

Corporate reputation: analysis of studies that applied literature systematization methods

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Abstract

A corporate reputation is a theme that permeates other issues of management, associated with this, or academic interest that is historically intensified, or that naturally calls for the need to review this academic production. In this sense, the literature systematization methods (LSM) emerge as alternatives to recover this production and trace the panorama of the state of the art on the subject. This article has the general objective of analyzing the characteristics of scientific production on corporate reputation that employs literature systematization methods. Therefore, quantitative, descriptive, anchored research was carried out in bibliometric, using a sample of 15 articles, published between 2015 and the first quarter of 2024. The data from the sample formats are analyzed to capture the profile of these publications. To demonstrate the information, we summarize the two jobs, the type of systematization used, and the adequacy of research into frameworks. Among the main results, it was reported that the investigations were carried out in partnerships, the international collaboration is still low, the work concentrates on a larger volume of citations, it was identified that there is information that is not evident in us, we summarize two articles, we verified that classical LSM methods dominate the production and there are also missing information in the remaining sections of the articles, given that there are categories of two frameworks that are not served (or served by a reduced plot).

Keywords: corporate reputation. bibliometrics. systematic literature review. meta-analysis.

1 INTRODUCTION

Corporate reputation is an abstract and complex phenomenon that integrates different disciplines, with no consensus on the definition of the concept of corporate reputation (Bilginer; Özer, 2023). However, it can be considered as the perception (set of emotions and beliefs) of stakeholders, formed through their observations and interaction with the organization, in each period (Bilginer; Özer, 2023; Pérez-Cornejo; Quevedo-Puente; Delgado-García, 2019).

Although corporate reputation is a multidisciplinary concept, with parallel interpretations and divergences regarding its measurement, it is often approached as an intangible asset that brings with it the ability to boost the company; on the other hand, a bad reputation can completely harm the company's performance. Due to its importance for corporations, this construct generates repercussions in the business environment and is a topic of interest for academic researchers (Baruah; Panda, 2020).

Due to academic interest, the volume of publications on corporate reputation has shown a significant increase (Mateus; Acosta, 2022). In this sense, literature systematization methods (LSM) seek to identify, select, evaluate, and synthesize a sample of studies produced in a field of knowledge, in each period, with the most traditional quantitative approaches being bibliometrics and meta-analysis, while the systematic literature review (SLR) is the most widely used qualitative method (Chueke; Amatucci, 2022). This research will adopt the approach of Chueke and Amatucci (2022), which considers the term LSM as a nomenclature that covers the various techniques of mapping scientific production.

In this context, this study presents the following research question: what are the characteristics of scientific production on corporate reputation that employ literature systematization methods (LSM)? Thus, the general objective is to analyze the characteristics of scientific production on corporate reputation that employ literature systematization methods (LSM). The specific objectives were: (i) to analyze the profile of the publications, (ii) to analyze the types of systematizations employed in the studies, (iii) to analyze the disclosure of information in the abstract, (iv) to analyze the adequacy of these works to the methodological approaches present in the theoretical frameworks adapted from Ozturk; Kocaman; Kanbach (2024), Siddaway; Wood; Hedges (2019).

To achieve these objectives, this research uses a quantitative, descriptive, and bibliometric approach, with articles linked to the Scopus and Web of Science databases, from 2015 to 2024. These articles used literature systematization methods (LSM) on the topic of corporate reputation.

The research is relevant because there are already systematizations of literature focused on some specific related aspect of corporate reputation, which provides the opportunity to analyze the characteristics of this production. Furthermore, this study addresses the characteristics and rigor of the production of studies that carried out LSM focused on corporate reputation, which allows us to identify the theoretical contributions of these studies to this topic. In addition, the research also highlights the contribution of research involving LSM in suggesting future research and in replicability in corporate reputation research (Cortellini; Panetta, 2021; Kumar; Sharma, 2020; Mukherjee *et al.*, 2022).

This article is divided into five sections. The first is this introduction, which deals with the delimitation of the topic, the research question, and the objectives. Next, the literature review section addresses the construct of corporate reputation and deals with aspects of LSM. The methodology describes the typology of the research, its population and sample, and the collection and analysis of data. The analysis of results discusses the main findings of the research. Finally, the fifth section is dedicated to the presentation of the conclusions, limitations, and suggestions for future studies.

2 CORPORATE REPUTATION

Corporate reputation is the collective representation of a company's past actions and prospects, which describes how key stakeholders interpret the company's ability to generate value (Pérez-Cornejo; Quevedo-Puente; Delgado-García, 2019). In this sense, many managers consider corporate reputation to be one of the most important intangible assets a company has, capable of generating competitive advantages (Pérez-Cornejo; Quevedo-Puente; Delgado-García, 2019; Schulz; Flickinger, 2020).

One of the reasons why corporate reputation generates competitive advantage is related to information asymmetry. This is because stakeholders can use past behaviors of firms to form beliefs and make decisions (Deng; Yang, 2023). Therefore, these decisions can be financial, such as choosing

investments, purchasing shares, and providing credit. Consequently, companies with a superior corporate reputation have competitive advantages over others (Deng; Yang, 2023).

Another competitive advantage concerns consumers, since trust in business is associated with corporate reputation, which is related to the company's values and beliefs, and a good reputation indicates that the corporation has good ways to achieve its objectives and meet the expectations of its customers (Stravinskienė; Matulevičienė; Hopenienė, 2021). The importance of corporate reputation for consumer trust is achieved through the stability of purchasing volume, consumer retention, and the development of consumer relations. In this way, the use of an established corporate reputation by a company can prevent its economic decline and enable it to survive crises, maintaining good results and performance (Stravinskienė; Matulevičienė; Hopenienė, 2021).

