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Reputation Themes from Communication Perspective: A Qualitative Systematic Review

موضوعات السمعة من منظور الاتصالات: مراجعة منهجية نوعية

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Abstract

The article aimed to systematically review communication reputation-related research to shape the reputation literature from a communication perspective. After investigating several databases, a total of 366 peer-reviewed communication journal articles focusing on reputation were selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study. A qualitative text mining and thematic analysis approach was conducted using the NVivo program to examine the most frequently used words and major emergent themes. The results revealed that the topmost frequently repeated words in communication reputation-focused articles were "crisis," "public," "reputation," "communication," "media," and "relations." Also, this study discussed the six major themes that emerged from communication reputation research, which were communication and public relations perspectives, crisis communication, reputation dimensions and components, organizational/corporate reputation, online reputation, and reputation types.

Keywords: communication, public relations, reputation, meta-analysis, crisis communication.

المستخلص

هدف المقال إلى مراجعة الأبحاث المتعلقة بسمعة الاتصالات بشكل منهجي لتشكيل أدبيات السمعة من منظور الاتصال. بعد التحقيق في العديد من قواعد البيانات، تم اختيار ما مجموعه 366 مقالة في مجلات الاتصالات التي راجعها النظراء والتي تركز على السمعة بناءً على معايير التضمين والاستبعاد للدراسة. تم إجراء منهج التنقيب النوعي عن النص والتحليل الموضوعي باستخدام برنامج NVivo لفحص الكلمات الأكثر استخدامًا والموضوعات الناشئة الرئيسية. كشفت النتائج أن الكلمات الأكثر تكرارًا في المقالات التي تركز على السمعة هي "أزمة"، "عام"، "وسمعة"، و"اتصالات"، و"وسائل إعلام"، و"علاقات". كما ناقشت هذه الدراسة المحاور الستة الرئيسية التي انبثقت عن أبحاث سمعة الاتصالات وهي وجهات نظر الاتصالات والعلاقات العامة، والتواصل في الأزمات، وأبعاد ومكونات السمعة، والسمعة التنظيمية/المؤسسية، والسمعة عبر الإنترنت، وأنواع السمعة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاتصال، العلاقات العامة، السمعة، التحليل التلوي، الاتصال في الأزمات.

Introduction

Having a positive reputation is crucial for individuals and corporations these days. Creating a respectable reputation involves disseminating positive information and minimizing negative reactions in reality and online. Corporations should build a positive reputation by developing relationships with key stakeholders and influencers. Maintaining a positive reputation is everyone's responsibility in the organization. A good reputation can lead to more opportunities, improved trust, better employee selection, increased loyalty, higher corporation value, lower publicizing costs, etc. (L. Heath, 2013).

However, scholarly there is a gap between the practice and theory of communication and reputation, which drives the need for organizations to research and modify communication-based on stakeholders' unique characteristics and preferences. Meanwhile, the most crucial way an organization builds reputation is through its communication actions (Ajayi & Mmutle, 2021; Schreiber & Institute for Public Relations, 2011).

Studying corporate reputation from a communication perspective may facilitate a clearer understanding of the roles of communication in this field and improve the scholarly area as well. Communication and reputation are closely interconnected and are critical in the positioning process of an organization. However, Several academic publications have ignored the communication aspect of reputation (Barnett & Pollock, 2012). Meanwhile, corporate reputation as a concept and as a research area has been developed via an attractive pathway from a communication and public relations (PR) perspective over the last three decades. *The Handbook of Communication and Corporate Reputation* offered a communication perspective that contrasted with the multidisciplinary perspective of reputation. After the 2000s, studies, jointly authored books, and others asserted that corporate reputation should be reconsidered as a communication and PR discipline (Carroll, 2013b; Heath, 2013). This was a significant motivation that drove the present study to closely examine reputation research themes from a communication angle.

Hence, the problem statement of the present article is to identify a communication reputation framework from communication and PR perspectives throughout investigating communication reputation-focused articles

published in the communication publications in the last decades by adopting a qualitative text mining approach and then a thematic analysis tool.

Research Objectives

This present study has many objectives explained as follows:

1. To obtain specific results about the most frequently used words and major themes introduced in communication reputation-focused articles by using qualitative methods and the NVivo program.
2. To systematically review peer-reviewed communication reputation articles in order to identify clear themes and directions that will help further studies in examining reputation from a communication perspective, find its path, and make significant contributions to the communication and PR field.
3. In addition, this research genre should assist further studies in finding strong, clear, and comprehensive connections to communication theories and sub-communication areas such as corporate communication.

Research Questions

The present article seeks to identify a reputation themes and framework from communication and PR perspectives by addressing the following research questions (RQ):

RQ1: What are the most frequently used words within published communication reputation articles?

RQ2: What are the most frequently used themes within published communication reputation articles?

Literature Review

Several academic publications have ignored the communication aspect of reputation, including *The Oxford Handbook of Corporate Reputation* (Barnett & Pollock, 2012). Also, communication was excluded from the *Corporate Reputation Review* inaugural issue reviewed by Fombrun and van Riel (1997). van Riel's (1997) work titled *Research in Corporate Communication: An Overview of an Emerging Field* argued that corporate communication (CC) should be mainly responsible for corporate

reputation. The primary ultimate goal of CR is to enhance the organization's reputation and increase its profits through proper branding and marketing communication (Guru, Sanjeevaraja, Parashivamurthy, & Gopala, 2013). In addition, reputation and communication are key factors that determine success amid crisis (Singh, 2021).

Organization should be aware of what is important to its stakeholders and target publics in terms of reputation, it has to be able to establish successful communication with them (Karnaukhova & Polyanskaya, 2016). Important issues such as strong visual identity and good internal and external communication can lead to the dissemination of positive information about the organization. A lack of communication can lead to misalignment in the information policy of an organization. Also, scarceness of information on the most communication effective channels can cause audience loss or make it impossible to attract external and internal publics and generate gaps in the audiences' perception of a corporation. In addition, the functional areas of mass media and communication in reputation includes internet communication, visual communication, internal and external communication, formal and informal communication, and other types of communication (Karnaukhova & Polyanskaya, 2016).

