THE NORMATIVE IMPERATIVE

SOCIOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES OF STRATEGIC AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

EVANDRO OLIVEIRA
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Contents

INTRODUCTION

THE NORMATIVE IMPERATIVE: SOCIOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES OF STRATEGIC AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Evandro Oliveira and Gisela Gonçalves
/ Labcom, Beira Interior University (Portugal)

For far too long, the focus of applied communication has been in proving value and getting a place at the manager's table. We followed blind the growth imperative, and an economic model centred on the financial efficiency. In the years, some academics were looking for identifying added value of communication to the management game from a hegemonic perspective. Nevertheless, it was also a position of never being able to be a game changer, but rather a follower. It even charged also public sector with efficiency from a management cantered perspective.

We see then a change in the public sphere and in the social dynamics. Society intensified the game of legitimation of organizations with hashtags movements and global awareness. CSR, sustainability, diversity, equity, inclusion are now well widespread buzzwords in the corporate realm. Organisations feel the normative imperative, taking care of societal issues and even play a role in political discussions, as seen in corporate social advocacy and CEO activism. On the other side, corporate hypocrisy and soft propaganda are ongoing, and the media landscape and its watchdog role (with fake news and disinformation), seems to be diminishing.

For sure companies and even more public sector have always had a contract with society. A contract that comprises not just direct stakeholders (as employees, consumers, citizens or shareholders) but also broader publics (as the media, the nonprofit sector or the communities where the organisation operate). Of course, there are laws and regulations, the formal part of this social contract; but there are also semi-formal aspects, which are much more fluid and difficult to ascertain: the stakeholders' expectations regarding companies conduct, like following environmental or labour ideals, or the fulfilment of brand promises. Violations may result in swift actions by stakeholders, fuelled by social media boycotts, for example, but they can also go unnoticed. With excuses of endless use of rhetorical figures and a permissive attitude towards communication endeavours and brand communication, we let organisations preach their stories and narratives without hardly any accountability on their communication.

We invited the academic community to reflect upon the scope of those thoughts and to submit critical, empirical, or theoretical proposals for the interim ECREA Organizational and Strategic Communication thematic session conference that took place from 5th to 7th of July 2023 at the Autonomous University of Lisbon, in a joint organisation with LabCom – Research centre, from the University of Beira Interior.

About 50 senior and junior academics from different European and non-European countries participate in a 3-days event. The keynote address of the conference was delivered by Shannon A. Bowen, from the University of South Carolina, on the topic: "The normative imperative: Ethics". The theme of the conference was also jointly debated with invited professionals, in a round-table with the President of APCE (the Portuguese Association of Corporate Communication), a board member of the Global Alliance for PR and Communication Management and a consultant from Sair da Casca, a certified b-corp communication agency.

On the following pages, we can find 29 extended abstracts selected for presentation and discussion at the conference, after the double peer reviewing process. The 5 panels of the scientific event were organized under the following themes: (1) Activism and corporate purpose; (2) Human rights, gender and public interest; (3) Public engagement and digital communication, (4) Public communication and civic participation, and (5) Trust and sustainability narratives. Additionally, seven more papers were discussed as short presentations. Amongst others, some of the topics debated along the conference were: normative governance for organizational communication and strategic communication; impact of rhetoric, persuasion and brand narratives on society; public sector implications of normative dimensions; nonprofit and hypocrisy; impact of communication on consumers identity and well-being; B-corps as a new relationship management approach; accountability, integrated reporting and communication; greenwashing and other "image" washing; internal relationship management and well-being; corporate social advocacy and CEO activism.

Overall, these set of abstracts highlight the actuality, relevance and variety of theoretical and empirical approaches to the theme of the conference: The normative imperative – sociopolitical challenges of strategic and organizational communication[1]. We live turbulent times, at social, economic, and political level. Issues like sustainability, diversity, inclusion, activism, etc. are well widespread narratives but, we need to critically discuss their authenticity. We need to claim for more transparency and honesty in organizations strategic communication and work to understand how and why people are so influenced by their narratives. It is our role as academics and also as engaged citizens.

1. The extended abstracts are presented in this book on alphabetic order, by author surname.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

THE PR EXCELLENCE THEORY AND THE STRATEGIC PR MODEL: AEGON SANTANDER CASE STUDY

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Communication is fundamental to organizations as it creates, develops, and sustains social structures and meanings. As a dynamic and constantly changing process, communication helps create the organization and develop systems of meanings that people use to give meaning to their actions (Grandien & Johansson, 2012). The component of the communication process that this research focuses on is the sender - Aegon Santander.

The central theme of this work is the function and practice of strategic communication in the company Aegon Santander, from which derives the starting question "How to characterize the role and practice of communication at Aegon Santander, considering the Theory of Excellence and the Strategic Public Relations Model?", the overall objective is to understand how the communication function is understood and what are its practices in Aegon Santander and the specific objectives are: 1) understand how the strategic communication area is structured in the company Aegon Santander; 2) understand the benefit and effectiveness of strategic communication for Aegon Santander; and finally, 3) to gauge how the function of strategic communication is understood by the internal public at Aegon Santander.

Aegon Santander has been present in the Portuguese market since 2014 and was born from the alliance between Aegon Spain Holding BV and Santander Totta Seguros Vida (Aegon Santander, 2021). In Portugal, the Santander group, of which the insurer Aegon Santander is part, is the fifth largest insurance group, with a market share of 6.2% (Eco Seguros, January 2022). Compared to the year 2021, Aegon Santander Seguros increased its profits by 44% in the year 2022, reaching 27 million euros. In the same period, premiums increased by 31%, corresponding to about 181 million euros (Eco Seguros, March, 2022).

In December 2021, Aegon Santander had 947,604 policies, and 512,234 customers, and sales trends show that in 2021, the number of policies in the Aegon Santander portfolio increased by 1.4% compared with year-end 2020 (Aegon Santander, 2021).

Nowadays, the company's organizational chart comprises the board of directors, the secretariat, and six divisions: technology and operations division, financial division, technical and product division, risk management and internal control division, quality and compliance division, and marketing division, with a total of 83 employees.

Since founding in 2015, Aegon Santander had not invested in marketing and communication. However, in 2020 the marketing department was created to address the lack of a formal marketing and communication policy for the company, and the function was formalized in a new department, although with a more commercial slant, bringing together marketing and communication.

This work is positioned, in terms of epistemological line, in the principles of systemic theory and is based on a literature review around the Strategic Public Relations Model (de Carvalho Spínola, 2012) and the model of analysis of excellent public relations, the Theory of Excellence (Grunig, 2013), aiming to analyse the communication of Aegon Santander and thus answer the starting question and achieve the objectives.

The purpose of this paper is to be useful to the academic community, contributing to the study of the applicability of the Strategic Public Relations Model and the Theory of Excellence, and also, the possibility of being used by the organization itself as an analysis document, to support decision making and awareness, of the performance and function of the department under study.

In the bibliographic search conducted in the Google Scholar, B-on, J-stor, SciELO, and the University of Lisbon databases, through a boolean search with the keywords "communication practice", "communication function", "strategic communication", "public relations", "Theory of Excellence", "Strategic Public Relations Model" and "Aegon Santander", no academic study was found in Portugal on the function and practice of strategic communication in the company Aegon Santander. However, recent scientific articles were found on the function and practice of communication in organizations, the use of excellence theory as a theoretical framework, and communication excellence in organizations (Flores & Costa Martins, 2020; Kriyantono, 2019; Laskin, 2012; Pereira & Gonçalves, 2011; Verčič & Zerfass, 2016;) both referring to the Portuguese and international reality.

The methodologic strategy option was a case study, "in wich the researcher explores in depth the problem" (Creswell, 2003, p.15). The nature of the research approache, present in this paper, is mixed, and the method is inductive, having as research techniques direct observation of the marketing department[1], semi structured interview with the CEO of Aegon Santander, and with the coordinator of the marketing department, and a survey of the company's employees. For the analysis of the collected data, the techniques of interpretive analysis and descriptive statistics were used.

The Theory of Excellence (Grunig, 2013) and the Strategic Public Relations Model (de Carvalho Spínola, 2017) were used in this research as references and as guidance in the development of the methodological instruments. The Theory of Excellence explains the characteristics of excellent public relations and the Strategic Public Relations Model defines the positioning of the function in its strategic dimension. The elements that make up excellent public relations and the strands of strategic public relations were considered for the definition of the categories and units of analysis of direct observation, as well as for the development of the interview scripts and the questionnaire survey, and the subsequent analysis of the findings. In

1. During an internship at the company by one of the authors.

short, these models were used to evaluate the performance of the function and the practice of communication. Although the Theory of Excellence has been criticized (e.g. Cameron 1997; Cancel, Cameron, Sallot, and Mitrook, 1997; Cancel, Mitrook, and Cameron 1999; Heath 1992; Macnamara 2012; Murphy 1991), in fact it continues to be considered valid in different studies with the aim of analyzing the performance of the PR function in organizations given its normative character.

Based on direct observation, the interview with the director, and the interview with the coordinator of the marketing department, it became possible to realize that the area of communication in the company Aegon Santander is structured organically, but with strong management guidance, therefore, the function can be characterized as strategic, although the performance at the department level is predominantly of execution. It is also noted that this execution presents a strong tendency toward marketing communication and not so much toward public relations, as understood by the theories considered here.

To fulfil the first objective – to understand how the strategic communication area is structured in the company Aegon Santander, the techniques used for data collection were direct observation, semi-structured interviews with the administrator, and semi-structured interviews with the coordinator of the marketing department. Direct observation focused on the operation of the marketing department and the insurer since actions and communication planning is under the purview of this department. This is a technique used to directly observe behaviors and actions, which allows for accurate conclusions to be drawn about how the different communication plans are constituted and implemented (Bryman, 2015).

In turn, for the second objective – understanding the benefit and effectiveness of strategic communication for Aegon Santander, the data collection techniques were the direct observation of the marketing department and the organization, the semi-structured interview with the administrator, the semi-structured interview with the coordinator of the marketing department, and the survey to 80 employees of Aegon Santander.

Finally, for the third objective – to gauge how the function of strategic communication is understood by the internal public at Aegon Santander, the data collection technique is only the survey. This technique translates into an ordered series of questions to be asked, in writing, to the respondents and aims to collect information and opinions regarding the research question and objectives (Reis, 2018). With this technique, we intended to listen to the employees to assess and monitor how the communication activity is perceived.

For direct observation, the development of interview scripts and the survey, and consequent analysis, an analysis grid was used (Table 1) based on the dimensions of the Theory of Excellence and the Strategic Public Relations Model.

Table 1 – Analysis grid

Categories of analysis	**Levels of Analysis**	**Description**
Strategic dimension	Identity, publics, and values	If there is a strategic vision based on the analysis of political and economic contexts, on the systematization of the organization's history (values, mission, and vision), on the fundamental traits of the organization (identity), on studies of the company's image and reputation and the mapping of publics.
Department management	Purposes and functions of the department	If the department's management is planned and managed based on previously proposed objectives and on the values, identity, public, and image of the organization.
Department's purpose	Uniqueness and integrity	Whether the functions performed by the different members of the department are for the same purpose.
Department functions	The separation between marketing and communication	Whether the department's communications functions are separate from the marketing functions.

Hierarchy in the department	Report to the department director	Whether department members report directly to the department director and whether the director is a member of the organization's board.
Equality	Opportunities	Whether there are equal opportunities for men and women in public relations and in the organization.
Organizational culture	Participation of employees	If the organizational culture promotes actions in which employees are heard and invited to participate (participatory), or if a culture is promoted in which employees' opinions are not heard (authoritarian).
Organizational model	Bidirectional Symmetric Model and Systemic Model	If there are bidirectional symmetrical public relations (bidirectional symmetric model) – in which there are efforts for respect and mutual understanding between the organization and its public – and systemic (systemic model) – in which there is an adaptation of the organization to the surrounding environment.
Organizational structure	Characterization of the organization	Whether the organizational structure is characterized by defined rules, hierarchical communication, control, and coordination of procedures and objectives (mechanical) or whether flexibility, informality, open communication, high employee participation, and decentralized power predominate (organic).
Excellent public relations effects	Social responsability	If the company has social responsibility actions if communication reduces costs of regulation, pressure, and litigation, and job satisfaction is greater among workers.
Internal public	Understanding the communication function	Whether the understanding of communication by Aegon Santander employees is positive or negative.