Corporate reputation is an issue related to the creation, by the organization, of feelings of respect and trust in internal and external stakeholders, based on the use of resources transparently and responsibly, considering the public interest in all activities. Thus, the establishment of a corporate reputation is not an issue that can be achieved in the short term but is built over time (Das; Mukhopadhyay; Suar, 2023). For an institution to be considered respected by society, it must use its resources effectively, stably, and systematically, in addition to providing benefits to the public and not allowing inequality and injustice. In an institution with a corporate reputation, it is assumed that there is no discrimination among employees and that all of them are managed fairly, with social inclusion being prioritized (Akıllı, 2023).

That said, reputation is the return that stakeholders give to companies based on the credibility they convey. Although reputation takes time to build, it is fragile and can easily be damaged by events that affect the perception of stakeholders (Hoelz; Bataglia, 2019). Therefore, corporate reputation is something that organizations must try to control to convey positive impressions to their stakeholders (Rudin and Lee 2021).

Given the fragility of corporate reputation, its management has become increasingly important for corporations, as reputation creates a competitive advantage by increasing the value of products and services, in addition to generating credibility (Bilginer; Özer, 2023). In this way, this management must consider that reputation reflects the aggregated view of the multidimensional and individual assessments of stakeholders about a company (Baumgartner; Ernst; Fischer, 2022).

In this context, companies can build a reputation through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Companies may consider the adoption of CSR strategies as crucial to improving corporate image and profitability, including greater customer acceptance of companies that enthusiastically promote CSR actions (Chen *et al.*, 2021).

Furthermore, the inclusion of minority groups can also be a strategy to strengthen corporate reputation, given that Navarro-García; Ramón-Llorens, and García-Meca (2022) claim that the presence of women in management positions improves corporate reputation because stakeholders appreciate the general attributes associated with women. In this sense, Alves and d'Angelo (2023) show that CSR actions related to hiring vulnerable and stigmatized groups, such as prisoners, can also promote the reputation of organizations.

Due to its importance for companies, corporate reputation has sparked interest among scholars around the world to understand its various facets, which can make an organization outperform its competitors (Arora; Sagar; Singh, 2021). Furthermore, this interest occurred within the scope of several disciplines, which meant that studies of this abstract construct were carried out from multiple perspectives and with different approaches (Baruah; Panda, 2020).

2.2 BIBLIOMETRICS, META-ANALYSIS, AND SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

The most popular methods of systematization of scientific literature (LSM), as Chueke; Amatucci (2022), are bibliometrics, quantitative meta-analysis, and systematic literature review (SLR). The use of such tools provides an overview of the state of the art of knowledge on a given topic and allows the researcher to compile the relevant bibliography to support the theoretical discussion (Pessin; Yamane; Siman, 2022).

Regarding bibliometric research, it provides important findings that can point to research directions based on the summary of information on scientific production, including performance analyses and bibliometric mappings (Romanelli *et al.*, 2021; Rousseau; Rousseau, 2021). However, there is a discussion about the contribution of bibliometrics to the advancement of theory; an opportunity in which criticism suggests that these studies should go beyond descriptive lists of citations and present findings that are not limited to graphs (Mukherjee *et al.*, 2022).

There is also a line of thought that advocates the construction of bibliometric studies that are guided by a standard that implies greater rigor for such research, such as Romanelli *et al.* (2021). These researchers indicate that the four main challenges in bibliometric research consist of: identifying articles relevant to the topic, selecting search terms, formulating a research strategy, and presenting a bibliometric mapping. That said, Romanelli *et al.* (2021) also highlight that bibliometric research must identify aspects of scientific collaboration.

In turn, Ozturk, Kocaman e Kanbach (2024) developed a framework for bibliometric studies to contribute to literature. The authors present four stages of research, the first of which consists of defining the research objective, the second is collecting data from relevant literature, the third is analyzing and visualizing the data, and the last is interpreting the findings and results. Frame 1 details the framework for bibliometric studies.

Frame 1- Framework by Ozturk, Kocaman and Kanbach (2024) for bibliometric studies

| Research stages | Information to be highlighted |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1 Defining objectives | 1.1 Research objective |
| | 1.2 Expected research results |
| | 1.3 Research questions aligned with the objective |
| | 1.4 Scope and focus of research |
| 2 Data collection | 2.1 Database selection |
| | 2.2 Identifying search terms |
| | 2.3 Exclusion and inclusion criteria |
| | 2.4 File format identification |
| 3 Data analysis | 3.1 Identification of analysis techniques |
| | 3.2 Determining the software to analyze the data |
| | 3.3 Determining the software to visualize the data |
| | 3.4 Data analysis and results visualization |
| 4 Results | 4.1 The research questions have been answered |
| | 4.2 Contributing a new insight to literature |
| | 4.3 Inference about literature |
| | 4.4 Suggestions for future research |

Source: Ozturk, Kocaman and Kanbach (2024).

Frame 1 shows that in the first stage of bibliometric research, it is recommended to explain the research objectives, expected results, research questions arising from the objective and the scope of the research. In the data collection stage, it is recommended to present the database, search terms, inclusion and exclusion criteria for the sample, and file formats to the reader. In data analysis, the framework indicates that the following should be highlighted: analysis techniques, which can be exemplified by citation and co-citation analysis; software used to analyze and visualize the data; and the data analysis itself. Finally, in the results, the research should: present whether the research questions were met, contribute with a new insight to the literature, present inferences and point out suggestions for future research.

When it comes to meta-analysis, it has been widely accepted as a useful tool for aggregating effect sizes obtained in primary, experimental, correlational or prospective studies (Dormann; Guthrie; Cortina, 2020). It is a quantitative method used to combine the results of several studies, and can be developed in several ways; one of them would be the ‘pairwise meta-analysis’, which compares two treatments in several studies; while a ‘network meta-analysis’ involves the simultaneous synthesis of several studies to create pairwise comparisons of more than two treatments (Hu *et al.*, 2020).

Meta-analysis is important for quantitatively synthesizing the results of a set of research studies, as its methods allow the calculation of an overall average effect or relationship between several studies (Ruppar, 2020)). Although, Feeley (2020) states that an important issue is the quality of primary studies, and it is recommended that in studies that apply meta-analysis, a detailed section on the quality of primary studies and their inclusion in the research be presented.

