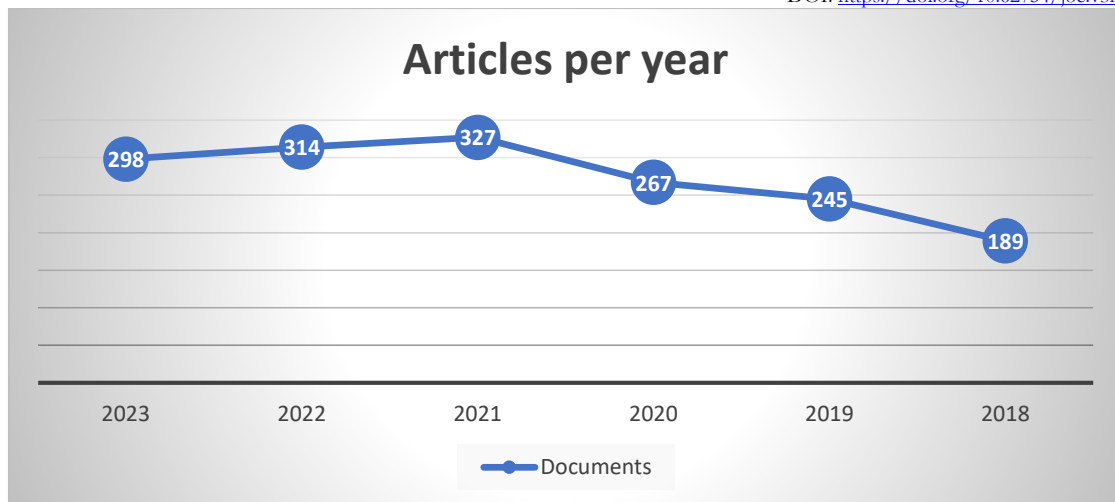


Figure (1) Temporal Trends in Peacebuilding Field

Instead, as expected, the field of sustainable business experienced exponential and sustained growth. As shown in Figure 2, between 2018 and 2023, publications increased 2.5-fold (from 1,668 to 4,115), Figure (1) Temporal trends in peacebuilding field representing an average annual increase of 20%. These data reflect the consolidation of sustainability as a central focus on corporate, political, and academic agendas. Furthermore, the literature review showed that climate regulations and social demands could have influenced the formation of an analytical space conducive to strengthening the field (Ahlström, 2019; Cifuentes-Faura, 2022).

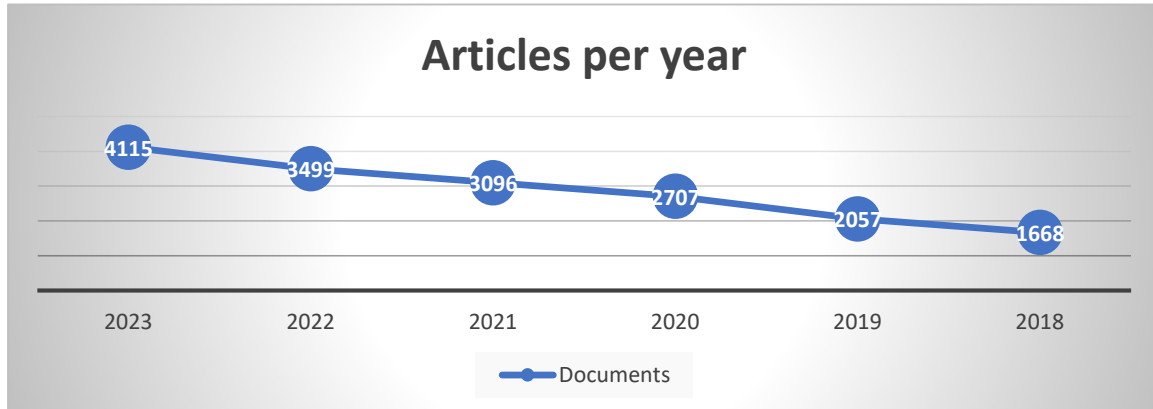


Figure (2) Temporal Trends in Sustainable Business Field

Ultimately, the comparative analysis revealed a marked disparity in academic production between the two fields. While sustainable business reached 4,115 publications in 2023, peacebuilding registered only 298 works. This substantial difference indicates that, despite its geopolitical importance, peacebuilding remains an area of specialized research, in contrast to the apparent predominance of sustainable business as an applied field of study.

A clear example of this disparity, in addition to the overall data offered in this study, is represented by the findings of Sharifi et al. (2021), who analyzed three decades of research on climate change and peace. These authors collected only 1,337 articles during this period. They identified four major themes, demonstrating that, while not a nascent field, studies on the relationship between environment and peace constitute a specific niche. In contrast, Pan et al. (2023) collected a larger sample, exceeding 3,000 articles, and showed a broader thematic configuration.