Of the main findings, the perception stands out that, both for the leaders interviewed and for the workers, communication brings benefits to Aegon Santander, but there is still a way to go for communication to contribute on a larger scale to the effectiveness of the business, being necessary to plan and act in all aspects of public relations – social responsibility, institutional communication, internal communication, among others – so that there is consistent strategic communication.

Regarding how the strategic communication function is understood by the internal public at Aegon Santander, it can be said that it is perceived as crucial to the business and organizational success.

After a thorough analysis of the findings, it is possible to conclude that the area of strategic communication in the company Aegon Santander is structured organically, but is on the path to excellence in public relations, although there are factors to improve such as the separation between marketing and communication or a different designation of the department; the development of consistency in the communication function at the level of all aspects of public relations and not only on marketing communication oriented; and the strategic planning of communication in all its axes, so that communicational actions contribute more noticeably to the effectiveness of the organization.

To assume a genuine social role, companies have to face strategic communication / public relations as a normative imperative that guides their actions in society and not just in the markets. The legitimacy of its activities depends on its social acceptance and on obtaining a license to operate. An approach merely from the perspective of marketing only legitimizes its commercial and not social action. The study carried out at Aegon Santander revealed that these assumptions have not yet been internalized, firstly due to the maintenance of the designation and functions of the department (marketing and communication), as well as the expression of an awareness that communication is necessary and fundamental, but for the success of the business, that is, a mercantilist expression of communication.

Keywords: Strategic communication; Excellent public relations; Strategic public relations model; Theory of excellence; Aegon Santander

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PUBLIC RELATIONS ROLE AND MEDIA DATA STRATEGIES ISSUED BY SAUDI GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CRISIS

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Introduction

Public Relations and media communications in Saudi governmental organizations play a significant role in the fight against COVID-19. An extensive study conducted by Worldwide's Analytical Research Division revealed a change in the attitudes of the Public Relations and communications market in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during the year 2020. However, there has been a gap in the effectiveness of the strategies of using social media as a tool of public communication. The gap pertains to the most effective tools and the impacts they have on the general public. The researcher will be answering the question of "how" effective social media can be as a communication strategy. This study paper discusses the practices and roles of Public Relations and Media communications strategies issued by the Saudi governmental organizations in the Arab World during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The topic of Public Relations role and media data strategies issued by Saudi governmental organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis is an up-to-date kind of research that deals with the current global state. The research fits the World today and even Public Relations scientific in academic perspectives. The study contributes to the advancement of knowledge for Public Relations professionals and communications leaders in both governmental and non-governmental organizations, which also because this study helps rate the effectiveness of using social media as a communication tool during the era of COVID-19. In the present-day digital World, social media constitutes an effective channel of communication through which organizations can build connections with the public.

There seem to be many organizations that are essentially using social media as a one-way channel for running promotions, rather than as a two-way channel. This has made it difficult for organizations to effectively use social media, despite the potential they bear (Distaso and McCorkindale 2012). Through interviews conducted online, Distaso, McCorkindale, and Wright (2011) established that the four most common challenge faced by Public Relations professionals who were yet to adopt social media was accepting control loss and the inability to predict what the public might do or say. It is for this reason that social media provides avenues for communication between the organization and its public, as well as between the public and its organization, which translates to two-way communication in the social media sphere.

Objectives of this study

This research aims at developing a study on the uses of social media by the Public Relations industry in Saudi governmental organizations. The study investigates the extent to which social media has changed in terms of dealing with information in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The study checks the usage of social media and takes Twitter as an example of social media platform to help reach the following objectives.

1. Investigate how Saudi governmental organizations are using social media, especially Twitter, to communicate with the public during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.
2. To explore Public Relations roles and tactics throughout social media by Saudi governmental organizations in the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.
3. To examine and assess Public Relations practitioners' perceptions of using social media platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis in Saudi governmental organizations.
4. To identify the effectiveness of communication strategies using social media by the Saudi governmental organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

5. To observe the effective opportunities of using social media by Saudi governmental organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

This study's scope is limited to qualitative inquiry. Clark and Creswell (2014) hold that the scope of any study expounds on the limits of any research where the specific parameters form the core business of the study. In other words, the scope is the means through which the study defines the content covered within a review. In this regard, the study primarily focuses on the Public Relations role and media data strategies issued by Saudi governmental organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic series; these two parameters are the core of this research. Anything discussed in this research revolves around refining the two variables – the Public Relations and media strategies and the Saudi governmental organizations during the pandemic. Other scopes that assisted in the formulation of the research question include the following: social media engagement, the current state of the World in the management of the coronavirus through the media, and its impact so far. Lastly, the study setting is for Saudi Arabia governmental organizations, and it is the origin where the study participants are based. The participants are government officials, Public Relations leaders at the Saudi Ministry of Health as an example of Saudi governmental organizations, and Twitter posts from the Saudi Ministry of Health's official social media account on the Twitter platform.

Literature review and theoretical framework

The critical analysis of the role of Public Relations to strategically curb the pandemic effects has been futile for ages. The cultural value has dramatically influenced the orientations of Public Relations (Al-Kandari & Gaither, 2011; Al-Shohaib et al., 2009). The strategy issued by the Saudi governmental organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic was significantly examined and integrated. The government has tried to cause an impact through social media communications and news release distribution efficiently. The strategies can come about when there is a change in Public Relations in the country. The expected improvement is ensuring a strategic communication flow within the public domain. Many Public Relations practitioners and professionals continue to struggle with the impact of new media, particularly the Internet. Despite the general perception that corporate websites, email response facilities to citizens, distribution of news releases, and chat rooms are now standard Public Relations practice aspects (Galloway 2005).

Public Relations and Strategic communication are imperative because it helps in passing information from one party to another. The literature review will focus on Public Relations roles, strategic communication, and how the Saudi Arabia government has used it to communicate COVID-19. The literature review will also analyze theories and models of communication, where the theoretical framework will also inform the methodology. This analysis of the existing theories will help understand how they can be used to examine the research problem. Through the literature review, the researcher will investigate and analyze studies related to the research topic and questions that aim to find out the Public Relations role and media data strategies used by Saudi Arabia governmental organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Furthermore, the literature review and the overall research process revolve around theories and models in order to describe phenomena. Using theories and models helps us to develop a better understanding of the research problem. The theories and models are as stated below, which are also explained in more detail in the study. (Stakeholder, Gatekeeping, Persuasion, Key Opinion, Two-step flow theories, and Grunig's four models).

Crisis communication has been greatly transformed due to the COVID-19 outbreak in Saudi Arabia (Hassounah, M., Raheel, H., & Alhefzi, M. (2020). Governmental organizations have implemented creative and innovative solutions to engage external stakeholders such as public members in knowledge and information sharing. Gutiérrez-García, Recalde, and Alfaro (2020) argue that social media provides an opportunity for government officials to generate ideas about public engagement within corporate communication. Therefore, the utilization of social media can help government officials to communicate about any crisis that may face a nation.

According to Hinson (2012), practitioners in Public Relations should manage strategic decision-making and organizational behavior processes that align with public informational needs and should do it from a strategic management point of view. There has been a redefinition of strategic management during the era COVID-19 pandemic to accommodate the utilization of social media. Changes have taken place as far as communicating with the public is concerned. The inclusion of the public in decision-making to promote a balanced dialogue between governmental organizations and public members has been widely fostered.

Park (2021) states that crisis management is one of the most important things when a nation or the World is going through calamities. Crisis management is the process of putting measures in place and employing strategies that will help to reduce negative events. However, there are challenges when it comes to managing crises if there are no effective communication tools. Social media has become an important tool in managing crises across the World. The Saudi Ministry of Health is one of the governmental organizations that have created a dedicated team of social media strategists who have helped create messages that meet public informational needs. When Saudi Arabia started implementing COVID-19 safety guidelines, it was important for the government to explain to the public members why it was doing so and why it was necessary (Alahdal et al., 2020). Through Public Relations, the government of Saudi Arabia explained the importance of citizens adhering to the rules and regulations which were put in place.

Methodology

The methodology conducted for this research study is a content analysis and a semi-structured interview in a qualitative approach. The question overall for the research is to look at the role of Public Relations and the way in which media data strategies have evolved, with particular reference to the COVID-19 pandemic within Saudi governmental organizations. Four key research questions have been identified as relevant in order to gain an overall perception of how governmental organizations used Public Relations in Saudi Arabia during the COVID-19 crisis. For the first method, a content analysis, the researcher collected the data in this study from social media platforms, specifically Twitter posts, and requires no permissions because posts were publicly available. However, in the content analysis, the researcher defined the variables for each tweet as follows; messages type, Tweet type, and media type, as well as the level of engagements for each tweet, such as number of likes, number of retweets, and number of replies. The time horizon for this study will be cross-sectional: The first seven months of the pandemic when the World Health Organization announced that it is a global pandemic, and it occurred in Saudi Arabia, which started on the 5th of March to the 5th of October 2020. The researcher chose this period because it includes special events such as the first and second lockdowns. They extended it to contain the Ramadan and pilgrimage (Hajj) months. For the second method, the researcher also conducted a semi-structured interview as a second method to support the first result of the content analysis. The participants are some Public Relations and communications specialists and professionals from the Saudi Ministry of Health as an example of Saudi governmental organizations. Overall, the researcher will analyze the case study to show the need for strong Public Relations and the value of active social media strategies management within governmental institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The case is handling a strong communications plan and media data strategies by Public Relations professionals in Saudi Governmental organizations during the COVID-19 Pandemic crisis in 2020. However, it is essential to examine the Saudi governmental organizations' roles and communications strategies issued during the crisis of COVID-19 to control the risk and crisis communications management.

Expected results and conclusion

This study is now in progress, which means that it is under the researcher's work. Where the researcher is now working on analyzing the data that has been collected to draw conclusions for the purpose of this study and to find answers to the research questions being raised. However, the researcher will be giving assessments and explorations on the way that the Public Relations role and media data strategies were used by the Saudi governmental organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis as well as offering recommendations for the field of Public Relations and social media communication strategies. The limitations so far are the way of collecting and analyzing the data is time-consuming because it requires preparation, permissions, and learning some software for analysis.

Keywords: Public Relations roles; Media communications strategies; Social media; Twitter; Saudi organizations; Covid-19 pandemic; Risk and crisis communications

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NUCLEAR ENERGY AS GREEN? ANALYSIS OF THE NEWS MEDIA IMPACT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S DECLARATION ON THE COMPLEMENTARY DELEGATED ACT

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Energy is a key factor in the development of any country. According to the International Energy Agency, energy is at the heart of the sustainable development agenda for 2030 (IEA, 2018). Sustainable development requires energy conservation as a priority in the 21st century. Therefore, energy needs to be reliable, clean and affordable (Ho & Kristainsen, 2019).

Nuclear energy plays a vital role along with the development of renewable energy and carbon dioxide isolation for fossil fuels to preserve the global environment (Matsui et al., 2008). Countries have sought alternative and cleaner sources of energy in place of fossil fuels due to environmental concerns and energy security concerns (Kanwal et al., 2022).

Global energy shortages are causing a global economic slowdown triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 (Aktar et al., 2020). The Russian invasion of Ukraine exacerbated the situation, driving up fuel prices worldwide (Ben Hassen & El Bilali, 2022). As fuel prices rise, household fuel bills directly increase (for example, for heating, cooling, cooking, and mobility). Furthermore, the cost of energy and fossil feedstock inputs needed to produce final household consumption goods and services is expected to increase (Guan et al., 2023).