A systematic literature review (SLR) seeks to find research gaps to suggest avenues for investigation; thus, SLR can summarize all existing information in an impartial manner, as well as critically evaluate and integrate the results of individual studies to build a substantial body of knowledge (Cortellini; Panetta, 2021; Kumar; Sharma, 2020). Although SRL condenses knowledge in the area and points out directions for future research, it is subject to criticism, especially because some articles do not report the details of the research process, which does not do justice to the intention of creating a map of research in the field and prevents replications (Sauer; Seuring, 2023). Therefore, Siddaway, Wood and Hedges (2019) state that qualitative SLR studies can be carried out using a replicable, rigorous and transparent methodology. In this sense, the authors presented information that should be presented in each part of these studies, as can be seen in Frame 2.

Frame 2: Information that should be presented in SLR studies according to Siddaway, Wood and Hedges (2019)

| Section | Information relevant to the sections | Number of articles that highlighted information |
|----------------|--|---|
| 1 Introduction | 1.1 Describe a new or existing theoretical conceptualization, or present a summary of it | 6 |
| 2 Methodology | 2.1 How and when you searched specific databases | 1 |
| | 2.2 Publication Years | 6 |
| | 2.3 Search terms | 6 |
| | 2.4 Exclusion or inclusion criteria | 6 |
| | 2.5 Measures taken to avoid bias and errors in study selection | 6 |
| | 2.6 Diagram | 1 |
| 3 Results | 3.1 Summary | 2 |
| | 3.2 Understanding the phenomenon | 6 |

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 3.3 Conclusion of studies | 0 |
| 3.4 Counterexamples | 0 |

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024), based on Siddaway, Wood and Hedges (2019).

Siddaway, Wood and Hedges (2019) indicate that, in the introduction, the topic should be detailed based on the presentation of theoretical concepts, while in the methodology the research should be explained in detail, including how, when, in which databases the research was carried out, which years of publication, which search terms were used, which inclusion and exclusion criteria were adopted and for which theoretical and/or empirical reasons. In the results, the researchers argue that one should not just summarize the paragraphs but present a new and improved conception of the phenomena.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 TYPOLOGIES

This research is classified as quantitative, in terms of its approach. This typology focuses on data control, using objective instruments and techniques that enable analysis supported by mathematical instruments (Mineiro; A. Alves Da Silva; Gracia Ferreira, 2022). This approach is justified because quantifiable data from the sample is collected and subjected to descriptive statistics so that the research findings can be obtained.

Regarding the purpose (objective), this is a descriptive work. According to Siedlecki (2020), descriptive research is one of the types of non-experimental designs, aligned with the quantitative approach, in such a way that the objective is to describe individuals, events, or conditions, without directly manipulating the object but describing a sample or variables individually or comparatively. The application of description in this paper is applicable due to the presentation of the characteristics of the scientific production under analysis, resorting to the use of textual description, descriptive statistics, tables, and graphs.

Regarding the analysis tool, this study is inspired by bibliometrics. Based on the collection of scientific articles, bibliometrics maps academic production, analyzes the characteristics of these publications, and even reveals nuances of the evolution of knowledge (Chueke; Amatucci, 2022; Donthu *et al.*, 2021; Pessin; Yamane; Siman, 2022). The next subsection will present the sample and selection criteria for the selected articles, and the following subsection will detail the collection and how the bibliometric analysis was developed.

3.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The research analyzes studies that applied methods of systematizing scientific literature (LSM) (Chueke; Amatucci, 2022). In this sense, we sought to find publications with this characterization that deal with corporate reputation in the Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases. The choice of WoS was due to the advantages it provides: being one of the oldest, most widely used, and most reliable databases, which indexes more than 34,000 journals and publishes research from all over the world (Birkle *et al.*, 2020; Khan *et al.*, 2022). Scopus, despite being newer, created in 2004 by Elsevier, has solidified itself as a multidisciplinary, comprehensive and reliable database, also enabling coverage of scientific articles produced in several countries (Pranckutė, 2021).

Given this, the databases were accessed, and a search was carried out for articles on corporate reputation that involved LSM. The search began in Scopus when it was carried out using the following string: (*TITLE-ABS-KEY ("corporate reputation") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (bibliometric* OR systematic* OR "meta-analysis")*). While in WoS with this string: *ALL= ("corporate reputation") AND (ALL=(bibliometric*) OR ALL=(systematic*) OR ALL=("meta-analysis"))*. The use of the term 'corporate reputation', in both bases, is justified because it is a consecrated term, while at the same time incorporating the collective vision of all stakeholders (Sofian; Abdullah; Mohd-Sabrun, 2023).

The consultation, in both databases, was carried out on March 30, 2024, at 04:42, Pacific Standard Time (PST). This procedure identified that the population includes the productions that systematize the literature on corporate reputation in Scopus and WoS, between 2015 and 2014, totaling 63 and 71 works, respectively. From this universe, repeated articles were removed, those that were not on the topic of corporate reputation and those that were on the topic, but did not employ a production scan (i.e., they were not bibliometric, SLR, or meta-analysis). Resulting in a 'purposeful' non-probabilistic sample (Rahman, 2023) of 10 research studies from Scopus and 5 from WoS. In other words, the corpus of this work is made up of 15 articles.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

After determining the sample, the materials were exported in .csv (in Scopus) and .bib (in WoS). At the time of export, the option to generate the final file with the complete data of the articles was selected in the checkbox. In addition, the complete articles were also downloaded for the final analysis.

Once the data has been collected, the materials can be analyzed. First, the RStudio software was accessed and the command to activate the tidyverse and bibliometrix packages was entered. There are several software packages for developing bibliometric studies. The ones indicated in this research were chosen because they are specifically designed for this type of research, are among the best-known applications, are open source, widely used in other research, and can be integrated with other packages in the R language (Aria; Cuccurullo, 2017; Büyükkidik, 2022; Khan *et al.*, 2022).

Next, the .csv and .bib files are imported into RStudio. This allows each file to be converted into a database that can be read in the software, which allows them to be merged into a single database and subsequently exported to a file in .rds format, which is required for importing into the biblioshiny solution.