This notable gap suggests an imbalance in the conceptual integration between the two domains. Although they are recognized as pillars of sustainable development, the literature rarely explores their intersections, mainly from economic or business perspectives. This academic disconnect reinforces the relevance of transdisciplinary approaches such as the one proposed in this study, which seeks to build bridges between these traditionally separate spheres.

Citation Impact Analysis

The citation analysis revealed that the field of peacebuilding enjoyed a certain degree of consolidation. However, its disciplinary reach was limited, reinforcing that its findings have been poorly reflected in other fields. The 1,370 documents accumulated 11,776 citations, representing an average of 8.6 citations per article (Figure 3). This figure, although moderate, indicates that the field's influence is primarily concentrated within its thematic niche, as also revealed by the h-index of 37.

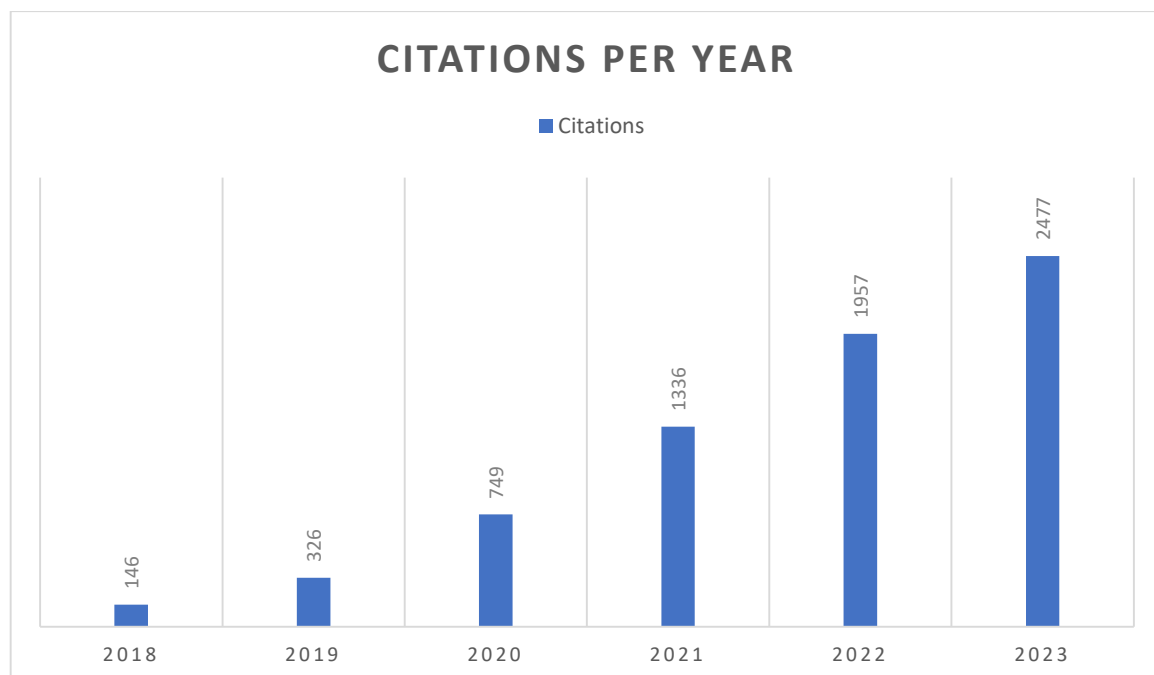


Figure (3) Citation Distribution in Peacebuilding Field

Among the most cited articles were relevant theoretical and empirical studies in specific contexts (Kochanski, 2018; (Martin-Shields & Stojetz, 2019; Von Billerbeck & Tansey, 2019). Gender studies in post-conflict contexts were particularly prominent in areas such as transitional justice (McLeod & O'Reilly, 2019). Furthermore, a study by a seminal author such as Ide was analyzed to evaluate the proposal for consolidating environmental peace based on the premise that environmental preservation can act as a factor in negotiation and reconciliation between warring states. This study could serve as a seminal precedent in developing initiatives for peacebuilding through sustainable local, national, or international business.

However, despite the potential for conceptual bridges, these citation patterns suggest that peacebuilding research tends to circulate within specialized academic circles with little impact on applied disciplines. The emphasis on specific theoretical debates—such as reconciliation mechanisms—seems to have limited dialogue with economics and environmental management fields.

This relative academic insularity could explain, at least in part, the difficulties in translating research findings into practical policies or interdisciplinary applications. However, future researchers should take this isolation into account, as auxiliary research revealed analyses such as those by Ponguta et al. (2018) and

Dresse et al. (2019) that affirm that peace studies are interdisciplinary. This aspect may be valid within the designs but has not been expressed in the dialogue with other disciplines.