The European Parliament declared nuclear energy investments as green earlier this July (July 6, 2022), which is an important step forward for the European Union's energy transition and security. There has been debate in the European Union (EU) about whether nuclear power is "sustainable." In the initial delegated acts, nuclear energy was not mentioned. The EU Joint Research Center, in collaboration with two other expert bodies, reviewed the technology and found it sustainable. As a result, the Commission has granted nuclear energy the status of a transitional activity in the taxonomy by adopting a complementary delegated act (Joint Research Centre, 2021). The plans also claim that gas can qualify as a sustainable investment too if the same amount of energy cannot be generated through renewable sources, and there are plans to switch to renewables or low-carbon gasses. If a project guarantees that it will handle radioactive waste, nuclear power can be referred to as green. To be more precise: new nuclear and gas power plants are to be categorised as "sustainable investments." Nuclear energy and gas would then be given a green light, and the financial floodgates would be opened for them (European Commission, 2022).

Historically, nuclear energy has been a controversial topic in society. Nuclear power has been perceived negatively by the public opinion for many years (Ho & Kristainsen, 2019). As a result of the 1970 "anti-nuclear movement," the media focused a great deal of attention on nuclear energy risks; citizens often represented the negative bias toward nuclear energy, while politicians tended to maintain the pro-nuclear position. The media has consistently covered protests against nuclear sites, but coverage has steadily shifted from positive to negative over time (Harney, 1991).

In recent years, authors (Vossen, 2020; Ersoy & İşeri, 2021; Mercado-Sáez et al., 2019; Du & Han, 2020; Ho & Kristainsen, 2019) have investigated a variety of newspaper articles in different countries concerning nuclear energy such as Russia, China, Netherland, The United Kingdom and some other European countries. In general, these articles focused on identifying the reasons for the media coverage cycles, which are mostly nuclear energy risks and environmental issues. However, few studies (Ahmad et al., 2021; Ji et al., 2021) have explored media attention to sustainable energy and sustainable investment. There is a significant gap in the framing of "nuclear energy as green energy discourse" and its connection with sustainable investment.

In shaping public attitudes toward nuclear power, news coverage has played an influential role (Vossen, 2020). Due to frequent media coverage of nuclear hazards, people tend to overestimate their probability (Ho et al., 2019). The way news is reported in the media has a significant impact on the public opinion (Hamborg et al., 2019). Frequently negative coverage of nuclear energy undermines scientific consensus on the safety of nuclear energy. There are experts with opinions that differ from the general consensus in media stories about nuclear energy, which prevents the common public opinion from being displayed (Merkley, 2020). Nevertheless, media coverage of nuclear energy contains both positive and negative views, but it tends to favour the negative view (Puspita & Pranoto, 2021). Studying nuclear energy from a sustainability frame provides a new perspective. Considering sustainability as a positive term, it is expected that nuclear energy can establish a positive perception within this context.

The purpose of this research is to analyse how the European Parliament's decision regarding sustainable investment in the energy sector was represented in the news media. This study contributes primarily to understand the news media's attitude regarding "Complementary delegated act (CDA) and identify the vital topics of the news. Thus, two research questions were developed:

RQ1: What is the news media' reaction towards the "Complementary delegated act (CDA)" by the European Commission?

RQ2: What are the main topics identified in the news?

To answer the research questions, a quantitative method was carried out to analyse 7822 news media obtained between 1 June 2022 to 31 December 2022. Data was searched and collected through the digital platform Nexis Uni®. Lexis-Nexis provides full-text of more than 1,000 newspapers around the world in English, German, French, Dutch, Spanish, Italian and Russian (Lexis-Nexis, n.d.). This academic database allows the inclusion of content from news agencies (Karstens et al. 2023) and facilitates scholars the accessing and downloading of full articles and data such as published date, publication type, publisher, length, section, country, cite, company, language, title, word count. The search was conducted by combining two keyword groups carefully defined and sufficiently large in order to obtain as much news as possible. The groups combine keywords associated with "nuclear energy" and "the recent EU green energy declaration": ("Nuclear Energy" OR "Nuclear Power" OR "Atomic Energy" OR "Nuclear Fusion" OR "Fusion Power" OR "Nuclear Fusion") AND ("Taxonomy" OR "Delegated Act" OR "Energy Transition" OR "green label" OR "green energy" OR EU OR "European Union" OR "EU Commission" OR "European Commission" OR "European Parliament" OR "EU Parliament"). The keywords were written in English, as it is the most spoken language in the world (Statista, 2022). Regarding the access dates to data, the June to November news was downloaded between 12 and 15 December 2022 and the December news was downloaded on 17 January 2023. The download was done in order of relevance of the articles and by month.

The analysis was carried out in two stages: first, a descriptive analysis was performed in excel to explore the sample and look for the newspapers' reaction towards the "Complementary delegated act (CDA)'' by the European Commission, and secondly, an Unsupervised Text Analysis (Topic Modeling) using the keyword clustering technique (*k*-). This computational analysis made it easier to detect sets of topics formed by keywords.

Results about news media reaction (RQ1) show that most of the 7822 news were generated in September (1627) but the higher number of news was published between the end of August and first days of September. The daily publication data show that between 30th August to 9th September 766 news were generated (almost 10% of the total sample). The analysis of regions and countries shows that Mexico generated the most news (2391). The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ranks second with 1624 news generated in the region. The North American region generated a substantial amount of news (766): Canada 388 and The United States 378. Small number of news published throughout the rest of the world.One third of the news (2382) is published by CE NoticiasFinancieras. Tender Monitor Africa-Asia is the second most popular mass media company in terms of reporting (911). Nuclear energy news was frequently published by some of the world's leading newspapers: the Guardian (303), the Financial Times (242), The Times (102), The Independent (180), MailOnline (120), The New York Times (163), German-based Die Welt (English) (133) and Russian-based What The Paper Say (77). The majority of the news does not provide any information about the section in which it was published (4592). Others are mostly covered in the main news (1108), the world and international news (652), the columns and opinion (525), the business and economy (303), and policy (199). News covered in sections about sustainability and energy topics were rarely encountered: environment and climate (40), sustainability (4), nuclear power (28), energy (12), renewable energy (8).

The most cited organisations, the majority are international organisations linked to the UE and energy such as the European Union (955), European Commission (428), International Atomic Energy Agency (310), European Parliament (123), International Energy Agency (59). Other most cited organisations fall under the following categories: national energy organisations (OAO Gazprom, EDF, National Grid PLC), financial institutions (Bank of England, the European Central Bank), companies (EMPRESA NACIONAL DE RESIDUOS RADIOACTIVOS SA, the French multinational company in the nuclear energy sector Areva (SA) and media organisations (Financial Times, Media Platforms) .

About the main topic identified in the news (RQ2), the computational analysis yielded five main topics. The "Russia-Ukraine war" was the main topic. The great coincidence is that this topic is covered in most of the news. "Nuclear energy" and "gas" are two topics that are very much in the news, as well as "European country", topics that are directly associated with the "Complementary delegated act (CDA)" by the European Commission. Finally, "government" was the fifth topic detected which is linked to "policy". There is a lack of association between nuclear energy and sustainability, as sustainability is not associated with nuclear energy. In this context, "climate" was the topic that showed the highest repetition within the group of words and the majority was mainly associated with "change", "emergency" or "crises".

This study addressed that news generation varies significantly by date, region, section, and citation. It was quite surprising that most of the news was not devoted to finding a sustainable solution to the energy crisis and consider "Complementary Delegated Act" is one such policy. News media largely ignored the concept of nuclear energy being green energy, as claimed by the "Complementary Delegated Act". Instead the news media extensively covered the "Russia- War" event.

From the results, it can be concluded that media coverage of the issue has been significant. It is interesting to note that the news was not mainly generated by European countries. There is no doubt that this issue has been of international interest, throughout the world. As a result of the media analysis, the issue was covered in leading newspapers across the globe, including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Russia.

The Russia-Ukraine war, nuclear energy, and gas were the most covered topics in the news. In other words, newspapers have covered the topic, but from a political perspective. It could be said that sustainability has received marginal treatment in the media. Newspapers have not given much attention to the discourse "nuclear energy as green". The media did not address the nuclear-green energy association in this way if the European Parliament wanted to create it. Clearly, media attention was centred around the war issue.

In this study, the language is considered as a methodological limitation. Keywords searches were conducted in English, which limited the possibility of obtaining results in other languages that are widely spoken throughout the world (e.g. Spanish, Chinese, French), (Statista, 2022). In addition, other news databases or types of publications are set out of this study. In the future, we should also consider other news databases or digital resources to analyse the trends over time. Social media, for example, may influence public opinion differently from how newspapers shape it. Due to this, it is crucial to understand how different digital platforms set their agenda and shape public opinion.

Keywords: sustainability; nuclear energy; European Union; news media; topic modelling

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AN OUTLOOK ON THE ROLE OF EMPLOYEES IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION: THE POWER OF MICROBOUNDARY-SPANNERS

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Internal communication and organizational communication have focused on the management of employee relationships, as employees are the closest public of organizations (Men, 2011) if not the most important (Tao et al., 2018). Employees perform different behaviors bridging the organization and external publics, often called boundary-spanning behaviors. The present study merges theoretical scopes of the fields of communication and management with the objective of understanding the role of employees as boundary-spanners. Literature in organizational behavior and management focus more on role expectations, whereas public relations and communication focus on relationship building with employees and communication behaviors as boundary-spanners.

This piece of work merges both theoretical backgrounds to 1) provide a clear definition of what is employee boundary-spanning and its importance in organizational communication, 2) clarify which are the necessary antecedents for employees to voluntarily engage in such role, and 3) concrete outcomes that emerge from the development of these employees' behaviors. The present conceptual paper provides answer for all these three questions.

Literature review

Boundary-spanners

Boundary-spanners bridge organizations and publics, helping the organization communicate with publics, and advocating for publics when making decisions (Tam & Kim, 2019). Traditionally, boundary spanning includes elements of information attainment and dissemination (Tushman & Scalan, 1981), with information being transmitted to and utilized within an organization. As indicated in Kim and Rhee (2011), there are two kinds of boundary spanners: formally designated and practice spanners. Formally designated boundary spanners are agents assigned to perform such roles, whereas practice boundary spanners engage in spanning the boundaries in diverse fields without being assigned such role (Kim & Rhee, 2011).

In the case of employees, they become practice boundary spanners, as they engage in spanning with no official assignment of the role (Levina & Vaast, 2005). Because this role is a non-designated role, boundary-spanning could be considered an extra-role behavior. Extra-role behaviors are behaviors which "benefit the organization and/or is intended to benefit the organization, which is discretionary and which goes beyond existing role expectations" (Van Dyne et al., 1995, p. 218).

The umbrella of extra-role behaviors includes a wide array of terms which can include not only boundary- spanners, but organizational citizenship behaviors, prosocial behaviors, and other constructs (Van Dyne et al., 1995). The main difference among these terms comes from the intentionality of the behaviors (Moorman & Blakely, 1995).

Because employees volitionally engage in communicative behaviors and public bridging which is not part of their work as employees of the company or organization, and these actions most likely will have a positive impact on the organization, their function as boundary- spanners can be consider as an extra-role behavior.

Kim and Rhee (2011) introduced the term microboundary-spanners to refer to non-designated boundary spanners who engage in communication behaviors voluntarily, both obtaining and disseminating information from and to internal and external constituencies. Because employees microboundary spanning is not a designated role, it is a relational component that makes employees voluntarily engage is such activities (Kim & Rhee, 2011).

Several research pieces regarding organizational communication have indicated that the tool to bridge publics and originate relationships between organizations and publics is two-way communication (Andreu Perez et al., 2022, Briones et al., 2011, Kim & Rhee, 2011). This type of communication strategy can be initiated by organizations to increase the quality of the relationship with employees, (Andreu Perez et al., 2022; Kim & Rhee, 2011), and because of the higher quality of the relationship, being more prone to engaging into microboundary spanning (Kim & Rhee, 2011).

The type of relationship (Grant & Mayer, 2009; Lee, 2017) is determinant to produce employee behaviors, although other factors (like existence of previous crisis in the organization, employees' self- monitoring, ...) intermingled with the relational component could also have an effect on employees' behavior (Bolino, 1999; Kim, 2018).