Reputation Definitions

"Reputation" is derived from the Latin words "re," which means over and over, and "putare," which means calculating. "Reputation literally means calculating over and over again the pros and cons of a subject, a person, an organization, or its products." (Carroll, 2013b, p. 15). Further defined reputation as a perception about "the degree of admiration, positive feelings, and trust an individual has for another person, organization, industry, or even country." (Carroll, 2013b, p. 15).

In an attempt to summarize the common components among different definitions of corporate reputation in literature, specific characteristics were assigned to corporate reputation: it is a dynamic concept, it takes time to build and manage, there is a bilateral relationship between reputation and image, it crystallizes a company's principle ranking in a competitive market, and different stakeholder groups may have different reputations of the same organization based on their background (C. J. Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997; C. Fombrun &

Shanley, 1990; Charles J. Fombrun, 1996; Gotsi & Wilson, 2001; Gray & Balmer, 1998; Walker, 2010).

Therefore, the following definition of corporate reputation can be concluded after the review of Gotsi and Wilson (2001):

a stakeholder's overall evaluation of a company over time. This evaluation is based on the stakeholder's direct experiences with the company, any other form of communication and symbolism that provides information about the firm's actions and/or a comparison with the actions of other leading rivals. (Kioussis, Popescu, & Mitrook, 2007, p. 148)

In the *Encyclopedia of Public Relations*, Heath (2013) defines "reputation" and "organizational reputation" as follows:

Reputation is a collective representation of stake-holders' perceptions of the organization that is created over time, and subject to change. Based on the organization's identity, its previous performance and behavior, reputation involves the expectation of future delivery of desired results and fulfillment of expectations. Organizational reputation is a multidimensional construct that incorporates management, leadership, quality of services and products, financial performance, workplace environment, corporate social responsibility, ethical standards, and communication.(pp. 787–788)

Reputation has also been defined as the phenomenon of earning acceptability and legitimacy of a much wider audience (Origgi, 2014, p. 2). "A good reputation comes from living your values, delivering for customers, making good decisions, meeting and exceeding performance standards, and demonstrating good behaviours... across the organization." (Origgi, 2014, p. 4)

Helm et al. (2011) defined it as "a stakeholder's overall evaluation of a firm in respect to its past, present, and future handling of stakeholder relationships that reflects a firm's ability and willingness to meet stakeholders' expectations continuously."(p. 13). It has also been defined as an "intangible asset that can contribute to competitive advantage in the marketplace of goods and services" (Salgado, 2012, p. 152).

Meanwhile, reputation management defined as follows:

Reputation management is the strategic use of organizational resources to influence the attitudes, beliefs, and actions of various, and sometimes conflicting, stakeholder groups. Reputation management seeks to emphasize an organization's positive attributes while carefully managing its risks to reduce the likelihood of negative impacts on its overall reputation. (L. Heath, 2013, p. 790)

Reputation is conceptualized as the most suitable guiding philosophy for organizational PR. RM advocates seeing it as a guiding paradigm for the entire PR field, in which losing reputation is considered a greater sin than losing money to an organization. Hutton et al. (2001) empirically studied 500 companies and found that reputation management is "gaining ground as a driving philosophy behind corporate public relations" (p. 247). As a result, RM is considered the new face of an organization's PR that is implicated in theory and practice (Hutton et al., 2001; L. Heath, 2013; Origgi, 2014; Salgado, 2012). A historical review of PR definitions revealed numerous metaphors such as engineer of public consent, persuader, interpreter, perception manager, relationship manager, and reputation manager, among others (Hutton et al., 2001; van Riel & Fombrun, 2007).

Recently, numerous organizations have adopted reputation as a PR strategy and approach that contributes to the planning process that considers reputation in their policy, vision, values, behaviors, communication actions, and relationships (Tak Jie Chan, Sathasevam, Noor, Khiruddin, & Hasan, 2018; Gotsi & Wilson, 2001; Gray & Balmer, 1998). Furthermore, the management of an organization's reputation strategically affects its competitive advantage. PR working alongside other departments practice their management function in building, improving, and managing an organization's reputation. RM is related to attempts to influence impressions, perceptions, and interpretations of an organization's past, present, and future. Organizations use mass media to manage their reputations through media coverage, visibility, and ads to propagate images that enhance their reputation (Hutton et al., 2001; Heath, 2013; Zinko et al., 2007).

Related Reputation Models

Considering reputation as a valuable organizational asset contributes to an argument that aims to put categories, variables, or dimensions that measure reputation similar to

Fombrun's reputation quotient model (Heath, 2013). Fombrun's model proposed six categories of measuring reputation: emotional appeal of an organization, quality and value of products and services, financial performance, vision and leadership, workplace environment, and social responsibility (Heath, 2013). As Bass (2018) explained in the Framework for Measurement and Valuation report (2005), the reputation of a public agency is formed by several aspects/channels, namely leadership, performance, workplace, product/services, innovation, and governance.

The RepTrak model has been explored by Reputation Institute since the year 2000. The model was introduced in Madrid in 2005–2006 and was developed by Charles Fombrun and the Reputation Institute of Charles Fombrun, and Cees van Riel throughout the Reputation Institute's development of the reputation quotient (RQ) model in 1999. Later on, RepTrak was peer-reviewed and published in (Charles J. Fombrun, Ponzi, & Newbury, 2015; Ponzi, Fombrun, & Gardberg, 2011). The RepTrak model is recognized as an authoritative international framework that identifies reputation factors, measures reputation, and allows corporations to track their performance and compare it with competitors (Bratus & Sydorov, 2021).

The RepTrak was the first identical tool that had been integrated all over the world in order to frame and measure reputation from several stakeholder group perceptions at an international level. The core of the RepTrak model is the emotional factor which helps to create a bond between stakeholders and corporations and measures strength of reputation based on four elements: esteem, admiration, trust, and feelings. The obtained level of the bond determines the corporation's reputation (Bratus & Sydorov, 2021; Tak Jie Chan et al., 2018; Charles J. Fombrun et al., 2015).