In the field of sustainable business, on the other hand, total citations reached 77,801, more than 10 times the volume of peacebuilding. Furthermore, the field's growth was dizzying, showing a CAGR of 118%, with a jump of 47% between 2022 and 2023 (21,071 to 30,908) (Figure 4). These data reflected the accelerated massification of the field. According to the literature and triangulation carried out, this phenomenon was driven by the climate emergency and the adoption of ESG standards in the face of possible scenarios of non-compliance with the SDGs (Leal Filho et al., 2023; Leal Filho et al., 2020). Likewise, it was found that 2021 was key in the consolidation of the field since citations almost doubled compared to 2020 (13,799 vs. 7,189), a fact that coincided with COP26 and the rise of net-zero corporate policies (Das & Ghosh, 2023; Ferrando, 2022).

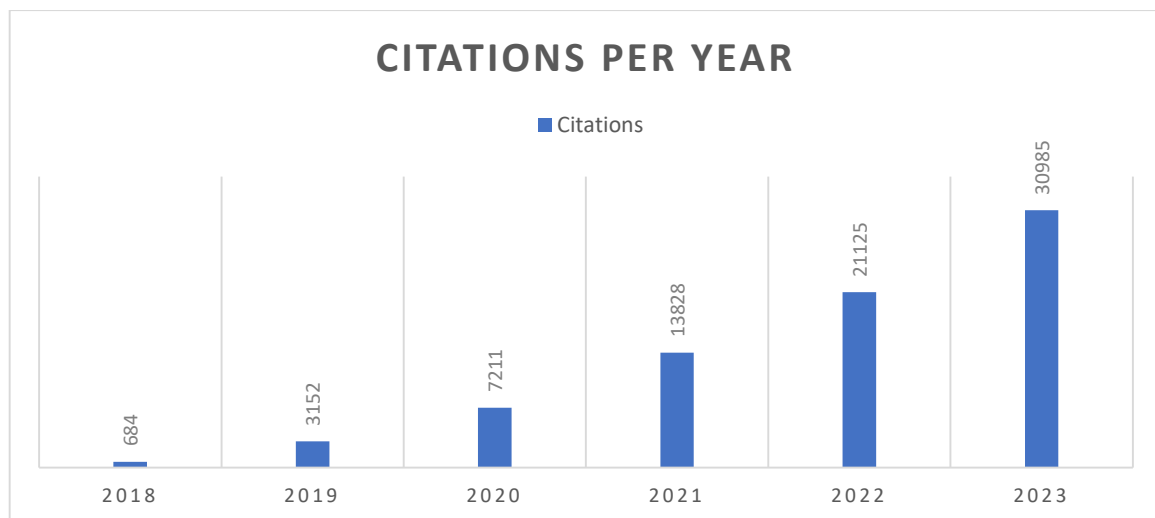


Figure (4) Citation Distribution in Sustainable Business Field

An important result of the comparison was that while both fields arguably operate at different levels of relevance and scope regarding social problems, the thematic maturity curve showed that they are at different stages of evolution. First, in peacebuilding, citations received by articles from 2018-2019 were marginal ($n=472$), indicating that the field draws on recent research (2021-2023 contributes 82% of total citations). This finding suggests an evolving literature where new contributions rapidly displace previous approaches.

Meanwhile, the citation pattern for the field of sustainable business showed a trend toward accumulating influence. In this regard, the distribution showed that even articles from 2018 remained relevant (684 citations), and 65% of the citations correspond to studies published between 2021 and 2023. The literature review showed that seminal works were frequently cited, especially those focused on the circular economy and SDGs. Furthermore, the analysis of emerging topics using the newest filter revealed that areas such as just energy transition are gaining traction (Moreno et al., 2022; Nadaleti et al., 2022). Finally, the citation density per article revealed a three-fold difference (Peacebuilding ≈ 5.1 citations per article, Sustainable Business ≈ 15.6 citations per article). The discrepancy showed that the sustainable business field produced more knowledge and generated more influential and referenced research. It is worth noting that these results were obtained by comparing only the 5,000 most relevant articles, which can be explained by the fact that business sustainability attracts more funding, international collaborations, and political attention than peacebuilding studies. Furthermore, publication sources also played a critical role in assessing the data since while the field of peacebuilding could be restricted to niche journals, journals that cover sustainability topics appear among the important and influential ones globally (e.g., Journal of Cleaner Production).

Comparative Analysis of Thematic Areas

The analysis of the areas of knowledge showed that the social sciences dominated both fields. However, this result is difficult to interpret due to the thematic scope of this thematic area. In peacebuilding, Social Sciences led the distribution with 85% of the documents (1,473), focusing on conflict, public policy, and sociopolitical dynamics. Furthermore, the Humanities (333) and Psychology (75) stood out for their qualitative and mixed approaches to topics such as historical memory, trauma and resilience, and the impact of conflict on individuals and communities, among others. Regarding the disciplines that could serve as bridges in the intersection and design of strategies, Environmental Science (89) and Economics (62) had a marginal presence, highlighting the disconnection with socioecological and economic approaches noted above. Similarly, business (89) accounted for only 5%, confirming the poor integration between peace and business models (figure 5).