Microboundary-spanner behaviors

Employees are microboundary-spanners which have relationships with their organization, and behave in a certain way because of this relationship. Among the behaviors that employees perform as per their non-designated role of micro boundary-spanners, that include the bridging of publics and dissemination of information. However, the depiction of such behaviors has been better explained in the organizational communication and public relations work regarding employee behaviors.

In the fields of public relations, Kim and Rhee (2011) researched how employee communicative behaviors can affect public relations outcomes, and introduced the concept of megaphoning, which includes both "positive and negative external communicative behaviors" (p. 246) of employees about their organizations. Employees could voluntarily forward and share information about their organization's accomplishments and problems.

The megaphoning concept may initially look similar to word-of-mouth (WOM), but there are two main differences which are first, the type of public disseminating the information, and second, the unit of analysis of each concept. WOM is a concept used in marketing, an area that focuses solely on consumers'. Megaphoning is not a behavior related to consumers since the actors of the behavior are employees; neither is limited their positive and negative experience with products, it includes communicative action towards an organization itself (Chon, 2019).

Similarly, to what happen with extra-role behaviors which was composed of different constructs; in public relations megaphoning employee communication behavior (ECB) contains constructs such as megaphoning (Lee, Mazzei & Kim, 2018), advocative and adversary communicative behaviors on the employees' side (Kim & Rhee, 2011). Megaphoning is therefore an activity is conceptualized under the term employee communication behavior or ECB (Kim & Rhee, 2011). ECB, a broader concept, includes As Kim (2018) explains, ECBs are voluntary. Organizations can't force their employees to comply with communication behaviors – these behaviors are carried out by employees, in spite of the organization wanting them to perform or not to perform ECBs.

Because of the inclusivity of ECBs, both positive and negative megaphoning are parts of the employee communication behaviors. The relationship that employees have with their organizations predicts megaphoning effects: if the relationship is positive, employees are more likely to engage in positive megaphoning, and if the relationship is negative employees are more likely to engage in negative megaphoning (Kim & Rhee, 2011).

The concepts and findings from Kim and Rhee (2011) about relationships and megaphoning in organization-employee relationships (OERs) settings have been applied to different types of publics outside of the organizational context, for example in the governmental environment (Kim & Krishna, 2018) or in the public diplomacy context (Tam, Kim & Kim, 2018), yielding the same results. In the crisis context, studies using organization-public relationships (OPRs) found that trust was a significant predictor of pro-government megaphoning, while none of the OPR variables were significant in the case of anti-government megaphoning, this being explained by the ideology of the publics (Chon, 2019).

OPRs were not significant predictors in the case of negative megaphoning (Chon, 2019), indicating that the quality of the relationship did not affect the extent to which employees speak in a negative way about the organization. Also, communal relationships reinforce two-way communication techniques that improve the quality of relationships, in opposition to exchange relationships. The characteristics of exchange relationships (Hon & Grunig, 1999) imply that there is a lack of dialogue and communication since only receiving a reward in exchange for favor matters. Dialogue and two-way communication reported positive ECBs in crisis instances (Kim, 2018).

Positive and negative megaphoning are two different variables. Speaking good about the organization does not necessarily means that the employee is not going to speak in a negative manner about the organization in a different instance. Because employees are engaged with the organization, if they believe the organization needs to be defended, they will engage in positive megaphoning; whereas if they are concerned about the wrongdoings of the organization and have contacted with external publics that are becoming active, the may be leaning to produce negative megaphoning (Kim, 2018). While, if measuring an only issue, employees will develop only positive or negative megaphoning, engaged employees will be prone to engage in either positive or negative megaphoning depending on the specific issue and specific behaviors the organization is engaging with.

Scouting is another ECB, which interlinks with megaphoning because of the proactivity of employees and their volition to look for information and forward information to other publics, but scouting implies a more internal end of the communication. While megaphoning focused on the forwarding and sharing of information to external publics, scouting focuses on the forwarding and sharing of the information with internal publics, although the information comes from the outside of the organization (Kim & Rhee, 2011). The term of scouting comes, in fact, from the environmental scanning literature.

In recapitulation, positive megaphoning, negative megaphoning and scouting are all employee communication behaviors, in which both positive and negative megaphoning are behaviors in which employees talk about the organization to external publics, and in which both positive megaphoning and scouting utilize information forwarding for positive reasons, which may result in positive outcomes for the organization, hence being part of the behaviors performed by micro-boundary spanners, as their function is framed as an extra-role behavior.

Research Questions

Pieces of literature belonging to different fields point out to distinct aspects related to employee boundary-spanning, specially regarding the antecedents that influence employee boundary-spanning behaviors and the specific consequences stemmed from these behaviors, as explained in the previous literature review portion. For this, the present study aims to provide answers for the next set of research questions.

RQ1: What is the definition of employee boundary-spanning?
RQ2: Which are the necessary antecedents for employees to voluntarily engage boundary-spanning?
RQ3: Which are the concrete outcomes that emerge from the development of employee boundary-spanning?

Discussion and Conclusion

The comparison of boundary-spanning across fields and the integration of their elements is key to understand the span of behaviors that employees perform voluntarily. While the term boundary-spanning has been used in several pieces of research, many times the scope of behaviors that fall under boundary-spanning have not been limited or defined. For that, it is important to understand what boundary-spanning actually is, and because of the many implications that it has, how to get employees to engage in it.

Implications of boundary-spanning include positive and negative megaphoning, scouting, and the ultimate consecution of managerial goals. Strategies for employees to engage in boundary-spanning rely on relationship cultivation and symmetrical communication. All of these aspects will be explained in this article.

This research offers both theoretical and practical contributions by integrating management and communication to provide a comprehensive overview of boundary-spanning behaviors. It sheds light on the practical aspects of relationship cultivation as a managerial strategy, highlighting the potential outcomes achievable through strategic communication and management planning.

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CELEBRITY COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT AND FAN CHARITABLE PARTICIPATION: TOWARDS THE ASSIMILATION OF SYMMETRICAL COMMUNICATION IN ENTERTAINMENT PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Fans are individuals emotionally involved with the media personae that leads them to consume mediated content related to the personae (Sandvoss, 2005). This media personae could be celebrity from a wide array of areas. There are large communities of fans related to diverse interests and related celebrities, such as sports (Reysen & Branscombe, 2010; Sandvoss, 2005), literature (Hills & Booth, 2018), music (Baym, 2007; Bennet, 2012), television shows (Jenkins, 2014) and many other. Since fans are followers of celebrities, they tend to identify with their favorite celebrities. Identification with the celebrity bolsters the influence of the celebrity, leading fans to imitate their actions (Kjærgaard et al., 2011; Kosenko et al., 2016).

Celebrities pursue, at the same time, to establish a positive image to attract more publics, maintain publics' attention and keep their good standing. This is achieved through the exhibition of behaviors of celebrity goodness, that can be considered ethical and authentic (Moulard et al., 2015). A common practice among celebrities to maintain this good standing is to perform donations and CSR actions. With CSR having a positive impact on the celebrity's marketing deals, and also in their overall reputation, even becoming role models because of their good practices, celebrities are engaging more and more in performing CSR actions (Jon, 2008; Seo, 2019).

The present study brings together the notions of relationship between fans and celebrities and celebrity goodness, setting a frame to predict fans' donations to charitable and benefit entities. This research opens the door to the studies about the relationships between fans and celebrities, and proposes the application of public relation principles and strategies to induce positive fan behaviors, such as the donation of money in charitable causes their favorite celebrities has a partnership with.

Literature review

Fan-celebrity relationships

Fans involvement indicates a great level of dedication and participation in events, purchase of goods, communication behaviors, and strong sense of loyalty towards the celebrity they admire (Jia et al., 2020). At the same time, dedication relates to the continuity of the following intention which is a result of the perceived quality of the relationship (Chang & Chou, 2011). Communal relationships are those in which there is a mutual bond between the individuals engaged in the relationship, whom also care for the others' needs, grounded in the notion of giving a benefit in response to the need of such benefit (Clark & Mills, 1979).

The loyalty of fans and the level of engagement they show is reflected in communal relationships. When applying this specific type of relationships to the organizational field, communal relationships bring more positive employee behaviors, emphasizing the need of two-way symmetrical communication (Lee & Chon, 2020).

In the case of fan publics, similarly to the field of employee communication embedded in public relations, fans and celebrities are grounded in exchange relationships, with fans paying for the products developed by the celebrity, and celebrity producing content for fans to consume.

Nevertheless, this type of relationship is not sustainable in the longer term (Clark & Mills, 1979; Lemay & Clark, 2008). Instead, a communal relationship model based on dialogue would bring more attraction and affection towards the celebrity, and more positive actions performed by fans, such as donation for benefit purposes, that can be beneficial for the celebrity.

The cultivation of communal relationships comes intertwined with the development of symmetrical communication (Lee & Chon, 2020). Symmetrical communication gives publics a voice, a chance to express their concerns and ideas and influencing management decisions (Grunig & Kim, 2017). Symmetrical communication enables the dialogue between management and publics, it empowers publics, and also points out the need of identifying the key publics the organization should prioritize. The strategic behavioral paradigm is grounded on the view that strategic public relations are powered by symmetrical communication, stablishing dialogue, and incorporating publics in organizations' decision-making (Kim & Grunig, 2017). According to this paradigm, organizations should detect active publics, listen to them, communicate with them and build good relationships with them (Grunig et al., 2002). Only pursuing two-way symmetrical communication and communal relationships fans will remain engaged in performing diverse actions, including the donation in charitable projects in which the celebrity is involved.

H1: Fans who perceive their relationship with their favorite celebrity to be communal will be more likely to donate in charitable events.
H2: Fans who perceive their communication with the celebrity to be two-way symmetrical communication will be more likely to donate in charitable events.

Celebrity goodness

There is so much competition for a celebrity to grab publics' attention, and there is so much scrutiny towards public figures. Celebrity goodness is determinant for celebrities to maintain the attention and good standing. For example, a component which matters to cater fans attention is celebrity's authenticity. According to Moulard et al. (2015) celebrity authenticity is "the perception that a celebrity behaves according to his or her true self" (p.175). Straightforwardly expressing feelings (candidness) and the perception that the celebrity demonstrates strong values and principles ends up being a component that shows authenticity and attract publics to the celebrity (Moulard et al., 2015).

Other aspects related to authenticity also relate to celebrity's behaviors. Fans seek relatable celebrities, people that learn from errors and know what it is like to struggle (Ilicic & Webster, 2016). Findings of a celebrity brand study performed by Ilicic and Webster (2016) showed that celebrities that were considered authentic were those considered “friendly”, “honest”, “sincere”, “wholesome”, “personable”, “down-to-earth” and “transparent” (p. 414).

Another aspect worth to look at is celebrity’s social consciousness. While this idea is related to CSR, since artists choose to help the organizations that resonate the most with them and their ideals (Jon, 2008), it is also important to show interest and knowledge about the issues happening in the world. Donating money to organizations of their choice may be not enough if celebrities are not sensitive about catastrophes happening at the moment, such as natural disasters that destroy the lives of many publics, or sanitary crises like coronavirus.

Donating money and helping in certain instances is not enough if artist don’t believe in the values of the CSR actions they engage with (Jon, 2008; Seo, 2019). Celebrities need to understand why they engage in social corporate responsibility and charitable actions, and also be aware of their surroundings. The congruence between the celebrity’s characteristics, field of work, and chosen charitable project he or she collaborates with is indispensable for fans to associate positively the celebrity and his/her charitable labor.

It is common for celebrities to engage in some sort of CSR practices. The actor Hugh Jackman launched a coffee shop, Laughing Man Coffee, in New York City so that farmers from developing countries could sell their products in USA. World-famous popstar Britney Spears visited some of her young fans affected by the Hurrine Katrina back in 2006, and also raised funds for victims of the hurricane in her native State, Louisiana. Singer Lady Gaga teamed up with MAC cosmetics on a campaign for the MAC AIDS fund to spread knowledge about HIV and AIDS and break down stereotypes and misconceptions about the disease.