The RepTrak model provides a systematic tool for analyzing and tracking stakeholder perceptions, and this helps corporations to manage their reputation and get better (Charles J. Fombrun et al., 2015). The Reputation Institute has classified seven rational elements that represent the rationale of reputation while working to change stakeholders' perception, behavior, or measure corporate reputation. These rational elements are products and services, innovation, workplace, governance, citizenship, leadership, and performance, and have been described through different details in figure 1.

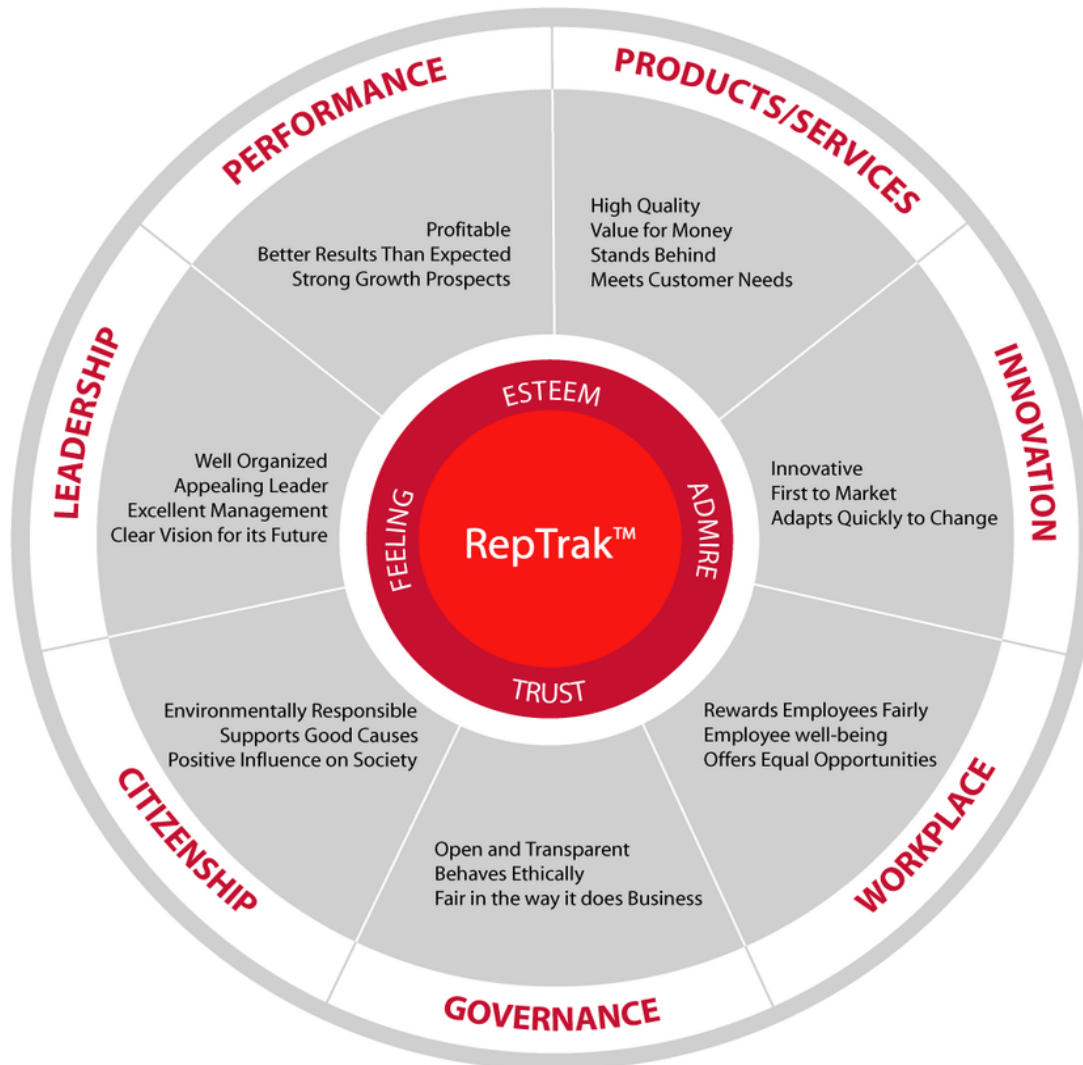


Figure 1: RepTrak™ Reputation Model (Charles J. Fombrun et al., 2015)

This model excludes corporations with a standardized framework and criteria for benchmarking their reputation and censoring it internationally and identifies the main factors that drive reputation which consists of the set of attributive values of the corporation (Tak Jie Chan et al., 2018; Charles J. Fombrun et al., 2015; Ponzi et al., 2011). The RepTrak model is commonly being adopted for both protecting and building reputation (Tak Jie Chan et al., 2018; Charles J. Fombrun et al., 2015). The model also takes into consideration the cultural aspect of the macro-environment, macro-institutional context, and systemic cultural features (Bratus & Sydorov, 2021).

Fombrun and van Riel (2004) suggested six communication dimensions of an organizations reputation: visibility, authenticity, distinctiveness, transparency, responsiveness, and consistency. van Riel & Fombrun (2007) discussed these dimensions as models for diagnosing a corporation's expressiveness profile. The model suggested that "stronger reputations are the result of corporate communication that produces favorable perceptions in the minds of the public" (van Riel & Fombrun, 2007, p. 90).