Once these steps of processing the raw data have been completed, it is then possible to develop the analyses. The first of these is to use the biblioAnalysis function to calculate the bibliometric metrics and the summary function to display the main results of the previous function; for more details, it is recommended to consult the official documentation at https://www.bibliometrix.org/vignettes/Introduction_to_bibliometrix.html. The biblioshiny function is also used, which has an interactive window to generate visual analyses. At this point, the bibliometric aspects would already be presented in numerical terms, with the summary function, and visually with graphs and tables, with biblioshiny; such aspects include the authorship profile, evolution of annual production, main journals, most productive countries, works that received the most citations, among others.

After that, we move on to analyzing the summary of each article. Garcia, Gattaz and Gattaz (2019) refer to elements expected in the title, abstract, and keywords of articles that contribute to the relevance of the publication. Adapting to the considerations of Garcia, Gattaz e Gattaz (2019) regarding the expected structure of a summary, at this stage, the authors read the summaries to identify the number of evidence, in this segment of their texts, the sample collected, which time horizon they reached, whether the research object is corporate reputation associated with some other, whether the objective is explicitly mentioned and whether it is indicated which information was analyzed from the sample.

Next, the LSM of the research was identified by reading the title, abstract, and when necessary, the methodology. At this point, it is important to emphasize that the authors of this article did not interpret which typology would most assertively describe each sampled article; the effort was focused on identifying how the texts themselves are classified. In due course, the number of publications per year for each LSM was identified, the number of citations per LSM was determined, the average impact factor of the journals that published the publications and the average number of citations obtained were verified.

Finally, we proceed with the textual analysis of the full articles to identify the suitability of these articles to the LSM methodological approaches. Thus, we seek to identify whether the articles

that propose to follow a quantitative approach follow the adapted stages of the LSM framework Ozturk, Kocaman and Kanbach (2024), while the articles that proposed a qualitative approach fit the adapted framework of Siddaway, Wood and Hedges (2019). At this stage of data analysis, articles that used semi-systematic review and exploratory review were not evaluated, since these differ from the traditional systematization presented by Chueke and Amatucci (2022).

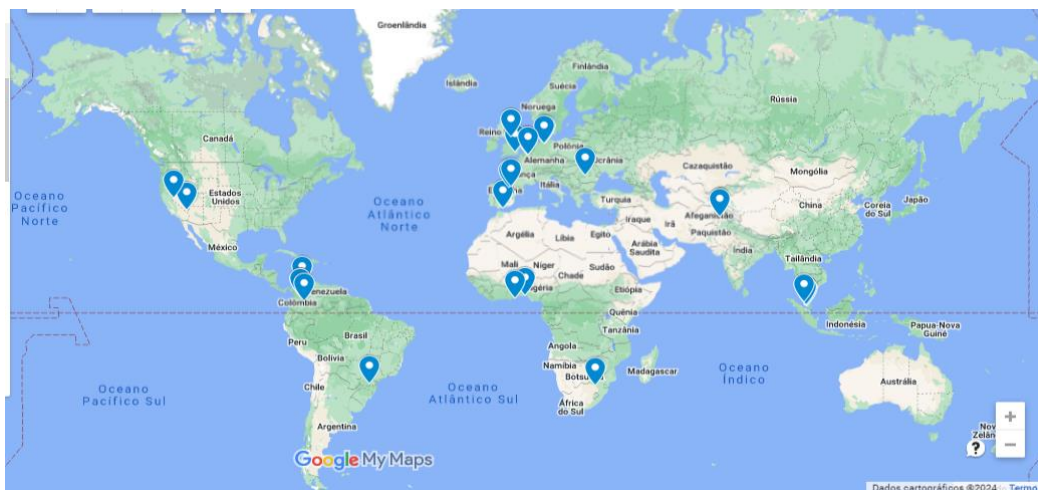
4 RESULTS

4.1 PROFILE OF PUBLICATIONS THAT SYSTEMATIZE THE LITERATURE ON CORPORATE REPUTATION

Regarding the authorship profile, publications occur in partnerships. On average, the number of authors per article is three. Four studies (27% of the total sample) were produced in pairs, as well as seven that were in trios (47%), two were in quartets (13%) and another two that were in quintets (13%). There were no individual publications. It was also found that international collaboration was 6.67%; that is, in general, the partnerships are domestic, with authors from the same country.

This set of articles was written by 45 researchers. Two of these authors participated in two articles, thus, they are the most prolific authors in the sample: Juan Velez-Ocampo and Maria Alejandra Gonzalez-Perez. The 45 authors are affiliated with institutions from 13 countries, representing almost all continents, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - World map showing the authors' affiliation institutions



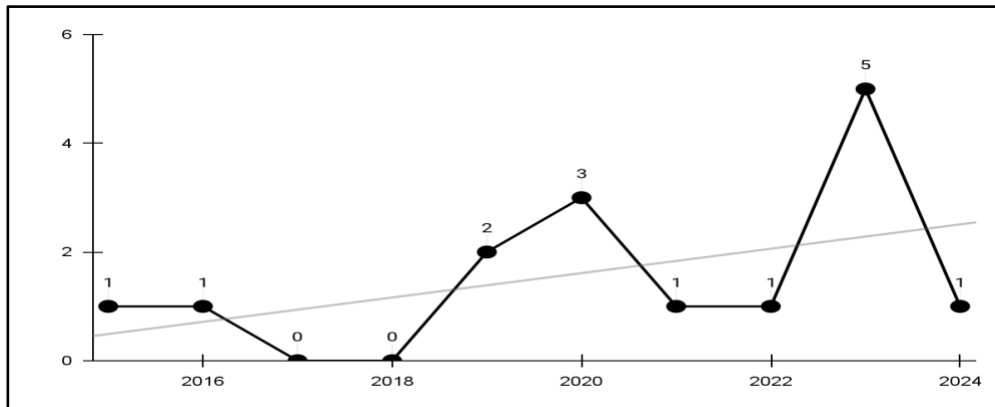
Source: Prepared by the authors (2024) on Google My Maps.