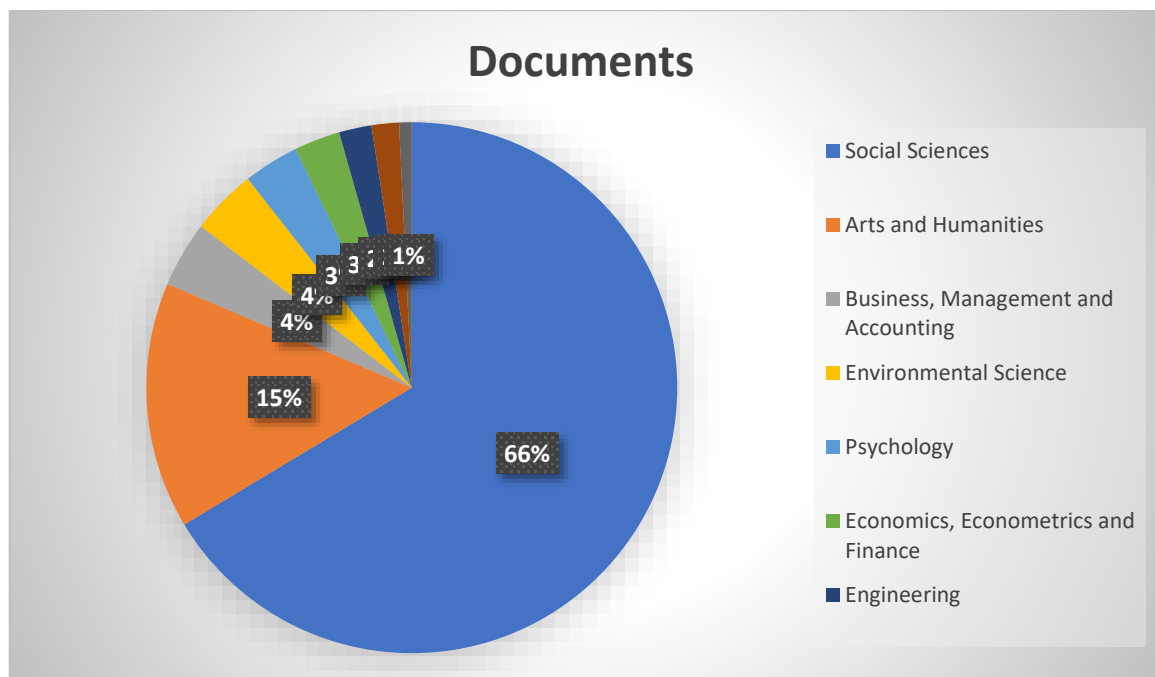


Figure (4) Subject Area in Peacebuilding Field

Regarding sustainable business, social sciences (7,336) and environmental science (6,810) dominated, a fact that resembles the search for balance between social and environmental impacts, which is one of the conceptual cores of this field. Furthermore, it was confirmed that sustainable economic and business models and the energy transition are prioritized within social and corporate strategies (Business with 6,230 documents and Energy with 4,546). In this regard, studies such as those by Barberón (2023), Doyon et al. (2021), and Naumann & Rudolph (2020) represent the importance of examining the socio-cultural and historical aspects that condition transition processes, another important line of convergence with the field of peacebuilding. Finally, Economics and Econometrics (2,690) was observed among the top ten areas, disciplines that could have a relevant weight in constructing a common conceptual and practical framework (Figure 6).