Table 1: Van Riel and Fombrun's Communication-based Dimensions of Reputation

Reputation Dimensions	Definition
1. Visibility	"Visibility is achieved through public prominence, for example, media and market presence, which are interrelated. Corporations that have high market presence tend to receive more media coverage and that can have both positive and negative effects depending on the organization's performance." (L. Heath, 2013, p. 789)
2. Authenticity	"is related to organizational identity, its core values, and business philosophy. It is reflected not only in corporate messages but also in behaviors that demonstrate organizational trustworthiness." (L. Heath, 2013, p. 789)
3. Consistent	"An organization's identity is reflected in its behavior and communication. Organizations acquire a positive reputation when action and message are <i>consistent</i> . Corporate actions and messages need to be consistent across different departments, but also internally and externally to achieve the desired reputation with internal and external stakeholders." (L. Heath, 2013, pp. 789–790)
4. Distinctiveness	"differentiation from competitors through characteristics that are exclusive and unique to the organization." (L. Heath, 2013, p. 789)
5. Transparency	"to be <i>transparent</i> requiring authentic insight into all corporate matters: policies, products, leadership, financial reports, and socially responsible practices. Provided information must be complete, accurate, relevant, timely, and useful for stakeholders." (L. Heath, 2013, p. 789)
6. Responsiveness	"an organization's willingness to engage in dialogue with its stakeholders and be ready to make adequate changes based on feedback. Such feedback reveals stakeholders' judgments as to whether the organization met their expectations." (L. Heath, 2013, p. 790)

According to the dimensions and definitions presented in table1, an appropriate development and execution of a communication system helps in building an organization's reputation. If successful corporate communication is carried out, it will induce stakeholder bonding and stimulate supportive behaviors. An organization's reputation is directly related to communication, as it is only communication that translates an organization's identity, impression, and image through advertising and publicity. Most stakeholders rely on all their senses to form an exclusive impression of a corporation. No corporation can create and sustain positive perceptions of distinctiveness and authenticity without depending on corporate communication (van Riel & Fombrun, 2007).

3 Method

The present study adopted a qualitative text mining and qualitative thematic analysis approach to explore the most frequently used words and major themes discussed in communication reputation-focused researches in the last decades. This research timeline was determined according to the first search results indicated in the first journal article published in a communication journal which first mentioned the term "reputation" in 1977. Meanwhile, the end of the period was specified according to the data collection period that took place in January 2022.

Data Collection Methods

To obtain a logical sample of empirical peer-reviewed articles, those published in the following databases were investigated: *EBSCO's Communication & Mass Media Complete*, *Elsevier Science Direct*, *Sage Journals*, *ProQuest Central*, *Taylor and Francis Online*, *Web of Science*, *Springer*, *ProQuest Central*, and the *Wiley Online Library*. According to past studies (Abu Arqoub et al., 2019; Abu Arqoub, 2020; Li & Tang, 2012), the explored databases were reputable and were affiliated with high-impact factor journals and quality empirical peer-reviewed research articles in the field of communication and media studies. Furthermore, specific communication journals were selected based on whether they were fully or partly devoted to communication and its sub-disciplines, such as communication theory, journalism, media studies, PR, mass media, semiotics, political communication, public opinion, new media, social media, digital media, communication, media education, international communication, mass media ethics, cultural communication, strategic communication, crisis communication, and related fields (Abu Arqoub et al., 2020; Liu & Wei, 2017). Moreover, selected articles must acknowledge that reputation or RM has gained considerable research attention.

The keywords "reputation or reputation management" and "corporate\organizational"

were used to search for articles on reputation within the mentioned databases. The search process was determined by choosing the international classifications of social sciences, and arts and humanities as (Web of Science Core Collection: Social Science Citation Index, and Arts and Humanities). Then, the following sets of inclusion and exclusion criteria were adopted based on previous meta-analyses as (Abu Arqoub et al., 2019; Abu Arqoub, 2020; Li & Tang, 2012). First, the articles must generally be empirical studies written in English, available in full text, and must have been published in the field of communication and media studies. Second, the key terms must be mentioned in the article titles, keywords, and abstracts. As for the exclusion criteria, we excluded other kinds of publications, such as conference proceedings, reports, and books or book chapters. We also excluded duplicate articles and those published in

other fields but were found in the search results of the database research, including articles about reputation published in business, marketing, economy, and management journals. To explain the systematic search method and criteria, Table 2 presents the number of articles in each database and the strict inclusion and exclusion criteria that were applied.

Population and Study Sample

The database search generated study population of 4656 articles as shown in table2, which were investigated according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Among the search outcomes, the total number of communication reputation studies were 366 articles, which were qualified for inclusion in the study’s sample.

Table 2: Database Search Outcomes and Certified Papers

N.	Databases	Search Outcome	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Certified Papers
1.	Elsevier Science Direct	768	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articles do not contain reputation, RM Keywords in its titles, keywords or abstracts. Articles do not focus on reputation or RM in its parts. (Some articles were just mentioned reputation in its abstracts but do not discuss or focused on it, or it was mentioned in abstract spontaneously). Conference papers, books and book chapters and other academic resources. Articles we could not access even from the library remote access or just have a printed copy. Other languages Other fields that are not communication, especially in business, marketing, economy, and management fields. Short papers that have no analysis and references list. Book reviews Repeated and duplicated articles 	119
2.	EBSCO’s Communication & Mass Media Complete	722	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer reviewed Full text articles 		21
3.	SAGE Journals	1598	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contained in one of the academic databases explored. 		79
4.	Taylor and Francis Online	717	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only articles written in English Languages 		45
5.	Web of science	851	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keywords: reputation, RM must be mentioned in Either the titles, keywords or abstracts of the articles Articles published only within communication or sub-communication fields. Dose not duplicated 		102
	Total Population	4656		Total Sample	366

Text-Mining Approach

Regarding the aspects related to the Knowledge Discovery in Database (KDD), Fayyad et al. (1996) and Hung and Zhang (2012) interpreted the most frequently used words and themes within this field of research. The present study used text-mining approaches to identify concise patterns within reputation-related sets of texts. The most frequently used words expressed variations in the used and off-repeated words within the text of the study sample. In our case, it explains the directions, tendencies, and focuses highlighted in the selected texts. Furthermore, the major themes present the most discussed issues, dimensions, and components within the context of this research field. To achieve this, NVivo 12 software was adopted to run a word frequency search and created a Word Tag Cloud so that major themes/categories were found and identified in the sample.