The consequences of the relationship between fans and celebrities goes beyond those consider strictly interpersonal, because this relationship holds an admiration component. Admiration can increase the intention of engaging in corporate social responsibility and charitable actions on the fans side (Castro-Gonzalez et al, 2019). Celebrities often engage in CRS actions in order to manage their reputations. When they engage in such actions they tend to become role-models for their fans (Jon, 2008; Seo, 2019), which also encourages fans to perform donations, participate in charitable events, and even organize fan donation campaigns. For these reasons:

H3: When fans perceive their favorite celebrity to be more authentic, they will engage more in donating in charitable events.

H4: When fans perceive their favorite celebrity to be more benevolent, they will engage more in donating in charitable events.

H5: When fans perceive their favorite celebrity to show more congruence between their traits and the charitable project, they will engage more in donating in the charitable event.

Methods

This study conducted a survey on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Participants (N=252) had to first indicate their favorite celebrity and then answer questions about the celebrity they indicated. Among participants, 62.7% (*N*=158) were male, and 36.9% (*N*=93) were female. The age of the participants ranged from 20 to 71. Ethnicity wise, 81% (*N*=204) of the participants reported to be White, 12.3% (*N*=31) were Black or African American, 2.8 (*N*=7) were Hispanic or Latino, 2.4% (*N*=6) were Asian.

Respondents were asked to identify their favorite celebrities. Afterwards, they were asked to complete the questionnaire about communal relationships, symmetrical communication, celebrity authenticity, celebrity goodness, CSR congruence, donation intention and demographic information (see table 1). Except for the demographic questions, all of the other questions were measured with 7-point Likert scales.

Results

The results of this study highlight the importance of symmetrical communication between celebrities and fans to influence fans donations to charitable causes in which the celebrity collaborates. The congruence between the celebrity traits and the chosen CSR project were also appointed as relevant attributes necessary to prime fans donations (see table 2). These results and implications are further discussed in this article.

Keywords: Strategic management; Celebrity communication management; Donation, Fan donation; Relationship; Symmetrical communication

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Appendix

Table 1

List of variables and measurement of the study

Variable	Measurement
Symmetrical communication	5 items from Kim & Rhee (2011) (α=.80, *M*=5.17, *SD*=1.00)
Communal relationship	5 items from Hon & Grunig (1999) (α=.79, *M*=5.43, *SD*=1.01)
Authenticity	4 items from Ilicic & Webster (2016) (α=.77, *M*=5.31, *SD*=1.16)
Celebrity benevolence	4 items from Joo, Miller & Fink (2019) (α=.80, *M*=5.37, *SD*=1.15)
CSR congruence	4 items from Joo, Miller & Fink (2019) (α=.82, *M*=5.38, *SD*=1.16)
Donation intention	4 items from Ranganathan & Henley (2008) (α =.85, *M*=5.12, *SD*=1.32)

Table 2

Hierarchical regression to predict fan benefic donation intention

Predictors	Fan donation intention		
	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3
Demographics and organization characteristics			
Gender	-.089	-.066	-.065
Age	.115	.007	.004
Ethnicity	-.025	-.064	-.075
Relationships and communication			
Communal relationship		.188***	-.006
Symmetrical communication		.614***	.494***

Celebrity's behavior and CSR			
Authenticity			.047
Benevolence			.152
Congruence			.162*
R^2	.012	.573	.601
ΔR^2		.558	.032
F	1.96	161.39	6.64

Notes: Beta weights are from final regression equation with all block of variables in the model. Gender was recoded as 0 for male and 1 for female.

*$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ ***$p < .001$

NUDGES IN THERMALISM: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Introduction

At the current stage of society, it can be observed that different ways of changing behaviour have been tested, through experiments, using a system of nudges in different areas of science. Improving decisions about health, wealth and happiness was the challenge set by Thaler and Sunstein (2008) in their work. Tourism is an industry with high growth potential, and with sustainability and health in mind, wellness is the type of tourism of choice for the tourist of the future (Buxton & Michopoulou, 2021). Despite its importance in public policies and the private sector, according to Souza-Neto et al. (2022) tourism is still a little researched area and it is necessary to identify the contributions of behavioural sciences so that people move in the best direction in an easier way. People are increasingly aware of the importance of taking care of their health and are looking for solutions to improve their quality of life (Campon-Cerro et al., 2020). Integrated into wellness through its attractiveness, thermal baths could become an effective antidote to current public health challenges (Erfurt & Cooper, 2009). Many authors have confirmed this evidence (Kazakov & Oyner, 2021; Mendonca et al., 2021; Pinos Navarrete & Shaw, 2021)but few have been concerned with how to communicate this trend.

Due to the relevance of this topic and the lack of studies that synthesize the implications of nudges in thermalism, the aim of this research is to analyse and synthesise the existing literature on the application of nudges; and to provide a consolidated view on the emerging subject of nudges applied to thermalism. Considering the directions of this study the following research question was raised:

Q1 - *What kind of nudging is suggested as communication strategy for thermalism?*

To study communication in thermalism, this article deepens the knowledge about nudges and considers the main influences addressed in the literature review to stimulate the practice of thermalism. As systematic literature review is an analysis that uses systematic and explicit methods to identify, select and critically evaluate relevant research, collect and analyse data from studies included in the review, using the PRISMA Statement method, we consider it the most effective methodology for conducting this research (Higgins et al., 2011). This study seeks to contribute to the area of communication and thermalism through a strategy using nudges for people's well-being.

The article is structured in four parts: the first adopts a theoretical approach to themes related to thermalism, and nudge; the second describes the methodology applied, the third presents the results and discussion, finally, the implications, conclusions, limitations and future lines of research are presented.

Literature review

Nudge theory teaches how to persuade others, in an indirect way. It integrates behavioural economics, and its nudge concept is rapidly influencing the design of community-based programmes in different policy areas. The existing literature on nudges presents results that vary between cultural and geographical approaches, public policy, health and well-being, and other types of interventions (Souza-Neto et al., 2022). Mortensen et al. (2019) believe that nudging can be a tool used by nurses to address patients' unwillingness to take action. In healthcare, physicians are advocates of nudges and claim it is a key strategy for obtaining informed consent (Gelfand, 2016).

In organisations it is important to develop nudges strategies that guide individuals' choices in order to improve their productivity (Hall-Ellis, 2015).

Notwithstanding the interest in the above-mentioned areas, there has been a significant increase in studies of nudges in the field of tourism. There are several contexts identified, hotel and restaurant (Cozzio et al., 2020), sustainability and acquisition of healthy eating habits (Coşkun & Yetkin Özbük, 2020; Dolnicar et al., 2019; Ferrari et al., 2019), destination management (Benner, 2019) and motivation, emotions and satisfaction (Chen et al., 2022).

Aware that habits form over time and always start with a stimulus. For Simkulet (2019) a stimulus is any influence designed to predictably alter a person's behaviour without limiting their options or giving them reasons to act. Nudges differ according to their nature of the intervention. They can be heuristic blockers, heuristic triggers or informative (Barton & Grüne-Yanoff, 2015; Souza-Neto et al., 2022). For (Dolnicar, 2020; Marques & Souza-Neto, 2022) the effectiveness of nudges in tourism depends heavily on the level of satisfaction it is therefore crucial to understand how interventions work and their underlying mechanisms. If on the one hand, in order to develop stimuli, products that create habits, it is necessary to know the internal need of the user (Eyal, 2019).On the other hand, to identify the effects of nudges on people it is necessary to increase knowledge about the behaviours, mediators, moderators and contextual factors that influence their effectiveness.

The research results of Majeed and Kim (2022) show that tourists expect a mix of health treatments, with conventional medical treatments and alternative health treatments and tourist attractions, as part of wellness tourism to improve their health and well-being. Whereas the reputation of thermalism as a health and wellness benefit is maintained in the European tradition by qualified medical specialists with experience in applying treatments using natural mineral water (Erfurt & Cooper, 2009). As a result of new trends, thermalism has been broadening the scope of action towards proactive, holistic and preventive behaviours, aiming at the improvement of personal, physical, emotional and spiritual well-being through water

(Romao et al., 2018). Considering that Folgado-Fernández et al. (2019) confirm the strategic role of water in the proper management of ecosystems for the enhancement of human resources and wellbeing we have the perfect connexion for better people's wellbeing and quality of life.

Antunes et al. (2022) refer that although the relationship between communication and thermal tourism is still a very incipient area of scientific knowledge, some studies are beginning to emerge. It is, therefore, fundamental to obtain conceptual clarity around the various areas that surround communication, to which we associate in this research thermalism. Almost as old as communication is the act of persuading (Mateus, 2020). Bonet (2020) relates the importance of rhetoric to the possible intentional action, i.e. stimulus. This strategy is fundamental to create nudges capable of building a persuasive argument. For Mateus (2020) the appeal to emotions as a way to prove an argument is even more important in persuasion processes that lack objective and factual proof, as is the case of the thermal experience. Basing persuasion on a set of emotional messages or images that configure a network of affections may be the force for creating the nudge that will lead you to the experience. We are not in the domain of cognitive persuasion, but affective persuasion where it is possible to feel the emotions needed to convince.

Methodology

The method used consisted of a systematic review using the PRISMA Statement (Preferred Reporting Items Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis), because it is an iterative process and its conduct is highly dependent on the intention and quality of the studies included in it, and researchers may need to specify or modify their original review protocol during its conduct (Moher et al., 2009). In the systematic review process conducted in February 2023 there were 4 distinct steps. First the keywords "thermal tourism" OR " "health and wellness tourism"" OR "spa tourism" OR "tourism" AND "nudge" to be used in the search in the Web of ScienceTM

Core Collection and Scopus databases were identified. This choice is due to the fact that these databases cover several areas, namely, Sciences and Technology, Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences among others. In addition, together, they broaden the search and reduce the possibility of bias in journals indexed exclusively in one of the databases Mongeon and Paul-Hus (2016) which have the necessary breadth to be truly comprehensive in any research. In this stage 221 articles were found. In the second stage, after careful screening, and based on the exclusion and eligibility criteria defined to fine-tune the review of the study, 108 articles were excluded. In the third phase for abstraction and analysis, the articles were initially subjected to an abstract reading and then to an in-depth reading to identify the established themes and sub-themes. The last stage of the review resulted in 106 articles that were used for the qualitative analysis. The EndNote 20 and Nvivo software allowed identifying the articles for the study, performing their analysis and systematising the collected information.

Results and discussion

The identification of relationships between strategic communication and nudges in the systematic literature review enabled the development of strategic collaborative practices to be applied to thermalism. Similar to Buxton and Michopoulou (2021), who identified that research in the thermal sector remains largely unexplored, this research also aims to contribute and co-create knowledge to these different areas of science. The first discussion relates to the identification of the themes in SLR and their relationship to thermalism. The second, with the need to understand the profile of people who visit thermal baths (Astefanoaiei et al., 2020). Finally, thermalism is still a reality to be unveiled and the nudge may arouse the curiosity to experience it. Since a stimulus is the activator of behaviour, whether we are aware of it or not, stimuli lead us to act (Eyal, 2019), we therefore consider the main contribution of this study. It is in this perspective that through an in-depth analysis of the scientific publications and the central themes under analysis we seek to develop recommendations with nudges, applied in different contexts, capable of changing beliefs and creating new well-being habits in thermal baths. Nudges seek to change behaviour through an indirect action and in the literature review have been applied in different areas (Kosters & Van der Heijden, 2015). In order to bring hospital units, higher education, sports entities, people with specific needs and organisations closer to thermalism, we propose the creation of nudges to be applied in these contexts to improve well-being and quality of life. According to Hall-Ellis (2015) the adoption of a theoretical perspective supported by nudges can change the work environment, so that individuals make decisions that are useful for themselves, for job satisfaction, for professional growth, as well as positive for the organisation. Regarding the association of water (Campon-Cerro et al., 2020) confirm that it has a positive impact on individuals' quality of life, satisfaction and loyalty. The results of this study provide theoretical, authentic and innovative contributions to the development of nudges applied to thermalism.