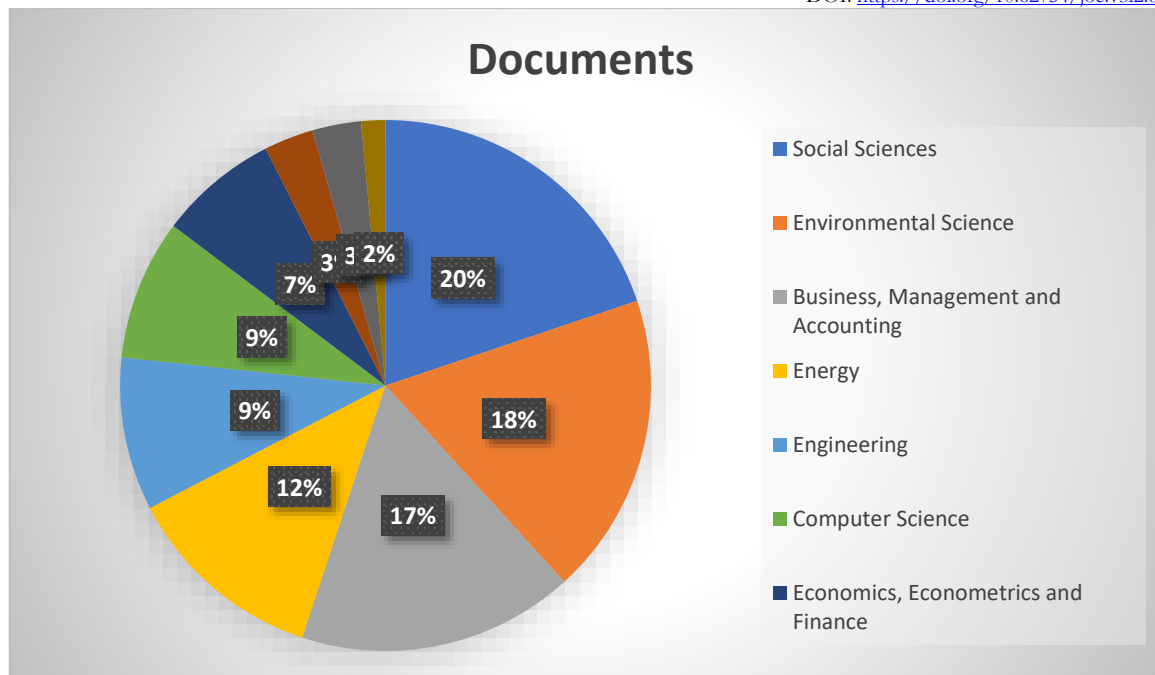


Figure (6) Subject Area in Sustainable Business Field

General Comparative Analysis: International Co-Authorship in Peacebuilding Vs. Sustainable Business

The geographical distribution of academic production in sustainable business showed clear Anglo-Saxon and European leadership during the period analyzed (Figure 7). The United States recorded 372 documents and 12,352 citations, while the United Kingdom, with 488 documents, achieved 23,608 citations, suggesting a more significant relative influence of the latter. On the other hand, although China surpassed the aforementioned nations in volume (530 documents), its impact per document was significantly lower compared to Western countries. This pattern was repeated in emerging economies such as India (352 documents, 31.2 citations per document) and Brazil (161 documents, 34.6 citations per document), where quantitative growth did not translate into a proportional impact.

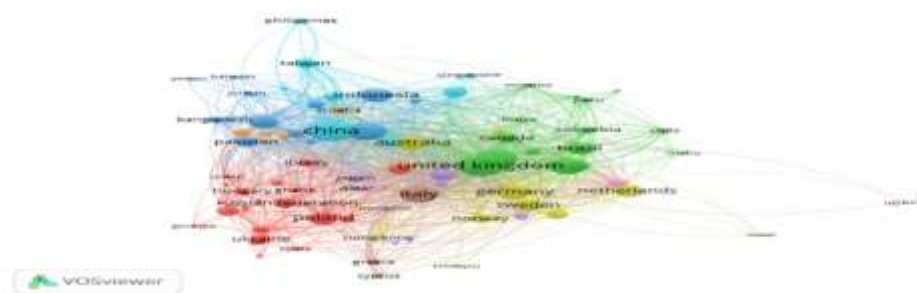


Figure (7) Country and Region Co-Authorship in Sustainable Business Field

In contrast, the peacebuilding field presented distinct dynamics (Figure 8). While the United Kingdom (356 documents, 3,546 citations) and the United States (298 documents, 2,016 citations) maintained their hegemony, the concentration of production was less marked. Colombia stood out in particular, emerging as the world's second-largest producer (133 documents, 1,007 citations), surpassing traditionally dominant countries such as Germany (91 documents) and France (19 documents). This trend reflected the country's role as a laboratory for post-conflict studies and the weight of local agendas and international cooperation in the discipline. Another relevant result was the limited Asian participation: India (12 documents), and China (outside the top) showed a marginal presence, in contrast to their prominence in sustainable business.