Publications by authors from the African continent are linked to three institutions: Covenant University (Nigeria), University of Ghana (Ghana), and University of Johannesburg (South Africa). The American continent was represented by authors from seven institutions: Ceipa Business School (Colombia), Nevada System of Higher Education (United States of America), Universidad de Antioquia (Colombia), Universidad EAFIT (Colombia), Universidade de Los Andes (Colombia), Universidade Estadual do Centro-Oeste (Brazil) e University of Nevada Reno (United States of America).

As for Asia, seven institutions emerged: Institute of Management Science (Pakistan), International Islamic University (Pakistan), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (Malaysia), Universiti Malaya (Malaysia), Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Malaysia), Universiti Teknologi MARA (Malaysia) and Universiti Teknologi Petronas (Malaysia). Finally, Europe was represented by ten institutions: Ghent University (Belgium), Helmut Schmidt University (Germany), Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu (Romania), Malaga University (Spain), Middlesex University Business School (United Kingdom), Newcastle University (United Kingdom), Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (Spain), University of Hamburg (Germany), University of Navarra (Spain) and Vlerick Business School (Belgium). No institution represented Oceania.

Although the articles were produced in all these affiliated institutions, it is noticeable that there is some dispersal of research among the different countries, as shown in Figure 1. The fact that production is being carried out in different locations contributes to scientific advancement by bringing experiences beyond the traditional northern centers: the United States and Europe (Torres; Albrez-Gutierrez, 2022). As an example of such contributions, the sample includes works by Zanedin *et al.* (2023) in the case of a bibliometric study of Brazilian production on corporate reputation and the meta-analysis of Adelua, Oyedepo and Odiboh (2021) on Twitter usage during the Covid-19 pandemic and corporate reputation in Nigeria. The annual output was then checked, see Chart 1.

Chart 1: Annual distribution of sample papers

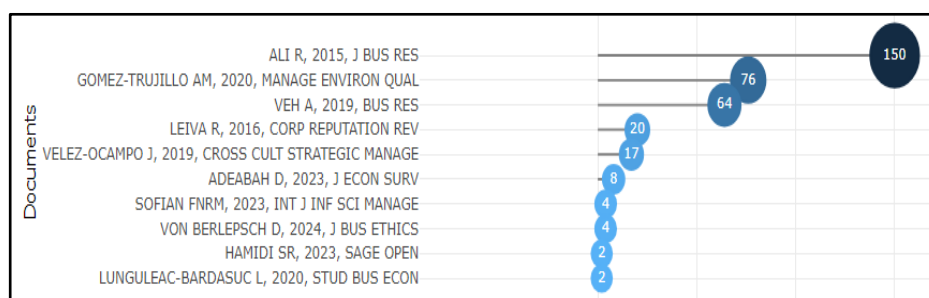


Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

The time series begins in 2015, with the publication of a study captured during the collection of this research. In 2016, another article was published. The following years (2017 and 2018) have no publications. Then there is a period of growth (2019, with two articles, and 2020, with three), followed by stagnation and a decline (2021 and 2022, with one publication in each year). The year 2023 records the peak of production, with 5 articles. By the first four months of 2024, there had already been one article published.

In general, it is noted that there is an alternation between periods of decline in production, followed by a recovery in interest in research that analyzes previous literature on corporate reputation. It is important to consider that this period coincided with the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which closed universities and research centers, resulting in a reduction in the volume of publications, even though academia did not completely stop scientific production (Onyema *et al.*, 2020; Sohrabi *et al.*, 2021). It is also worth checking the research propagation capacity via the volume of citations it received, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 - Top 10 most cited works in the sample



Source: Prepared by the authors (2024) on Biblioshiny.

On average, the papers received 23 citations. The most cited was the meta-analysis of Ali *et al.* (2015), with 150 citations. While, among the studies that received some citation, the least cited

were Adelua, Oyedepo and Odiboh (2021) and the semi-systematic review of Ayaz and Sigali (2022), both with one citation. Three papers received no citations. Furthermore, Table 1 shows the five countries of affiliation of the corresponding author (the one who represents the article before the journal), that received the most citations.

Table 1 - Total and average citations by country of origin of the corresponding author of the article

| Ranking | Country | Total citations | Corresponding author ¹ | Citation average |
|---------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1 | United Kingdom | 150 | 1 | 150 |
| 2 | Colombia | 93 | 2 | 46.5 |
| 3 | Germany | 64 | 1 | 64 |
| 4 | South Africa | 8 | 1 | 8 |
| 5 | Malaysia | 6 | 2 | 3 |

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

Note: ⁽¹⁾ When the number of corresponding authors is equal to 1, this indicates that there was only one article in the sample where the corresponding author was from that country.

Although Table 1 indicates that countries representing four continents are on the podium of dissemination, via citations received, it is necessary to be cautious in interpreting that the reach of all of them is similar. Specifically, the distance between the three best placed in the ranking is dozens of times greater than the last two. Furthermore, of the three countries that received the most citations, two of them are European; these two stand out in the average category. Furthermore, once the profile of the publications is known, it is worth deepening the analysis to the aspect of the disclosure of useful information to the reader in the summary of the articles, visible in the next subsection.

4.2 HIGHLIGHTING INFORMATION IN THE STUDY SUMMARY

Further analysis of the content of the abstracts of the papers revealed that eight studies (53.33%) explicitly stated their objective in the abstract. Regarding the object of analysis, all articles dealt with some aspects of corporate reputation, a clear result given the filters indicated in the methodology. However, it was found that most of the studies (13 or 86.67%) investigated the association with other themes: performance (two studies), media (two studies), ethics, internationalization, sustainability, industry 4.0, bank risk and supply chains (all the latter with one study). Given the journals' expectation for originality, this diversity of themes was already expected. In addition, the theme of corporate reputation itself naturally touches on other themes, given the complexity of what influences and can be influenced by it (Velez-Ocampo; Gonzalez-Perez, 2019; Von Berlepsch; Lemke; Gorton, 2024).