Consistently, based on the most repeated words, the program found correlations between words and identified the most common themes by grouping the most common words together in nodes which caused six significant major themes. By investigating each theme, the NVivo program identified the most contexts that each theme had used and discussed based on article titles and how communication reputation researchers used it. In the analysis, the most repeated and related articles using the same themes were classified, explained, and mentioned.

Qualitative Thematic Analysis (QTA)

This study applied the well-known qualitative thematic analysis (TA) methodology to systematically identify hot research topics in order to identify themes and contexts that reputation focused articles investigated over the last decade to predict future directions and knowledge gaps that communication researchers should focus on. TA has been widely used in the communication field as well as other fields that use qualitative research methods. It was used in this study to anticipate improved knowledge, understand theme development, and develop internationally informed analytical notions about reputation and its main themes from a communications perspective (Braun et al., 2019; Terry & Hayfield, 2021). Also, it has a flexible approach that enables the researcher to generate new insights and concepts derived from communication reputation-focused articles (Caulfield, 2022).

QTA is a good approach to use when trying to find knowledge and literature from a set of qualitative data that involves reading through a data set and identifying patterns in meanings across the data to derive themes (Braun et al., 2019). Also, the researchers in this study closely examined the data to identify common themes or topics, ideas, and patterns of meanings that occurred repeatedly. The various steps of conducting TA were adopted in this study which are familiarization with the data sets, coding most repeated words and ideas, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and lastly, writing up as explained in many sources (Braun et al., 2019; Caulfield, 2022; Terry & Hayfield, 2021).

Limitations of the Study

The present study had some limitations. First, reputation is a multidisciplinary research area; however, the present study focused only on communication discipline. Second, the sample was restricted by the inclusion and exclusion criteria which resulted in exclusion of some journals and articles that did not specialize in communication and other forms of research. Furthermore, some articles may have been missed because of database search inaccuracy.

Results

The present section presents the results that address the research questions and includes the qualitative variables with the most repeated words and major discussed themes within communication reputation articles.

Text-mining of Communication Reputation Focused Research

The word tag cloud is a sophisticated technique used to discover and explore word frequencies by arranging them in descending order. Thus, the most frequently used words become the largest words in the diagram (Haider & Dilshad, 2015).

Figure 2 shows word frequency within communication reputation research.



Figure 2: Word Frequency of Communication Reputation-focused Articles (Top 100 Words)

As in fig2, **Table 3** presents the order arrangement of word frequency based on count and weighted percentage. NVivo’s word frequency distribution shows that the most repeated words are “crisis,” “public,” “reputation,” “communication,” “media,” and

“relations.” Other frequently used terms include “corporate,” “organization,” “management,” “company,” “response,” “responsibility,” “online,” “press,” “stakeholders,” “strategies,” “international,” “public,” “social,” “journalism,” “government,” and “marketing.”

Table 3: Most Frequently Used Words within Communication Reputation Focused-Research (Most Common 60 Words)

Word	Count	Weighted Percentage	Word	Count	Weighted Percentage
1. Crisis	21276	1.24%	International	3035	0.15%
2. Public	18041	1.03%	Brand	2938	0.14%
3. Reputation	17195	0.88%	Trust	2855	0.14%
4. Communication	16153	0.83%	Role	2729	0.13%
5. Media	13341	0.78%	Important	2695	0.13%
6. Relations	11590	0.65%	Perceptions	2681	0.13%
7. Social	11569	0.56%	Marketing	2670	0.13%
8. Corporate	9406	0.56%	Content	2626	0.13%
9. Organization	8290	0.46%	Journalism	2594	0.13%
10. Information	7969	0.40%	Political	2553	0.12%
11. Company	6364	0.39%	Message	2522	0.12%
12. Management	6269	0.31%	Country	2499	0.12%
13. News	6220	0.30%	Impact	2491	0.12%

Word	Count	Weighted Percentage	Word	Count	Weighted Percentage
14. Organizational	5827	0.30%	Responses	2469	0.12%
15. Response	4971	0.28%	Issues	2453	0.12%
16. Responsibility	4720	0.24%	Consumer	2394	0.12%
17. Online	4519	0.23%	Power	2322	0.11%
18. Strategies	4348	0.22%	Value	2306	0.11%
19. Positive	4264	0.21%	Future	2293	0.11%
20. Negative	4254	0.21%	Process	2291	0.11%
21. Business	4157	0.21%	Government	2276	0.11%
22. Relationship	3671	0.20%	Influence	2275	0.11%
23. Theory	3660	0.18%	Strategic	2172	0.11%
24. Coombs	3556	0.18%	Identity	2169	0.11%
25. Effects	3440	0.17%	Post	2168	0.11%
26. Image	3405	0.17%	Society	2119	0.10%
27. Perceived	3334	0.17%	Community	1963	0.10%
28. Stakeholders	3293	0.16%	Support	1962	0.10%
29. Press	3236	0.16%	Personal	1952	0.09%
30. Participants	3073	0.16%	Factors	1934	0.09%

In clarifying the major themes and determining the relationships among the main terms, context, and research areas from the commonly used words in this field, this process shaped the following commonly frequently used themes: communication and PR perspective, crisis communication, reputation dimensions and components, corporate/organizational reputation, online reputation, and reputation types.

Major Themes of Communication Reputation Research

The present study investigated the most commonly used words to determine the relationship between words and context in articles. The themes were derived from many reputation articles and represented the most important concerns of communication reputation discourse and research. The next parts suggested some operational definitions to help us understand the broad themes of reputation research. Other themes were defined based on how articles employed them within their respective contexts. The definitions of these themes were extracted from the articles and organized in descending order based on the most important and repeated themes. Therefore, in most reputation articles, different themes overlapped and one article could contain more than one theme. The most significant and repeated themes were as follow:

1. Communication and Public Relations Perspective of Reputation

Table 4: Articles Discussed Reputation from a Communication and Public Relations Perspective

Theme	Context
Communication and Public Relations perspective	(Adi, 2015; Antric, McKie, & Toledano, 2019; Denner, Viererbl, & Koch, 2019; Farmer, 2018; Gibson, Gonzales, & Castanon, 2006; Hutton et al., 2001; J. R. Kim & Cha, 2013; Lorenzo-Molo, 2007; Oksiutycz & Kunene, 2017a; Stephen, 2008; Zerfass & Viertmann, 2017)

The above Table 4 shows the most related and repeated articles that discussed and used the first theme, *communication and public relations perspective of reputation*. The theme can be defined as a reputation concept, framework, and strategy discussed from a communication and PR perspective and area. Hence, reputation is often investigated from a communication perspective and can mostly be understood within the fields of communication and PR. Meanwhile, the most related repeated words indicated in this theme were communication, media, press, journalism, public, relations, information, news, effects, image, impact, influence, strategy, mass, agenda, perspective, attitude, and report.