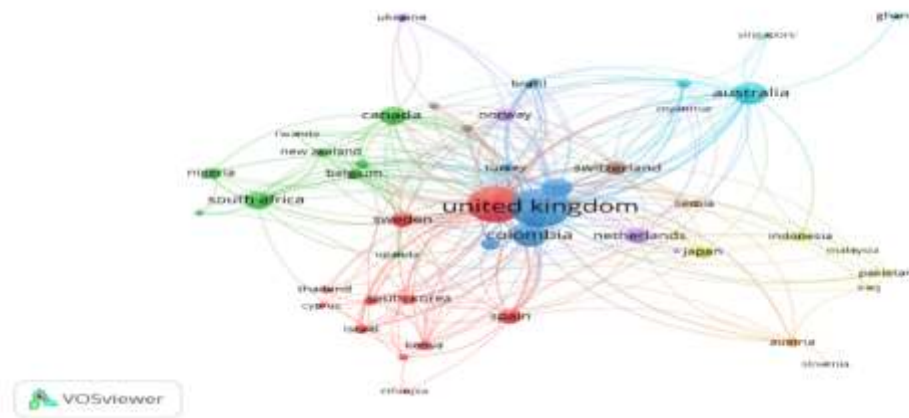


Figure (8) Country and Region Co-Authorship in Peacebuilding Field

The disparity between the two fields indicated that the factors driving academic production did not respond solely to economic or infrastructural capacities but also to geopolitical contexts and thematic priorities. Additionally, the data confirmed the persistent thematic disconnect between the fields. On the one hand, the literature on corporate sustainability tended to ignore the dimensions of conflict and peace, with only 2% of the articles analyzed including the term "conflict" among their keywords. Furthermore, studies on peacebuilding rarely incorporated conceptual frameworks or tools from the business sector, limiting their applied potential. This divergence suggests an epistemological fragmentation that hinders comprehensive approaches to complex problems, such as development in vulnerable regions.

Another challenge identified was the marked underrepresentation of critical regions such as Africa and the Middle East in both fields of study. Considering the historical relevance of armed conflicts and the potential of both regions in terms of energy transitions and the development of circular economy models, academic production remains marginal. This omission distorts global perspectives while reproducing exclusionary dynamics in knowledge generation, making it urgent to foster South-South collaborations and review geopolitical biases in dominant research agendas.

Colombia's positioning and patterns of scientific collaboration in global contexts

The bibliometric analysis revealed significant differences in Colombia's positioning according to the field of study. The country recorded 55 documents on sustainable business, representing just 0.7% of the global output analyzed. Although the relative impact was moderate (1,185 citations, ~21.5 citations per document), it surpassed comparable economies such as Chile (37.3 citations/doc) but was below Brazil (34.6). International collaborations, measured through Total Link Strength (TLS=63), showed predominant ties with the United States, Spain, and Brazil, reflecting intermediate integration in specialized knowledge networks (Figure 9).

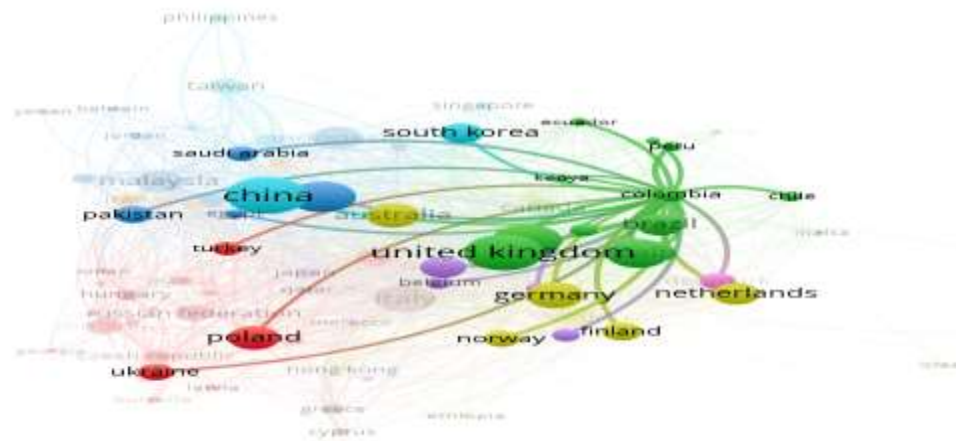


Figure (9) Country and Region Co-Authorship by Colombia in Sustainable Business Field

In contrast, Colombia emerged as a relevant player on a global scale in peacebuilding. With 133 documents, it accounted for 9.7% of the total production, ranking second only to the United Kingdom (356). However, the impact per document was lower (~7.6 citations) compared to its performance in sustainable business. Collaboration networks (TLS=83) were more robust, with strategic alliances centered in the United States, the United Kingdom, and South Africa, suggesting active coordination with centers of expertise in conflict studies (Figure 10).