Conclusion and implications

Despite the growing literature on nudge adapted to tourism, there are no studies applied to thermalism. The article rethinks and provides new insights into the role of nudges in thermalism, allied to different contexts and emphasizes the interrelationship between both by contributing to Thaler's nudge theory. It has been found that the power of water provokes relaxation and positivity (Folgado-Fernández et al., 2019), a communication strategy based on nudges can have a great impact on satisfaction, loyalty and consequently the well-being and quality of life of individuals. This study contributes to the literature by providing a structured approach to predict and explain a new communication strategy to be applied to thermalism. The analysis highlights the need to continue to develop knowledge in a sector with high growth and potential, as is the case of thermalism. We hope that the findings will motivate other researchers to move forward with empirical studies applied to thermalism. Finally, a limitation was the fact that the research was conducted in only 2 databases and only journal articles were considered. As a future line of research, we propose to expand the theme and conduct empirical studies using creative activism as a tool to test stimuli, change beliefs and behaviours.

This new refletion theoretical makes the first attempt to investigate nudges and may be relevant in opening new avenues for scientific research in the field of communication and thermalism.

Keywords: Strategic Communication; Thermalism; Nudge; Wellbeing

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PUBLIC INTEREST COMMUNICATION AND THE ADVOCACY STRATEGIES OF NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS: THE CASE OF ODIF IN CAPE VERDE

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Communication as a phenomenon underlying the construction of social reality leads us to the understanding of its study in relation to the social change it promotes, as a generator of changes in the structures that govern social contexts. In this sense, we place the field of Public Interest Communication studies as the main referent and, in particular, within the scope of non-profit or civil society organizations, we suggest dealing with the concept and practice of *advocacy* strategies. The practice of this type of approaches by groups and organizations in the public space, takes place in an organized political system, in an institutional plan, where the legitimacy of *advocacy* is observed in democratic regimes. *Advocacy* can thus be understood as a legitimate resource for participation in political decision-making processes, in a public sphere where communication serves as the basis for the construction of meaning and the common good.

Thus, according to Fressmann (2016) apud Fressmann (2017), Public Interest Communication should be seen as a discipline of media studies and mass communication. It should be distinguished from Public Relations and other areas of communication and presupposes a planning and implementation process of strategic communication campaigns.(Fessmann, 2017, pp.16-30)

Refers Erica Ciszek (2018) that from an academic perspective, research in the area of Public Interest Communication approaches the spheres of communication theory and the common good, where research contributes to practical applications that contribute to policy and/or behavior change. To be effective in promoting social change, public interest communication as a practice is based on four elements: the structural, the institutional, the social, and the individual.

In this sense, we will treat the concept of *advocacy* as a strategy that applies in this field and that is distinct from concepts such as *lobbying* or *activism*, despite the fact that it often uses these approaches and their means in its strategic plans. Thus, according to Ciszek (2017) *advocacy* is a core function of nonprofit organizations and allows them to give a voice to marginalized populations, promoting active participation in issues that affect their lives and promotes a platform where individuals and groups challenge interpretations of problems and propose solutions. Through communication tactics and strategies, civil society organizations advance their missions and improve the living conditions of their constituents.

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According to Servaes & Malikhao (2010), *advocacy* combines social networking and mobilization, interpersonal communication and negotiation, and the use of media to create pressure with audiences. The authors suggest that the power of supporting evidence generated by practitioners and academics should be effectively used through all these means to present a powerful argument for sustainable social change.

According to the literature review by Almog-Bar and Schmid (2014) different definitions of *advocacy* are presented according to how assistance, protection and support is provided to individuals. These concepts include actions with policy makers to change public policies and influence the governmental elite and public institutions to involve civil participation in order to promote a collective goal or interest. At the same time, the term has been associated with changes caused by practices carried out by groups of citizens with common interests.

The article presupposes the reflection on the *advocacy* strategies in contexts of countries in economic and social development, as is the case of Cape Verde, questioning the meaning of these measures, as well as their operationalization and effects. Thus, we will address the case of a non-profit organization that operates in that Lusophone territory, the ODIF, Organization for the Integral Development of the Family. Created on February 14, 2017, this organization has as its main mission "to promote equal opportunities, through the development of economic, social and educational actions so that women and men can assume, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity, their roles within the family and in society. Thus, we will present a case study (Yin, 2001) based on in-depth interviews with those responsible for the organization. Then, the data analysis phase was based on content analysis techniques (Bardin, 1977), assisted by the MaxQDA computer software (Kuckartz & Radiker, 2019).

However, this study also intends to problematize the activity of these organizations within a global order, in light of international organizations and their ideological purposes. It is also worth questioning the role of the State and the institutions and their relationship with civil society organizations. What mechanisms and approaches exist for this relationship in Africa? Does the legitimacy of the practice of *advocacy* emphasize and strengthen the participation of civil society in african counties? Do these practices foster and underpin balanced, plural and egalitarian democratic societies in africa?

Wieviorka (2010) argues that there are two fundamental axes in the study of ethical issues, within the scope of the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights (1948): the first refers to human rights in the face of despotic, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes; the second axis deals with the action of humanitarian NGOs.

In a liberal and democratic regime, through free association, it is up to humanitarian associations to fill the gaps left by the State, to demand responsibilities from it. Some authors describe the phenomenon of the emergence of NGOs as a symptom of the erosion of welfare state systems, and therefore of the delegation of responsibilities that used to be the responsibility of the state to private individuals, in line with a global neoliberal order.

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DOCTORAL RESEARCH ON CSR IN SPAIN: BEFORE AND AFTER THE SDGS

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The collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008 marked the beginning of the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. A crisis that exposed corporate malpractices such as financial engineering, corruption, environmentally damaging practices and labour rights violations that exposed the lack of ethics of some large companies. This led to an increase in distrust towards business, whose practices have been observed and scrutinised by a public that is increasingly concerned about environmental deterioration and more demanding on companies' actions. Firms are aware of these changes and on their way to gaining social legitimacy and regaining society's trust, companies have transformed the way they operate and have changed their relationship with society. Today, firms no longer have a single unilateral relationship with consumers, but rather, from an integral communication approach, companies have a complex structure of relationships with all their stakeholders. In other words, in the face of the growing distrust towards the business world caused, among other factors, by the financial crisis at the beginning of the century, Corporate Social Responsibility – from now on CSR – is presented as an opportunity to establish new relationships between companies and stakeholders. CSR is emerging as a key intangible value for all types of organisations.

In this context, in 2015 Barrio, Enrique and Chacón presented a bibliometric study at the *4th International Conference on Social Responsibility, Ethics and Sustainable Business* held in Athens, which analyses the theses on CSR published in Spain from 1990 to 2014. The main results include the existence of 72 dissertations about CSR published in 30 different universities, which shows the interest of academia in this area of knowledge. Especially from the areas of economics and business and communication.

However, in the same year, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A total of 17 SDGs form a universal call to action to end poverty, protect planet Earth and improve the lives and prospects of all citizens (United Nations, 2022). It should be pointed out that while previous UN declarations on sustainable development have focused on the actions of governments, the SDGs directly allude to the role of business through SDG 17 on partnerships (Buhmann et al., 2019), recognising the power and capacity of large corporations to provide solutions that promote the sustainability of the planet (Whittingham et al., 2022).

The establishment of the SDGs by the United Nations has reinforced the role of CSR in the international agenda (Oliveira et al., 2021), as no company is left out of the challenges set out in the SDGs (Singh and Rahman, 2021), since the achievement of SDGs requires the collaboration of companies (Lassala et al., 2021). In this sense, the 2030 Agenda has helped to place CSR at the core of business management (Estanyol, 2020). Authors such as Lu et al. (2019) claim that the SDGs have become a source of inspiration for exploring new business models. In fact, according to research carried out by Barrio and Enrique (2021), compliance with the SDGs is one of the main challenges that CSR directors must face in companies. The SDGs are directly related to CSR management in companies, a fact that can be seen in the perfect alignment of the 17 SDGs with the triple sustainability of CSR – economic sustainability, social sustainability and environmental sustainability (Lizcano, 2020; Oliveira et al., 2021; Singh and Rahman, 2021). In fact, CSR stands as a mechanism to implement the SDGs in companies (Nair et al.; 2021), making CSR a primary lever for the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda (Lizcano, 2020). In other words, the SDGs are the driving force behind CSR in companies.

Given this new context, we wonder whether this boost to CSR in companies due to the Agenda for Sustainable Development has also been reflected in academia. Therefore, the aim of this research is to replicate, a decade later, this bibliometric study of CSR dissertations published in Spanish universities and to find out what impact the establishment of the SDGs has had on the study of CSR via doctoral theses in Spain.

In order to carry out this comparison, a bibliometric analysis of the doctoral research of CSR in Spain has been carried out following the same guidelines as those carried out for the study by Barrio, Enrique and Chacón (2015). So, in order to do this research, it has been consulted the database TESEO, a platform created by the Secretary of Council Universities of the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science that collects all the doctoral theses read in the Spanish universities since 1976. The search was conducted on February 2023. This search was made by Exact Phrase option in the title, using the phrase "social responsibility". It has been narrowed down by date of publication of the thesis: from February 2014 to February 2023. A total of 163 doctoral theses about CSR were obtained. Consequently, the comparative analysis sample consisted of a total of 235 theses (72 for the period 1990-2014 and 163 for the period 2014-2023).

The study has been focused on five variables of analysis:

- The university where these dissertations have been defended.
- The university faculty/department where these dissertations have been defended.
- The main perspective from which the study of CSR is approached.
- The criterion followed to select the organisations that are studied in the doctoral theses.
- For theses that focus their research on a particular sector of activity, the sector of economic activity addressed is established as a variable of analysis.

Below is a summary of the main results:

- From January 1st 1990 to February 5th 2014, 72 theses on CSR have been defended in Spanish universities. From February 6th 2014 to February 14th 2023 the number rises to 163 dissertations. However, just 50 of the 72 theses were available in the first period and 157 of the 163 dissertations were accessed in the second period.

- The CSR theses from 1990-2014 were defended in 30 different universities throughout Spain. During this period, no specific university stands out as a leader in the study of CSR through doctoral theses. For the 2014-2023 period, the number of universities in which theses on CSR have been defended is 31. They are also spread throughout Spain, although in this case the *Universidad Complutense de Madrid* stands out with 11% of the theses on CSR published in the last decade. It is followed by the *Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia*, the *Universidad de Extremadura* and the *Universidad de Valencia*, each representing 5%.

- In relation to the faculties and/or departments in which these dissertations have been carried out, in both periods the faculties of Economics and Business stand out in first place – representing 68% (1990-2014) and 54% (2014-2023) –, followed by the faculties whose area of knowledge is communication (10% and 11% respectively).

- Regarding to the CSR approach, for both periods there are three main subcategories: theses that understand the CSR as a business management tool, the ones that work on the CSR from a marketing perspective and the dissertations that centre the attention on how the CSR is communicated. The business management approach is the most addressed in both periods, representing 30% and 35% respectively of the total number of dissertations analysed. However, an interesting fact is that the communication approach moves from the third position to the second for the 2014-2023 date range, which shows a tendency to approach this concept from the field of communication.

- With regard to the selection criteria of the organisations analysed in the theses, the tendency continues to use the sector of economic activity as an element of delimitation of the study universe, which for the dissertations published between 1990-2014 represents 30% and for the period 2014-2023 constitutes 35% of the total number of dissertations defended.

Other criteria also used in both periods are companies belonging to a stock market index or to a CSR rankings or lists. It also highlights specific case studies that allow for an in-depth analysis of CSR management. Lastly, it should be noted that in the last decade the specific study of CSR in universities represent 15% of the theses that address CSR.

- Finally, with regard to the sectors of activity most analysed in relation to their social responsibility behaviours, for the first range of dates analysed, the financial sector stands out, while in the last decade the financial sector has moved into second position. During last years, tourism has been the most studied sector, constituting 24% of the theses analysing a specific economic sector. This change may be related to the fact that in previous decades dissertations dealing with CSR in the financial sector focused on the analysis of the *Social Work (Obra Social)* of these entities. With the financial crisis of 2008, savings banks became banks and the *Social Work*, the object of study of CSR research in that type of institutions, disappeared. On the other hand, the fact that the tourism sector has been the most studied sector in the last decade can be explained by the weight of this sector in the Spanish economy, which represented 12.2% of GDP in 2022.