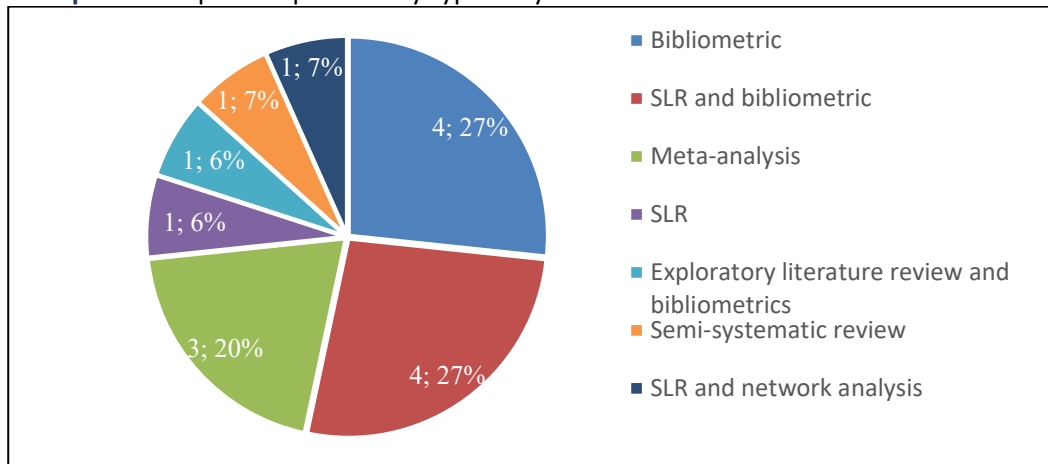
Regarding methodological aspects, nine articles (60%) already indicate the sample; this number drops to six (40%) when it is desired to know which time horizon they refer to. Regarding the specification of what would be analyzed from the collected data, it was noted that nine (60%) of the studies highlighted this information in the abstract, that is, the others (40%) indicate the LSM they performed, but do not explicitly state which aspects of the sample would be analyzed.

Furthermore, 40% were published in the last five years, except for one (published in 2019). It was also noted that, among them, only one of them received more than 10 citations. By not providing explicit information in the abstract, forcing the reader to read other sections or the full article, there is less chance of the study being read, and consequently, less potential for being cited; given that the abstract is among the elements that determine the interest in continuing reading (Garcia; Gattaz; Gattaz, 2019).

4.3 TYPES OF SYSTEMATIZATIONS USED IN STUDIES

As indicated in the methodology section, the 15 articles analyzed in this research performed some LSM, such as bibliometrics, SLR, meta-analysis or some previous stage of them, or even a combination of them. Graph 2 indicates that there is a greater presence of bibliometric studies in the sample (4 articles) or that employed SLR combined with bibliometrics (4 articles), with meta-analysis research also deserving mention (3 works); together, these possibilities represent approximately 70% of the entire sample.

Graph 2 - Sample composition by type of systematization



Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

In this sense, the predominant use is of these more traditional forms of analysis of scientific production. It is important to highlight those alternative possibilities, such as semi-systematic review, have found space for publication. Evidently, this choice of researchers can be understood considering the temporal aspect, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 - Type of systematization over time

| Year | Biblio-metric | SLR and bibliometric | Meta-analysis | SLR | Exploratory literature review and bibliometrics | Semi-systematic review | SLR and network analysis | Total |
|-------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|-----|---|------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| 2015 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| 2016 | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| 2017 | | | | | | | | 0 |
| 2018 | | | | | | | | 0 |
| 2019 | | 2 | | | | | | 2 |
| 2020 | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | | 3 |
| 2021 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| 2022 | | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| 2023 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | 1 | 5 |
| 2024 | | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Total | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 15 |

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

From Table 2, it is possible to see that the first study is a meta-analysis, the only article captured in the sample, referring to the year 2015. In 2016, there is the publication of bibliometric research. After a two-year hiatus, in 2019 there are two new publications, both guided using SLR

combined with bibliometrics. In 2020 there is bibliometric research, an SLR and there is also the use of hybrid methodology, this time an exploratory literature review with bibliometrics.

Six years after the article that inaugurated this sample series, a new meta-analysis was published in 2021. In 2022, a study using a semi-systematic review was published. In 2023, there was a diversity of research, with two bibliometric studies, an SLR with bibliometrics, a new meta-analysis, and an SLR with network analysis. Finally, in 2024, there was an SLR with bibliometrics. This methodological diversity points to the researchers' efforts to investigate the progress of research on corporate reputation from different analytical perspectives, which contributes to their contributions. Given this, it is possible to investigate the impact of these choices, especially regarding the citations received by these studies by the scientific community, as shown in Table 3.

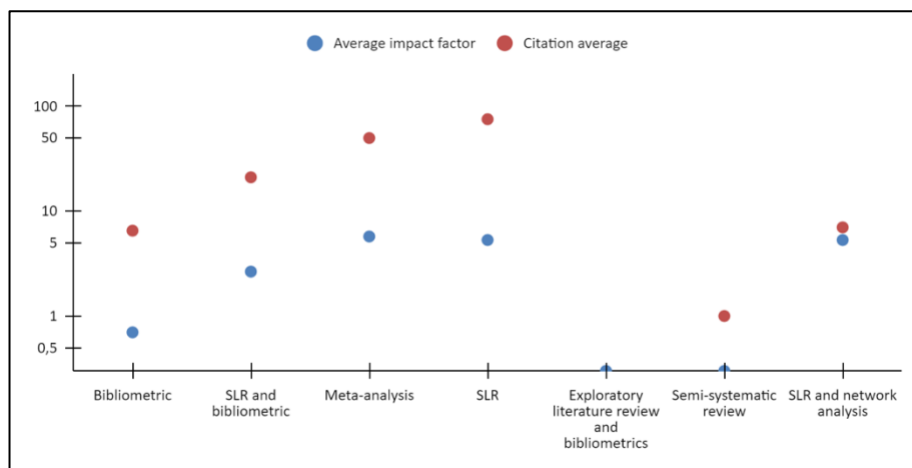
Table 3 - Citations by type of systematization

| Type of study | Total citations | Citation average | Total articles |
|---|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Bibliometric | 26 | 7 | 4 |
| SLR and bibliometric | 87 | 22 | 4 |
| Meta-analysis | 151 | 50 | 3 |
| SLR | 76 | 76 | 1 |
| Exploratory literature review and bibliometrics | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Semi-systematic review | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| SLR and network analysis | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Total | 349 | 23 | 15 |