2. Crisis Communication

Table 5: Articles Linked Reputation to Crisis Communication

Theme	Context
Crisis Communication	(Barkley, 2020; Coombs, 2004; De Waele, Claeys, & Cauberghe, 2019; Kiambi & Shafer, 2016; S. Kim & Sung, 2014; Ma & Zhan, 2016; Schoofs, Claeys, De Waele, & Cauberghe, 2019; Sisson & Bowen, 2017; Utz, Schultz, & Glocka, 2013; Zheng, Liu, & Davison, 2018)

The above *Table 5* mentions the most repeated and related articles that used or discussed the second theme, *crisis communication*, and linked it to the concept of reputation. The theme which can be defined as reputation was discussed within the articles in the context of crisis communication situations, framework, and applying crisis communication theories. This reveals that the concept of “reputation” is very close to the crisis communication area; hence, it can be studied by applying crisis communication theories and frameworks which many of the communication reputation studies applied. The most related repeated words indicated in this theme were crisis, communication, coombs, response, risk, responsibility, trust, stakeholders, issues, credibility, control, attribution, apology, situation, and attitudes.

3. Reputation Dimensions and Components

Table 6: Main Discussed Reputation Dimensions and Components

Theme	Context
Reputation Dimensions and Components	(Auger, 2014; Bratus & Sydorov, 2021; T J Chan, Tay, Huam, & Adzharuddin, 2020; C. J. Fombrun & van Riel, 1997; Charles J. Fombrun et al., 2015; Jamal & Abu Bakar, 2017; J. Y. Kim, 2016; Mohammed & Sharipudin, 2017; Sung & Yang, 2008; van Zoonen & van der Meer, 2015)

The present *Table 6* expresses the most important articles that were repeated and explains the main dimensions and components of reputation which were extracted from reputation models and applied within reputation research. This third theme consists of multidisciplinary dimensions of reputation that can be studied from other perspectives. In fact, many communication articles have investigated one or more dimensions. The operational definition of this theme can be reputation articles focused on identifying significant components and dimensions of the concept “reputation,” such as credibility, transparency, social responsibility, communication, performance, response, trust, content, message, quality, leadership, innovation, crisis, management, and building relationships. Meanwhile, these were the most repeated words expressed in this theme: reputation, stakeholders, context, media, credibility, transparency, social responsibility, communication, performance, response, trust, marketing, values, content and message, quality, leadership, innovation, management, building relationships, perceived images, identity, consumer, engagement, culture, and agenda.

4. Corporate and Organizational Reputation

Table 7: Articles Discussed Corporate and Organizational Reputation

Theme	Context
Corporate and Organizational Reputation	(Al-salhi, El Damanhoury, & Alawadly, 2021; Michael L Barnett & Pollock, 2012; Bass, 2018; Croucher, Zeng, & Kassing, 2019; Jonkman, Boukes, Vliegthart, & Verhoeven, 2020; Lange, Lee, & Dai, 2011; Lee, Lim, & Drumwright, 2018; M.-M. Meijer & Kleinnijenhuis, 2006; M. M. Meijer & Kleinnijenhuis, 2006; Nakra, 2000)

This *Table 7* shows that most articles concentrated on the corporate and organizational reputation which is the fourth theme. From the context of the articles, organizational and corporate reputation have the same meaning and are considered as a summary of the core concept of reputation. In the definition of the theme, many articles discussed and investigated the term “organizational/corporate reputation,” which is the public perception of an organization and a multidimensional construct. It is an “assessment

that multiple stakeholders make about a company’s ability to fulfill their expectations” (Sung Un Yang, 2007, p. 94). "Corporate reputation is a part of the intangible asset management that can help create a competitive advantage in firms. Hence, it is crucial for firms to create a favourable reputation and build a good perception among stakeholders."(Chan et al., 2020, p. 19).

Furthermore, the most repeated words express in this theme were public, communication, reputation, organization, corporate, business, ORM, media, information, community, company, stakeholders, social, strategies, culture, agenda, brand, credibility, transparency, social responsibility, performance, response, trust, marketing, impact, effect, values, leadership, innovation, crisis, management, building relationships, perceived images, and consumer.

5. Online Reputation

Table 8: Articles Discussed Digital and Social Media Reputation

Theme	Context
Digital and Social Media Reputation	(De Ridder, 2021; Jackson & Thaker, 2021; Ji, Li, North, & Liu, 2017; Oksiutycz & Kunene, 2017b; Ott & Theunissen, 2015; Salter, 2016; Schultz, Utz, & Göritz, 2011; Spence, Sellnow-Richmond, Sellnow, & Lachlan, 2016)

This Table 8 shows articles related to the sixth theme, *online reputation*, that have been discussed mostly within communication reputation researches. Digital/Online reputation can be defined as "the process of positioning, monitoring, measuring, talking and listening as an organization engages in a transparent and ethical dialogue with its various online stakeholders" (Floreddu & Cabiddu, 2016, p. 492). Hence, the idea behind digital/online reputation is to minimize negative contents and promote flattering and positive contents as much as possible. Also, online reputation management is the process of ensuring that the right information appears when publics search for it on browsers such as Google and on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn (Pollak & Svetozarovova, 2017, p. 319).