In conclusion, coinciding with the establishment of the SDGs in 2015 by the United Nations, the number of theses published in Spain on CSR has increased by 126 percentage points in the last decade compared to the theses published in the more than two decades between 1990 and 2014. It seems that the impetus given by the 2030 Agenda to CSR on the international scene as a mechanism for integrating the SDGs into business (Oliveira et al., 2021; Nair et al.; 2021; Barrio and Enrique, 2021; Lizcano, 2020; Estanyol, 2020) has also been reflected in research. This research is mainly carried out by university faculties of Economics and Business, so that the study of CSR is mainly focused on its character as a management tool. Even so, the data show that around 10% of the dissertations that deal with CSR do so from a communication perspective. However, this is always from the point of view of dissemination, focusing on channels and ways of disclosing information on the CSR carried out by the company. There remains, therefore, a whole field of study to be explored from an integral communication approach, analysing CSR as an intangible value to be managed by the communication departments of companies. It is also noteworthy that there are few theses that study CSR in SMEs. This is a striking fact, given that 99.8% of the European industrial fabric is made up SME (Bartolomé, 2019) and yet it is scarcely studied.

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WHEN GREEN IS NOT GREEN: THE MESSAGE OF THE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN AGAINST GREENWASHING BY THE PORTUGUESE ASSOCIATION FOR CONSUMER PROTECTION (DECO PROTESTE), AND ITS RECEPTION BY YOUNG PORTUGUESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Greenwashing has become an increasingly pertinent topic in the academic literature due to its growing operational significance and because it raises challenging questions and multidisciplinary research opportunities (Lyon & Montgomery, 2015). Greenwashing is a degenerative practice that arises from organisational social responsibility (CSR), specifically organisations' environmental (dis)engagement, valued socially and by consumers. Although CSR engagement has gradually become mainstream in the business context, research on CSR communication and its effectiveness remain limited (Christis & Wang, 2021).

CSR is an imperative for corporations worldwide (Hesse & Rünz, 2020, p. 3), due to the substantial impact of business activities on society, including on development trajectories and community-level outcomes within the vicinity of the development (Fordham & Robinson, 2018). CRS is an evolving concept that reflects various views and approaches on corporate relations with society at large and captures the responsibility of organisations to the environment, their stakeholders and society at large (Fordham & Robinson, 2018). It can be said that the aim of CSR is to align the financial activities of the company with social objectives (Sidhoum & Serra, 2017).

CSR tends to be understood as a four-dimensional concept (e.g., Carroll, 1979; Sidhoum & Serra, 2017). As an over-arching CSR theory, Carroll (1979, p. 500; 2016)'s four-dimensions definition of CSR (comprising economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic dimensions) provides the framework for identifying and mapping meanings of CSR. Four other possible dimensions of CSR are: the economic, which is related to the direct and indirect financial performance of the organisation; the environmental, which concerns the impact of organisational activity on natural ecosystems; the social, which includes issues linked to the quality of life of employees, customers and future generations; and corporate governance, which deals with the relationships between directors, managers and other stakeholders. The dimension that matters in the present proposal is the environmental one.

The environmental movement, which emerged within the countercultural contestation in the mid-1960s, and the first Earth Day in the 1970s stimulated a corporate performance concerned with the environment and, since then, cases of greenwashing, which are characterised by unethical practices, have emerged. The term greenwashing, although without consensus in the literature, concerns a panoply of misleading communications that aim to form overly positive beliefs among stakeholders about an organisation's environmental practices (e.g., Torelli et al., 2019). The increasing number of CSR claims, substantiated or not, creates difficulties for stakeholders to distinguish between realistically positive organisational performance and that which only appears to adopt a sustainable development model.

The term greenwashing was first coined in 1986 by Jay Westerveld (Pearson, 2010), having in 1972 been designated as "eco-pornography" by Jerry Mander. It is from the seminal work of Greer and Bruno (1996) that the number of studies on greenwashing has grown significantly (Laufer, 2003), starring a substantial leap in 2011 (Lyon & Montgomery, 2015). In the literature, the term has assumed the meanings of selective disclosure (e.g., Delmas & Burbano, p. 67; Lyon & Maxwell, p. 9; Tateishi, p. 3) and decoupling (e.g., Guo et al, 1828; Siano et al., p. 27; Walker & Wan, 2011).

Greenwashing, characterised by misleading communication, induces the consumer to perceive a certain "green" product – a sustainable product designed to minimize its environmental impacts – as eco-friendly, when it is not. These greenwashing practices harm individual and social well-being, which is the positive state of individuals and society that, "like health, is a resource for daily life and is determined by social, economic and environmental conditions" (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021, p. 10).

Taking the described context into consideration, the present proposal aims to answer the research questions: how is constructed the message of DECO PROTESTE's awareness campaign against greenwashing, "*Greenwashing*: Don't be painted green! Tell things as they are" ["*Greenwashing*: Não se pintem de verde! Contem as coisas como elas são"]?; what is the rhetorical potential of the message of DECO PROTESTE's awareness campaign against greenwashing, launched in 2023?; how is the message of DECO PROTESTE's awareness campaign against greenwashing, "*Greenwashing*: Don't be painted green! Tell things as they are", perceived by young Portuguese university students? Thus, the specific objectives are: 1. to understand how the message of the awareness campaign against greenwashing, "*Greenwashing*: Don't be painted green! Tell things as they are" is constructed; 2. to characterise the rhetorical potential of the message of DECO PROTESTE's awareness campaign against greenwashing launched in 2023; and 3. to know the perceptions of young Portuguese university students about the message of DECO PROTESTE's campaign "*Greenwashing*: Don't be painted green! Tell things as they are". With the present study proposal, it is intended to respond to Torelli et al.'s (2019) academic challenge to study the role of non-business organisations in moderating or amplifying its influence on stakeholders (p. 11) with regard to greenwashing. The object of study of this research assumes as theoretical anchor related to communication: a) the encoding-decoding theoretical model, by Hall (1997), taking into account that it will be about encoding (message of campaign) and decoding (perception of receivers); and b) rhetorical theory (Aristotle, IV century B.C./2005).

The campaign entitled "*Greenwashing*: Don't be painted green! Tell things as they are" chosen for analysis is the one launched in January 2023 by DECO PROTESTE, "the largest consumer protection organisation in Portugal" (DECO PROTESTE, 2023). This campaign, committed to helping consumers choose more sustainable products and recognise misleading environmental claims, is chosen because it is topical and because it is pioneering as regards this issue in Portugal. The video and three episodes of DECOpode, the entity's podcast, dedicated to the greenwashing are part of the corpus.

The techniques of discourse analysis (first objective), rhetorical analysis (second objective) and focus group (third objective) will be applied. The discourse analysis will focus mainly on four discursive strategies which are: naming (how is the phenomenon referred to?); predication (which characteristics are attributed to the phenomenon?); argumentation (which explicit/implicit arguments to build the defence?); perspective (speaker's positioning) (e.g., Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1987).

The rhetorical analysis is based on Aristotle's three rhetorical appeals: ethos, pathos and logos, which assume the condition of dimensions, having, therefore, each of them categories to better scrutinize the rhetoric present in the message under analysis. The categories are derived from the literature (deductive logic) and from the specifics of the corpus (inductive logic). In Aristotle's rhetoric (IV century B.C./2005), three "proofs of persuasion" are identified: a) those derived from the moral character of the speaker, building the impression that he is worthy of faith (ethos); b) those centered on the emotion that the speech stimulates in the audience (pathos) and c) those focused on what the speech demonstrates (logos) (pp. 96-97).

The focus group will be conducted with young university students attending bachelor and master degrees at the Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, Universidade de Lisboa, and previously exposed to the corpus. Participation will be invited. Therefore, the basis for the composition of the focus groups is based on the voluntary nature of the participants. Young people were chosen because about 97% of Portuguese young people are concerned about the environment (Green Savers, 2021) and because Portuguese adolescents have adopted some commitments to the preservation of the planet. More than half (56.8%) of those who responded to the survey of Health Behaviour in School Aged Children ([HBSC], 2022) say they actively seek ways to reduce environmental problems. ISCSP-ULisboa's students are chosen for ease of access to them. The total number of focus groups to be conducted will depend on the saturation criterion (Bryman, 2012).

Ethical conditions will be ensured in the application of the three techniques: for example, in the case of qualitative content analysis techniques (discourse analysis and rhetorical analysis), the categorization guidelines will be specified in detail. In the case of the focus group, participants will be informed about the object and objectives of the study and will be anonymized, in order to guarantee your greatest comfort to be sincere in the answers.

To compose a literature review on the thematic focus in approach – message and perception of campaigns against greenwashing –, a Boolean search was conducted on the academic database Communication and Mass Media Complete (EBSCOhost), "the leading provider of research database" (https://www.ebsco.com/), using the keywords "message" AND "greenwashing" AND "perception", in February 2023. The limiters "Academic (Peer-Reviewed) Journals" were applied, not opting for any temporal or linguistic restrictions. The search generates eight results. The careful reading of these articles resulted in the final selection of two useful articles (Christis & Wang, 2021; Ferguson et al., 2019), which confirms the scarcity of bibliography on the subject.

Ferguson et al. (2019), through an online survey, focused on the comparison of the persuasive effectiveness of the framings of corporate versus activist NGO website communications and their impacts on the perception of the triple values of sustainability (social, economic, and environmental) and corporate greenwashing with respect to a proposed oil pipeline in Canada. The results of the pro and con website communication framings confirm the hypotheses based on the theoretical Elaboration Likelihood Model by demonstrating a "non expert" peripheral route to a positive persuasion from exposure to the unsubstantiated vague claims, green visuality and deceptive linguistics in the corporate communication versus a mainly "expert" central route to a negative persuasion from exposure to verifiable factual content of the activist NGO communication. The empirical results demonstrated the advantages of a coherent alignment between triple sustainability values to increase the reliability of corporate moral discourse for internal and external stakeholders.

Christis and Wang (2021) note that to achieve effective CSR communication, companies need to adopt a uniform communication style, involving the synchronization of environmental actions and messages. This messaging style was found to be the most effective among three messaging styles evaluated (greenhushing vs. uniform vs. greenwashing) and contrasts strongly with the adoption of greenwashing techniques – the least effective style and one that caused negative repercussions among consumers exposed to it. The authors reach this conclusion from an online experiment, whose intent was to obtain insights on how environmental CSR communication can affect consumer trust, purchase intention and advocacy. Three factors of CSR communication – message content, message style and complimentary tactics – were evaluated.

Through the lens of legitimacy and signalling theory, Torelli et al. (2019) aimed to assess the different influences that various misleading messages about environmental issues have on stakeholders' perceptions and evaluate responses to an environmental scandal. The hypotheses tested through a four-for-two design experiment show that different levels of greenwashing have a significantly different influence on stakeholders' perceptions of corporate environmental responsibility and their reactions to environmental scandals. When a scandal occurs and greenwashing practice is discovered, stakeholder reactions are stronger if the company operates in an environmentally sensitive sector. This suggests that some categories of stakeholders may be more sensitive to environmental damage when there is greater potential danger.

The present proposal, due to its innovation, completeness (combining in the same study the focus on the message and on the receiver-perception), methodological robustness and timeliness, may bring useful contributions to the understanding of the subject in question.