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

Conventional LSMs are those that obtain the highest volume of citations. This finding is consistent both when considering the total sum and the average number of articles of the same typology. In absolute terms, the three meta-analyses presented the highest number of citations and the second highest in average terms; a finding in line with previous literature indicating that meta-analyses have greater citation potential than other research designs (Carpenter; Cone; Sarli, 2014). It is possible to advance in the citation analysis to consider a characteristic of the journal itself, that is, the impact factor, see Graph 3.

Graph 3 - Average impact factor and citations by type of systematization



Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

Corroborating the considerations presented so far, publishing an article in a period of greater reach (approximated by the impact factor) allows the study to be more likely to be cited. This is an advantageous situation for works that use already established LSM, such as those on the left side of Graph 3, which find space to be published in such journals.

In this sense, reviews that call themselves non-systematic are less used to support research, given that they differ from the dominant standard of systematizations (such as SLR and meta-analysis). Furthermore, these studies are recent in the sample and, according to Antunes (2015), It takes between two and six years after publication for citations to peak. Furthermore, since they are not aligned with the dominant pattern, they are less likely to be cited in the present, and may even become so in the future, as suggested by the 'sleeping beauty effect' (Carpenter; Cone; Sarli, 2014).

4.4 TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF ADEQUACY TO THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

As indicated in the methodology, the sample of this research has 15 articles that performed some LSM. Of these, 12 articles proposed to use a quantitative approach to LSM, that is, they developed bibliometrics or meta-analysis, according to the classification of Chueke and Amatucci (2022). Thus, the articles' compliance with this approach was analyzed based on an adaptation of the framework of Ozturk, Kocaman and Kanbach (2024), as shown in Table 4.

Table 4 - Adequacy to the framework Ozturk, Kocaman and Kanbach (2024)

| Research stages | Information to be highlighted | Number of articles that highlighted the information |
|-----------------|---|---|
| 1 Introduction | 1.1 Research objective | 7 |
| | 1.2 Expected research results | 11 |
| | 1.3 Research questions aligned with the objective | 4 |
| | 1.4 Scope and focus of research | 11 |
| 2 Collect | 2.1 Database selection | 12 |
| | 2.2 Identifying search terms | 10 |
| | 2.3 Exclusion and inclusion criteria | 9 |
| | 2.4 Identified the format of the files | 2 |
| 3 Data analysis | 3.1 Identification of analysis techniques | 10 |
| | 3.2 Determined the software to analyze the data | 6 |
| | 3.3 Determined the software to visualize the data | 6 |
| | 3.4 Analyzed the data and visualized the results | 12 |
| 4 Resultados | 4.1 The research questions have been answered | 4 |
| | 4.2 The study contributed a new insight to the literature | 8 |
| | 4.3 Has any inference been made about the literature? | 9 |
| | 4.4 There were suggestions for future research | 9 |

Source - Prepared by the authors (2024), based on Ozturk, Kocaman and Kanbach (2024).

Table 4 indicates that in the research objective definition stage, seven articles explicitly presented the research objective to the reader, while eleven already highlighted the expected results at the beginning of the article. However, only four papers presented research questions aligned with the general objective and eleven articles highlighted the scope of the research, that is, they explicitly stated whether the focus of the article was to perform a scientific mapping, or a network analysis, among others. It is worth noting that the low adherence of these articles, in terms of the evidence of the research question, makes it difficult for the reader to assess the adequacy of the article's methodology, since the research investigation is a result of this issue (Öztürk; Kocaman; Kanbach, 2024).

Regarding data collection in relevant literature, all specified the database used in the research, ten identified the search term used in the database, nine informed the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the articles in the sample and only two identified the format of the files. Chueke and Amatucci (2022) highlight that LSMs differ from non-systematic reviews in that they seek to enable the replicability of the study. In this sense, it was noted that the main obstacle to the replicability of quantitative systematization studies on corporate reputation, when it comes to data collection stages, is the low identification of the file format for readers.

In the data analysis, all articles presented the research data, while ten of them indicated the specific techniques used. Furthermore, half of the articles reported the software used to present and visualize the data. This finding diverges from previous literature, as Ozturk, Kocaman and Kanbach (2024) researchers typically do not have the skills to manually calculate collaboration similarity matrices between research studies or draw graphs manually, so they are expected to use software and should therefore be informed about this.

Regarding the interpretation of the results, the four articles that presented the research questions answered them, while eight articles presented insights for the literature, and nine made inferences and suggestions for future research. These findings indicate that some of the articles seek to present theoretical contributions for the advancement of research on corporate reputation, such as Romanelli *et al.* (2021) and Mukhejee *et al.* (2022) argue that it should be done. Subsequently, the textual analysis of the qualitative articles follows, using an adaptation of the framework of Siddaway, Wood and Hedges (2019), see Table 5.

Table 5 - Adequacy to the framework Siddaway, Wood and Hedges (2019)

| Section | Information relevant to the sections | Number of articles that highlighted information |
|----------------|--|---|
| 1 Introduction | 1.1 Describe a new or existing theoretical conceptualization, or present a summary of it | 6 |
| 2 Methodology | 2.1 How and when you searched specific databases | 1 |
| | 2.2 Publication Years | 6 |
| | 2.3 Search terms | 6 |
| | 2.4 Exclusion or inclusion criteria | 6 |
| | 2.5 Measures taken to avoid bias and errors in study selection | 6 |
| | 2.6 Diagram | 1 |
| 3 Results | 3.1 Summary | 2 |
| | 3.2 Understanding the phenomenon | 6 |
| | 3.3 Conclusion of studies | 0 |
| | 3.4 Counterexamples | 0 |

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024), based on Siddaway, Wood and Hedges (2019).