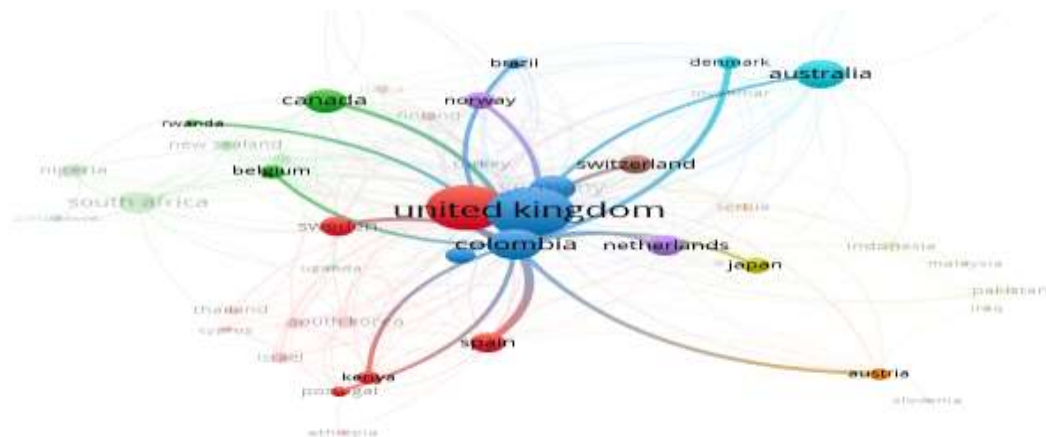


Figure (10) Country and Region Co-Authorship in Peacebuilding Field

Thematic Patterns and Opportunities for Convergence

Colombian production in sustainable business was characterized by a technical-economic focus, with priority co-authorships in leading countries in business research (United States, Germany) and regional partners (Brazil, Mexico). The dominant themes included renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and ESG policies, although a relative disconnection from local issues of conflict and peace was observed (Hoyos Chavarro et al., 2022; Sanabria Martínez, 2022; Streimikis & Baležentis, 2020).

While this gap contrasts with the actual demands of the region, where environmental sustainability and social reconstruction are interdependent, research was identified that sought to connect categories. In this sense, research was observed for models that reverse extractivism, contribute to social development, and promote peace scenarios (Krause, 2020; Romero-Colmenares & Reyes-Rodríguez, 2022). On the other hand, a clear line of research was also observed on entrepreneurship-related topics, particularly in its female, social, and student categories (Araque Geney, 2023; Ripoll Rivaldo, 2023).

Ultimately, it was confirmed that Colombia remains a benchmark in peace studies and a strategic player in bridging the gap between fields. Due to the unique experience of Colombian academia in post-conflict processes and the growing network of international academic collaboration, the country could promote mixed research. According to the auxiliary research, the analysis of sustainable agroindustry models in areas affected by violence relies on previous experiences examining the convergence of environmental and social demands (Higuera Carrillo, 2022). This approach would enrich the theoretical debate and provide public policy input with a territorial focus.

The analysis of key terms revealed that "peacebuilding" constituted the literature's central focus, with 756 occurrences and a Total Link Strength (TLS) of 2,449. This concept dominated quantitatively and acted as an articulating node for both theoretical and empirical studies focused on post-conflict reconstruction processes (Figure 11). It was followed in relevance by terms such as "conflict" (118), "violence" (68), and "peace process" (165), which reflected a recurring emphasis on the dynamics of violence and institutional negotiation mechanisms. Although intersectional approaches emerged—as evidenced by the mentions of "gender" (67), "women" (37), and "social justice" (29)—their presence was marginal compared to traditional themes, suggesting an agenda still in the process of diversification.



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The predominance of traditional approaches to peace and conflict and the relative marginality of intersectional perspectives raises questions about the field's capacity to address contemporary complexities. For example, the limited integration between terms such as "gender" and "local participation" (only two co-occurrences in the analyzed corpus) reveals opportunities for research that crosses scales of analysis and identity dimensions. Likewise, the strong association between Colombia and concepts such as "transitional justice" contrasts with the limited exploration of its potential for comparative studies with other contexts in the Global South.

Keyword Analysis in Sustainable Business: Focus on Colombia and Global Trends

The bibliometric analysis identified "sustainable development" as the central concept in the field, with 1,974 occurrences and a Total Link Strength (TLS) of 14,470. This term demonstrated a clear link between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda, serving as an integrative framework for the literature (Figure 12). Complementary concepts such as "sustainability" (1,630 occurrences, TLS 11,479) and "sustainable business" (294, TLS 2,181) demonstrated the consolidation of this field as an independent academic area and as an emerging corporate practice.



Figure (11) Keyword Analysis in Sustainable Business Field

Regarding technological trends, a growing integration of digital tools into sustainability models was observed, represented by terms such as "innovation" (446), "big data" (41), and "artificial intelligence" (47). At the same time, alternative economic approaches such as the "circular economy" (281) and the "green economy" (71) emerged, challenging traditional production paradigms. These findings suggest a transition toward more systemic and technologically enabled models.

Predominant Sectoral Approaches

The research revealed two main thematic axes. On the one hand, environmental and energy studies, with terms such as "climate change" (124), "renewable energy" (41), and "carbon emissions" (29). On the other, business management approaches highlight "business model" (230), "corporate social responsibility" (249), and "stakeholder" (204). This duality reflects the field's interdisciplinary nature, revealing potential disconnects between business theory and environmental practice.

Colombia's Position in Global Research

The analysis showed a marginal presence of Colombia in the international literature, with only eight occurrences of the term "Colombia" and a TLS of 67. Although topics relevant to the national context, such as "agriculture" (44) and "biodiversity" (25), appeared, these did not show explicit connections to concepts of peace or post-conflict. This disconnect is particularly striking given the country's potential to contribute to debates on sustainability in contexts of conflict and reconstruction.