However, multiple challenges have emerged regarding which aspects contribute to meanings online, such as the popular culture of stakeholders, influencers, and customers that result in online reputation being owned by public, especially stakeholder, groups (Neill & Moody, 2015). The most repeated words expressed in the present theme were social media, online, digital, blogs, websites, twitter, Facebook, digital media, video, and web.

6. Reputation Types

Table 9: Articles Discussed Reputation Types

Theme	Context
Reputation Types and Contexts	Governmental reputation: (Crijns, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017; Tahir, Abdullah, Hasan, & Alsagoff, 2021)
	Country reputation: (Ingenhoff, Buhmann, White, Zhang, & Kiouisis, 2018; Tam & Kim, 2020).
	Political reputation: (Browning & Sweetser, 2020; Slothuus, 2016).
	National reputation: (Cai, Ting, & Pang, 2009; Garud-Patkar, 2021; Wang, 2006).
	Academic reputation: (Biswas, Perkins, & Izard, 2012; Cozma & Dimitrova, 2020; Jie & Huam, 2019; Theus, 1993).
	Media reputation: (Deephouse, 2000; Jonkman et al., 2020; Tong, 2013).

The above Table 9 shows articles applied to reputation in different contexts and uses different reputation types. Hence, reputation can be used in several contexts, making it a flexible term that can be used in other contexts such as politics, government, and academic reputation among others. This theme included and explained the main reputation types that articles discussed and investigated within the study sample and revealed the following types: governmental reputation, country reputation, political parties’ reputation, national reputation, academic reputation, journalism and media reputation. These were the most repeated words expressed in reputation types: public, reputation, business, political, government, country, political parties,

national, academic, universities, journalism, media, information, community, company, stakeholders, social, communication, strategies, impact, effect, and culture.

Consistently, "the governmental reputation is a cognitive representation of citizens of the actions and results that the government made with regard to the terrorism threat. It crystallizes the government's ability to protect the citizens from harm."(Crijns et al., 2017, p. 5) Communication enables the government to show its transparency to the public, which enables citizens to appreciate governmental actions better and hence, facilitate a better governmental reputation (Crijns et al., 2017)

For political reputation, a political party's reputation is "shaped a great deal by the qualities of its candidates"(Browning & Sweetser, 2020, p. 4). "Past research suggests candidate character and authenticity are key traits that drive personal relationships and reputations, and thus might arguably transfer to higher reputation ratings for their parties" (Browning & Sweetser, 2020, p. 4). However, "On most major issues, political parties have policy reputations; that is, parties are known by citizens to stand for particular policies. As parties compete over time, their reputations for taking certain positions on issues and defending particular values are reinforced and increasingly recognized by citizens"(Slothuus, 2016, p. 306). In politics, "the importance of party reputation has long been recognized in the U.S., as has the role of party leaders and candidates in helping shape it." (Browning & Sweetser, 2020, p. 2). A party's reputation stems from the subsequent policies it develops, the issues it owns, and the sincerity with which it and its candidates communicate those policies (Browning & Sweetser, 2020, p. 2).

A country's reputation is:

Country reputation is an indicator of public diplomacy outcomes constructed through the long-term impressions of a country and has been proposed to incorporate three dimensions: leadership (in terms of governance), investment, and culture (Fullerton & Kendrick, 2017). Jain and Winner (2013) also identified additional dimensions of country reputation, including people, products/services, governance, immigration and investment, culture, and tourism. (Tam & Kim, 2020, p. 3).

Also, a country's reputation focuses on its emotional, physical, financial appeal, leadership, cultural, global, and political appeal (Yang, Shin,

Lee, & Wrigley, 2008). A country connects its reputation in the world through tourism promotions, export brands, policy decisions of its government, cultural exchange, activities and exports, and the people of the country themselves (Hamzah, 2019, p. 93).

National reputation is "the very foundation for conducting foreign policy; not only does a favorable reputation enhance soft power such as values, culture, policies and institutions, it can also help to legitimize the use of traditional hard power such as military interventions and economic sanctions"(Rasmussen & Merckelsen, 2012, p. 318). National reputation "unquestionably an instrument of power. Managing national reputation and nation-states' relationship with stakeholders overseas has been an integral part of foreign-policy making and public diplomacy"(Wang, 2006, p. 91). Also, national reputation "is all about having a good name in the world of nations. It refers to collective judgments of a foreign country's image and character that are then used to predict or explain its future behavior"(Wang, 2006, p. 91).

Media reputation is "the overall evaluation of a firm presented in the media" (Zhang, 2016, p. 885), and it "investigates the effect of a corporation's visibility and tone in news coverage on reputation." (Jonkman et al., 2020, p. 272). It is the representation of a person or an organization in the media through strategic framing in news subsidies, such as releases, and entails selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues and making connections between them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution (Murphy, 2010). Media reputation is "a collective concept connecting the firm, media workers, stakeholder sources of news about firms, and the readers of news." (Deephouse, 2000, p. 1098).

An article discussed how journalists work to improve their profession's reputation and repair damages to their image (Hindman & Thomas, 2013) in terms of ethical dilemmas related to funding and donation that have been given to journalists and mainstream media (Wright, Scott, & Bunce, 2019). It also discussed how journalists, news, and media coverage affect the reputation and media representation of an organization or issues. Information about an organization can be presented in a positive, negative, or neutral tone in media coverage (Bae & Park, 2011). In addition, journalists perceive and evaluate public relation professionals and use journalism to shape the credibility of their

profession (Llamero, Fenoll, & Domingo, 2019; Tkalac Verčić & Colić, 2016).

Articles discuss and measure university and academic reputations in terms of universities and higher education institutions images, programs, facilities, culture, rank, funding and tuition fees, scholarships, conducting and publication research, gratification of informational needs, diversity of ethnicity, multicultural curriculum, student body, and intercollegiate athletic programs using academic social media networks such as ResearchGate etc. (Biswas et al., 2012; Cozma & Dimitrova, 2020).

Discussion and Conclusion

The present meta-analysis study of communication reputation research revealed many significant conclusions which proved that reputation is an important area in the communication and public relations field. Thus, the main significance of the analysis and results is identifying themes that reputation was adopted and used and leading future studies of specific themes in conducting new specialized research related to each theme that was discovered in this study. Each theme can be considered as a separate context of study reputation and needs to be developed in theory and practice, which makes the result of this study a basis for new research directions.