It was identified that six articles in the sample were guided by the qualitative approach. This number added to the 12 from the previous analysis exceeds the sample of 15 articles because 4 articles used mixed methods, that is, they are qualitative-quantitative. Thus, they appeared in Table 4 and Table 5 and were analyzed by the two frameworks.

From this, we move on to the analysis of Table 5, where it is possible to see that all articles presented a new or existing theoretical conceptualization or presented a summary of it in the introduction of the article. This suggests that these articles included an explanation of the main terms, definitions, and concepts essential for understanding the information in the review (Siddaway; Wood; Hedges, 2019).

In the methodological section, it is identified that all articles reported the years of publication that make up the time horizon of the collection, as well as the search terms, the inclusion and exclusion criteria in the sample, and the measures taken to avoid biases and errors in the selection of studies. Regarding the replication problem pointed out by Sauer and Sering (2023), It is noted that information on how and when the database research was carried out was evidenced by only one article, a result that implies difficulty in replicating the research. In addition, it is noted that only one article used diagrams to detail the methodology, which could improve the readability of the section for readers (Siddaway; Wood; Hedges, 2019).

Regarding the results, the findings showed that only two articles summarized the academic production, which makes it difficult to understand the evolution of the topic of corporate reputation (Siddaway; Wood; Hedges, 2019). None of the studies presented the main conclusions found in research on corporate reputation, nor did they discuss counterexamples, that is, evidence that goes against the theoretical model analyzed. However, all the qualitative articles sought to demonstrate some understanding or comprehension of corporate reputation, to contribute theoretically to the topic.

5 CONCLUSION

Corporate reputation is one of the key concepts in management, both because it permeates several other aspects of business and because it is one of the sources of legitimacy for companies, contributing to the organization's sustainability. In this broad context, several studies have been developed on the topic of reputation, which naturally began to demand some kind of systematization of all this literature.

Given the development of all this literature, this research proposed to analyze the characteristics of the scientific production that systematizes the literature on corporate reputation. This objective was achieved, since a bibliometric-inspired study was developed, using articles published in journals published in the last 10 years (2015 to 2024), which carried out some LSM. Thus, 15 works available in Scopus and WoS that met these criteria were analyzed.

The first finding corresponds to the characteristics of this sample. Thus, it was identified that the articles were written in partnership and were produced on almost all continents. However, there is still little international partnership between the authors and there is a fragmentation of authorship (only two authors have more than one article in the sample). In addition, it was also noted that there is an intercalation between hiatuses and moments of peak annual production; and that three works concentrate almost all the volume of citations in the sample (two of them European and one South American).

These findings are in line with the first specific objective, which aimed to analyze the profile of these publications. By knowing the profile of the publications already published, other researchers receive a valuable arsenal to define strategies based on patterns of previous publications, a contribution of this research for academics who wish to undertake new systematizations within the theme.

Likewise, the second specific objective, which was to analyze the evidence in the abstract, was also met. In this item, it was found that the abstracts tend to omit the disclosure of important information for the reader to know what the research is about and the development of the analyses thereof. Specifically, a portion of the articles indicate the sample size in the abstract and an even smaller fraction indicates the time horizon collected. Just over half of the papers explicitly state the

research objective in the abstract and there is still an opportunity for evidence regarding which aspects were effectively analyzed in the samples that the investigations collected.

As recommended in the literature (Garcia; Gattaz; Gattaz, 2019), it was found that works that provide less information are also cited less. Thus, one contribution of these findings is to support greater dissemination of information in the abstract, maintaining conciseness but without losing informativeness.

Regarding the third specific objective, the types of systematizations used in the studies were analyzed, which was the goal. It was found that most of the studies used bibliometrics and a combination of this with SLR. It was also noted that recently, space has been emerging for the dissemination of research involving alternative versions of the three classic systematizations, albeit timidly, but the fact that a new possibility of analyzing previous production is emerging may help researchers who are not aligned with the dominant positivist standard of classic systematizations to also find space for publication. However, it is worth considering that the predominance of the volume of citations still prevails over the classic LSM, especially meta-analysis, as expected from the previous literature (Carpenter; Cone; Sarli, 2014).

Deciphering these findings provides both an opportunity for researchers to find a basis for their methodological choices and for academia, in general, to understand how research is being developed. This can also help teaching and research institutions to train new researchers, using these cases as study examples.

Finally, the fourth specific objective was achieved through a textual analysis of the adequacy to the methodological approach of the theoretical frameworks adapted from Ozturk, Kocaman and Kanbach (2024), and Siddaway, Wood and Hedges (2019). It was observed that few articles with a quantitative approach explicitly addressed the research questions that should be aligned with the general objective, which makes it difficult to understand the research investigation, and most studies do not provide information on the format of the files used in the research. In addition, the research indicated theoretical contributions to the topic of corporate reputation. As for the articles with a qualitative approach, it was noted that a minority of them reported, in the methodology, how and when the database was researched, which hinders the systematization of these investigations. Finally, although the studies that applied SLR presented theoretical contributions to the topic, they did not present an understanding of the evolution of the topic of corporate reputation.

These findings contribute to the understanding of the methodological rigor of literature systematization studies so that it can be inferred that these studies can present a more detailed methodological description to contribute to the systematization of bibliographic studies. In addition, these studies can also contribute to the accumulation of knowledge about corporate reputation by highlighting the evolution of academic discussion.

This research has limitations, including the time frame that may exclude classic studies on the subject, and even the selection of the English language in the collection, which may reduce the scope of the search for other research. However, these limitations can be seen as gaps that will allow the development of future studies, thus contributing to the advancement of knowledge and, accountability to society regarding how scientific research is being developed, especially on a topic – corporate reputation – that directly affects the opinion of the community.

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