Opportunities for Future Research

The gap identified in Colombian research suggests the need to:

1. Develop studies that connect biodiversity and agriculture with peacebuilding processes.

2. Promote the integration of local perspectives into global sustainability frameworks.

3. Explore the potential of circular and green models in post-conflict contexts.

Main Joint Lines of Research for the Future at the Intersection of Sustainable Business and Peacebuilding

The growing convergence between the fields of sustainable business and peacebuilding presents unique opportunities to develop economic models that are environmentally sustainable and actively contribute to peacebuilding in conflict-affected territories. This study identifies seven priority areas for future research based on critical knowledge gaps and emerging practical experiences.

From designing ethical value chains in post-conflict zones to developing metrics that link corporate sustainability with violence reduction, these lines of research seek to overcome the current fragmentation between the two fields. Each proposal combines innovative theoretical approaches with applied cases in contexts such as Colombia, where the intersection between inclusive business and peacebuilding is particularly relevant.

The areas highlight the potential of technology for transparency in conflict-ridden economies, the urgency of an energy transition with territorial justice, and the need to train change agents with hybrid skills (business and mediation) (Arroix Jiménez et al., 2023; García Duque & Casadiego, 2021; Jiménez-Pitre et al., 2023; Martinez & Jensen, 2023). Likewise, it is evident how the bioeconomy and glocal alliances can become drivers of reconciliation, provided they integrate communities as strategic partners.

These lines of research respond to documented gaps in the literature (less than 5% of studies explicitly connect the two fields) and propose concrete indicators to measure socio-environmental and peace impacts in an integrated manner. This analysis concludes with a call for transdisciplinary research that, beyond traditional theoretical frameworks, generates practical tools for territories in transition. Table 1 shows the matrix of lines of research that could articulate the intersection's future and facilitate the design of peacebuilding strategies based on sustainable businesses.

Thematic Line	Main Focus	Practical Example (Colombia)	Key Indicators	Current Gap in Literature
1. Business for Reparation	Design models that integrate environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and reparation	Agricultural cooperatives in Catatumbo (ethical cocoa/coffee) with ex-combatants and victims	- Reduction of illegal economies - Local employment - Ecosystem restoration	Only 0.3% of peacebuilding studies mention the "ethical chain."
2. Technology for Peace Use	AI/blockchain for transparency in conflict-ridden supply chains	Mineral traceability platform in Chocó	- Conflicts over reduced resources - Traceability of raw materials - Community participation in data	Only 2% of sustainable business studies link "AI" and "human rights"
3. Just Energy Transition	Renewable energy with equity and historical reparation	Solar farms co-designed with Wayúu communities (La Guajira)	Reduced energy gaps - Displacement mitigation - Economic diversification	Only 6.5% of peacebuilding address "energy."
4. Hybrid Education	Training in business skills and conflict resolution	Diplomas in "Entrepreneurship for Peace" at universities	Entrepreneurship by victims/ex-combatants	<1% in sustainable businesses mentioning "peace education."

Thematic Line	Main Focus	Practical Example (Colombia)	Key Indicators	Current Gap in Literature
			- Recidivism of violence reduced by	
5. Glocal Governance	Public-private-community partnerships for resource management in conflict zones	Agreements for sustainable water use in Meta (agroindustry-communities)	- Conflicts resolved through dialogue - Investment in community infrastructure	Only 5% of peacebuilding organizations analyze "intersectoral partnerships."
6. Corporate Peace Metrics	Indicators that measure businesses' contribution to reducing violence	Reintegration impact indices (e.g., % ex-combatants hired)	- Homicides reduced in areas of operation. - Trust in institutions.	ESG metrics ignore peace variables (social cohesion, access to justice).
7. Bioeconomy and Territorial Peace	Biodiversity as a basis for resilient economies in former conflict zones	Conflict Markets for non-timber products (acai/rubber) with peace-sustainability certification (Amazon)	- Forests conserved - Community income - Illegal deforestation reduced	Only 1% of sustainable businesses link "biodiversity" and "conflict."

Conclusions

After thoroughly assessing the main findings, the authors concluded that comprehensive sustainability (environmental, social, and economic) can be a synergistic mechanism for peacebuilding. However, it is critical to note that implementing concrete strategies and policies must prioritize equity in access to resources and repairing community fabric. The data analyzed demonstrate that, without actively including historically marginalized populations, even the most innovative business models reproduce exclusions.

Therefore, pursuing an integrated landscape in post-conflict contexts requires adapting global frameworks to local realities. In Colombia, the effectiveness of strategies such as intersectoral partnerships or agroecology will depend on addressing structural issues such as land tenure, illegal and informal economies, digital divides, and human rights protection systems.

Finally, it is essential to note that education and technology are catalysts for the intersection between sustainable business and peacebuilding. However, they are not substitutes for the structural changes that must be fostered for strategies to achieve their objectives. In this sense, sustainable business, linked to redistributive policies and the strengthening of local leadership, could introduce innovative processes and advances that mitigate the deepening asymmetries that undermine peace processes.

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