For the most frequently used terms within communication reputation research, text mining analysis showed that the most repeated words were “crisis,” “public,” “reputation,” “communication,” “media,” “relations,” “corporate,” “organization,” “management,” and “company.” This analysis approach shaped the following major themes: communication and PR perspective of reputation, crisis communication, reputation dimensions and components, reputation types and contexts, organizational/corporate reputation, and online reputation. This communication perspective of studying and understanding reputation is consistent with past articles that considered reputation to be the new face of organizational PR (Gibson et al., 2006; Hutton et al., 2001; J. R. Kim & Cha, 2013). In addition, it is clear that reputation has many definitions, and consensus on one definition is not easy. The present article tried to review important themes that also have more relation to communication perspective which is consistent with Walker’s (2010) review

and contributes to define reputation in specific contexts and cases.

Reputation is also related to communication crisis and is directly influenced through times of crises. Previous studies on crisis communication have suggested that a history of past crises within an organization affects reputational threat, especially when these crises result from an organization’s activities (Coombs, 2004). In addition, numerous articles have used crisis communication theories and frameworks, revealing the important relationship between reputation and crisis communication as a research area (Y. Kim, Kang, Lee, & Yang, 2019; Schultz et al., 2011; Shim & Yang, 2016).

The themes that relate to reputation dimensions and components is basically dependent on what The RepTrak, Fombrun’s quotient, and van Riel and Fombrun’s expressiveness profile/communication dimension models express and explains the core components of reputation that were adopted in many articles. However, all these models and detentions still need to be developed in order to apply them to different contexts of reputation. For example, measuring reputation in governmental and political organizations has some specialties that differ from measuring the reputation of profit companies. Reputation literatures that have been produced until now from a communication perspective are not sufficient to cover areas of reputation in the discovered themes and contexts.

On the other hand, online reputation expresses the effects of digital technologies in this field, which also gives us a glance into the future of reputation research that focuses on applying new technologies in reputation. Online reputation seems to be the new thing that future researches will focus on. This study revealed that many articles discussed online, digital, and social media reputation in different contexts and organizations, but did not determine a clear model or detention that enabled us to investigate and measure online reputation.

For the significant application of reputation in different contexts, important reputation types have emerged, and this can lead researchers to focus on applying reputation in new contexts and also contribute to reputation literature in these specific contexts and types. Indeed, “PR researchers have much work to do in identifying the mediating roles that reputation may play” (Hutton et al., 2001, p. 258). Hence, investigating reputation types from reputation

articles is still limited. These types have to be examined and described in different methodological and theoretical contexts in order to ensure its validity as a communication conceptual framework that can be adopted worldwide in studying reputation in the contexts of government, country, politics, national organizations, academic organizations, and media institutions.

Organizational and corporate reputation is the stakeholder's perception of an organization. It indicates the significance role that reputation, with all its different kinks, may play in organizations. However, the specific communication detention and communication components that communicators and public relation practitioners need to be aware of are still undetermined precisely. The clear relationship between strategic communication, business communication, and marketing communication within organizations, and how they deal and relate to the reputation needs more clarity and sufficient research. This is one of the knowledge gaps that this study revealed.

Conclusions

Results of this study contribute to strengthen the literature on reputation from a communication and public relations perspective which will help in resolving the scholarly controversy about its multidisciplinary nature and clarifies the specialty of reputation in the communication and public relations context. The findings of this study support the arguments of Carroll (2013b, 2016, 2008, 2011), and other new studies as (Gregory, Nichols, & Underwood, 2021; Maor, 2020; Marsen, 2020; Nisbett & Schartel Dunn, 2021; ŞIRZAD, 2022) regarding the role of communication and public relation strategies and activities that can benefit and add value to reputation.

Reputation-related discussions began 45 years ago in 1977, when an article published in *Public Relations Review* first used the term "corporate reputation" in its abstract. Generally, the respectable number of 366 communication articles focused on reputation and studied the concept from a communication perspective while reflecting the importance of sub-communication and public relations research area. Most of these articles have been published in communication and special public relation journals which indicate the interest of public relations area to reputation as a strategy and sub-area as have been considered and discussed in many resources

(Antric et al., 2019; Browning & Sweetser, 2020; Farmer, 2018; Hutton et al., 2001; J. R. Kim & Cha, 2013; Origgi, 2014).

In conclusion, this study confirms that communication and reputation are closely interconnected and that reputation is a vital sub-communication area that corporate communication, strategic communication, and public relations are concerned about and considers the main goal that these practices seek to achieve, especially during times of crisis, as explained in previous studies (Guru et al., 2013; Karnaukhova & Polyanskaya, 2016; Singh, 2021). Also, this study revealed the gap between the theory and practice of communication and reputation which makes it evident that organizations build their reputation through their communication actions (Ajayi & Mmutle, 2021; Guru et al., 2013; Schreiber & Institute for Public Relations, 2011). This study should help researchers, journalists, students, and others understand sub-research areas in this field. Finally, this paper underlined the need for more substantial scholarly contributions to this academic stream from a communication and public relations perspective through applying specific communication methodologies, theories, and models.

Recommendations for Future Research

For future studies, researchers should discuss reputation as a concept of communication, along with its role in organizations. Articles should focus on building clear models and distinct theories that can be adopted for reputation in all types of organizations and entities. Researchers must clarify how they are going to measure and examine reputation empirically and in which cases this could be deemed useful.

Furthermore, communication journals that focus on public relations should allocate special issues for discussing aspects of reputation. Towards a holistic understanding of reputation, more qualitative and mixed methods methodologies must be specifically conducted. Furthermore, online reputation requires specific models, tools, and dimensions that should be investigated and identified in future scholarly works. Finally, critical studies may investigate the abuse of reputation and its negative side effects considering the rise of big data, social media, and algorithms that could be used to deceive stakeholders.

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