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SOLVING CHALLENGES OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION DURING THE TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY IN PUBLIC SECTOR: THE CASE STUDY OF LITHUANIAN MINISTRY

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Relevance

Internal communication plays an important role in nowadays modern organisations. Researches carried out over a quarter of a century revealed that companies that pay a lot of attention to internal communication achieve better results, employees well being, their team members work more productively, are more involved in the organization's activities, more motivated and loyal, compared to those organizations that do not pay attention to internal communication (Thompson, 2002; Tourish, Hargie (eds.), 2004; Madlock, 2008; Lee, 2022). Scientists claim that remote work, when an employee performs the work functions assigned to him/her remotely, at a different workplace, using information and electronic communication technologies (Law on the Labor Code of the Republic of Lithuania, 2023), is becoming more and more popular all over the world (Meister, Millyerd, 2010). Hybrid work, when employees can work from home or from office' workplace or can change these forms of work during the week, is also growing in popularity (Grzegorsczyk et al., 2021). Both of these work forms have been boosted by the global COVID-19 pandemic (Ceurstemont, 2020; Eliyahu, 2022) and require changing internal communication processes. Although there are studies analysing internal communication success factors in private sector during the new hybrid work era (Bansal, King, 2022; Wang et al, 2021), there is only a few analysis on internal communication challenges and possible solutions in the public sector (Toleikienė et al., 2020; Jacobsen, Salomonsen, 2021; Ndlela, Madsbu 2022). Surveys of employees in the ministries of Lithuania, which is a multi-party parliamentary republic, before and during the pandemic revealed that there is a low job satisfaction in public sector (Ministry of Internal Affairs of Lithuania, 2021) and one of the reasons is a lack of effective internal communication. There are fourteen ministries in Lithuania and each ministry has subordinate state institutions and bodies. The same system is in Lithuanian municipalities' institutions, which as the governmental institutions are also financed by the state. Therefore, issue of effective internal communication is relevant for one third of all employees working in the public sector - 360 thousand out of 1.3 million. The conducted study is one of the first qualitative case studies of its kind, analyzing the challenges of the internal communication management arising during the pandemic in the Lithuanian public sector organization - the ministry, and revealing how internal communication specialists and middle managers solve these challenges. The study would fill the gap of public sector's internal communication management research in the new reality and would suggest effective ways of communication for other public sector organisations.

Research problem

The problem under discussion is complex. The pandemic period and the subsequent forced transition to remote and hybrid work can be described as a period of uncertainty, during which it was necessary to review the usual communication order, reduce uncertainty and introduce clarity in the new reality. K. Weick's organizational information theory was chosen as a theoretical background as this theory pays great attention to managing uncertainty, reducing ambiguity, and ensuring stability (Griffin, 1991). Furthermore, private sector receives attention of researchers about internal communication challenges, opposite than public sector which has its specific features. The public sector differs from the private sector in terms of lower employee motivation opportunities, slower decision-making process (Boyne, 2002; Masiulis, 2007; Mullins, 2013; Giedraitytė, 2016). In addition, the possibilities of public sector organizations to operate promptly are limited - the public sector is subject to strictly defined rules and directives in its daily activities (Baarspul, Wilderom, 2011). It should be noted that in recent decades, the society has been placing increasingly high expectations and demands on the public sector (Bučinskas, Giedraitytė, Raipa, 2013). By receiving high-quality, innovation-based, customer-oriented private services, society demands from the public sector to improve public services, increase the attractiveness of the public sector to the public (Giedraitytė, 2016). Although public sector possibilities to operate promptly is limited, it has to work under public pressure for speed and to be ready to react immediately (Mullins, 2013). Taking into account the conflict between society's needs for urgent decisions during the crisis and specific of public sector, internal communication management of the latter, emerging challenges and possible solutions should be studied separately from the private sector. Analysing public sector, it is unclear, how should be addressed internal communication challenges in state-owned organisation with the strict rules, bureaucratic procedures; which internal communication channels work; what criteria should be used to define the value and efficiency of internal communication? How to create an effective internal communication process management system in ministries, which would promote employee involvement in value creation processes, increase employee loyalty? A case study in the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Lithuania identifies these challenges. Therefore, such a scientific problem is raised in the work: how should be internal communication managed effectively in the public sector organisation (ministry) in the new reality?

The objective of research

After theoretical analysis and identifying the challenges of internal communication management in the times of uncertainty during the pandemic in a public sector organization, to provide guidelines for improving internal communication in public sector organizations.

Tasks

1. To identify how internal communication (IC) processes are affected by remote and hybrid work.

2. To identify the challenges of IC in public sector organisations during the new hybrid work era and to compare to those identified in scientific literature.
3. To identify the succesful IC changes were implemented in the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania in organisational level and those implemented in units level.
4. To provide recommendations about IC channels and tools for effective IC development of public sector organizations in the era of hybrid work.

Methods

Content analysis, qualitative research: semi-structured interviews; generalization.

Research methodology

A case study strategy was chosen to solve the scientific problem and collect the data needed for the study. The peculiarity of a case study is that the research consists of one object (person, institution, event), but several research methods are combined. The research subject must not only be a typical representative of the general set of subjects, but also a person who is willing and able to provide versatile information necessary to answer the question raised by the researcher (Bitinas et al, 2008, p.138). Therefore, two internal communication specialists and five managers of different structural departments of the Ministry were selected for the case study as informants who can provide information on the issues of interest in the study. This was done to ensure the greatest possible representation of different points of view. A semi-structured interview was chosen for the study. In order to understand internal communication management processes at the level of the ministry and departments, two separate questionnaires were created - for internal communication specialists and heads of structural units. The questions are designed to answer all five research questions. The study was conducted in January 2022. At the time of the investigation, there were ten structural units in the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Lithuania. In order to ensure the highest possible representativeness of the structural units of the ministry, five informants - heads of units - from five different structural units of the ministry were randomly selected. Both internal communication specialists responsible for internal communication were interviewed. Due to pandemic-related restrictions, all conversations were conducted remotely via the MS Teams platform with cameras enabled. The informants were in their usual working environment on a regular working day - they worked from home or from the ministry. When speaking while seeing the interlocutor, you can gather a lot of useful information, important details, often leading to new insights. It was possible to observe not only the cognitive, but also the emotional aspects of the answers, and ask additional questions. The interview with the informant lasted about 40 minutes on average. The conversations were recorded on a telephone recorder.

Results

1. The study showed that due to remote and hybrid work there are changes in organising internal communication (IC) processes in organisational level as well as in teams level. At organisational level new digital communication culture, where Ms Teams and Zoom plays a key role, is forming. Live meetings, trainings for employees have been changed to virtual meetings which becomes more effective and more structured, it save participants time. Because of new digital communication culture more stakeholders (businessmen, colleagues from abroad) are included in decision making process in public sector organisations. There are also significant changes at teams level: live tete-a-tete communication has been changed to emails communication; more communication tools in team level are being used (Messenger, Ms Teams, etc.); new forms of team building are being used by team leaders (coffee meetings online, etc.).
2. During the research at the Ministry of Communications of the Republic of Lithuania, the five challenges identified for remotely working teams coincided with those presented in the scientific literature: how to promptly provide feedback; how to avoid different interpretation of information

when communicating by letters; how to create and maintain a personal relationship between employees and between the manager and employees; how to reduce the increased level of uncertainty and stress; how to motivate employees. The newly identified challenges, which were not mentioned in the studies of other researchers, include the lack of concentration of attention when employees communicate remotely, as well as more obstacles related with urgent problem solving, prolonged problem solving process.

3. The study revealed that successful IC changes at organisational level in the Ministry were the solution to create one platform for all meetings (MS Teams); start of a new format 'Ministry hour' (where top management of the Ministry present news virtually to all employees, heads of units present their achievements and challenges and employees could raise the questions); decision to organise specific trainings for all employees – psychologists, emergency management specialists as well as instructions from the top management and internal communication specialists for middle-level managers about communication with employees during the time of uncertainty. Research showed that succesful IC changes at units level were leaders decisions to give common task to several team members; regular feedback from middle-level managers for each team member (tete-a-tete online or via phone) as well as regular online meetings organized by team leaders with all team members at least once per week. *University Fourth Mission and Social Impact. Ethic imperative and relational challenges in the context of high education in Italy*

4. It was found that IC management at the level of the entire public sector organization could be improved by better utilization of the intranet, promotion of cooperation between organisation's units, establishment of regular remote communication of the organization's management with the entire team, organization of relevant training for all employees, establishment of the principle of informing ministry employees first before information goes outside. It has been found that receiving information about changes from the top management of the organization is especially

important for employees who expect to receive information before it is presented to other stakeholders. The study also showed that IC at the level of the units could be improved by more frequent communication between managers by phone or through other remote communication platforms with their employees, more frequent feedback provision, ensuring regular conversations between the unit's employees, encouraging informal communication between team members and dedicating special time for that (to discuss holidays plans, pets, etc.) as well as encouraging middle-level managers to share information with the team members which was got from the top management. Research revealed that seeking to ensure smooth internal communication it is crucial to share information with employees in all levels of organization - by the ministry's top management, by middle managers and by internal communication specialists.

Keywords: Internal communication; Challenges; Public sector; Ministries; COVID-19; Hybrid work; Remote work

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Corporate lobbying on sustainable finance: how financial lobbying drives negative engagement behavior on Twitter

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An integral part of a healthy democracy is lobbying. It is closely linked to universal values such as freedom of speech and the right to petition the government and allows various interest groups to express their views on public decisions that may affect them (Mulcahy, 2015). Lobbyists provide regulators and legislators with information, using their expertise to both improve the quality of decision-making and influence policymaking. And while the interests of various industries are represented in the political arena, the financial industry is one of the leading lobbyists (Igan & Mishra, 2014) due to its numerous and complex regulations. This makes it particularly important for the financial industry to influence political decision-making (Igan & Lambert, 2019). Financial lobbyists advance business interests by building and maintaining relationships with key decision-makers, conducting policy research, drafting and amending legislation, and assisting agencies in drafting complex regulations, among other things (Igan & Lambert, 2019). The influence of the financial industry on political decision-making is therefore deemed to be wide-ranging and commonplace, while the financial sector is "among the most powerful lobbies in Europe" (Mulcahy, 2015, p. 19).

Indeed, the financial lobby vastly outspends other (public) interests in lobbying in the EU by more than 50 times (Pieper, 2020). According to a survey conducted by the Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) (2014) "the financial industry spends more than €120 million per year on lobbying in Brussels and employs more than 1700 lobbyists". The same report further highlights that the financial industry has vast lobbying resources and privileged access to decision makers in the EU, concluding that the financial lobby has clearly “a powerful voice” (Wolf, Haar, & Hoedeman, 2014). The intense lobbying stems from financial industry’s desire to contribute to the wave of new regulations (Igan & Lambert, 2019). These have come to the sector over the past decade in everything from systemic risk to ESG (environment, social, governance) investments. As a Brussels-based lobbyist noted, “Asset managers recognize that they are the best ones to defend their interests [in policy debates]” (Riding, 2021).

Most recently, the financial industry has stepped up its lobbying efforts on sustainable finance (SF). Although no general agreement exists on the definition of SF in the financial and policy sector (Strauß, 2021), in the EU’s policy context, SF can be defined as “finance to support economic growth while reducing pressures on the environment and taking into account social and governance aspects” (European Commission, 2021). SF plays a crucial role in achieving EU’s international commitments on climate and sustainability goals, as well as its climate and energy targets for 2030. To reach these objectives, the action plan on financing sustainable growth introduced a classification system for sustainable economic activities: The EU Taxonomy (European Commission, 2021). The EU Taxonomy can be seen as a tool that creates a common language between policy makers, project promoters, issuers, and investors. It aims to provide investors with an understanding of whether an economic activity is environmentally sustainable and whether investments comply with robust environmental standards (European Commission, 2021). In other words, the EU Taxonomy has a very specific function: “to help investors identify, report on and ultimately finance activities with sustainable levels of environmental performance” (PRI, 2021, p. 6).

However, since its promulgation by the European Commission in April 2020, the EU Taxonomy has also been subject to fierce criticism by public interest groups and NGOs across the world (e.g., *Change Finance*, *CEO*, or *FinanceWatch*). According to the NGO ECOS (2021), the proposal submitted by the Commission is deemed far from satisfactory since it contains criteria that contradict science. This is despite the fact that EU legislation is legally obliged to be based on scientific facts. The reason for this is attributed, among other things, to intensive lobbying by the financial industry (Crêpy, 2021). Mathilde Crêpy, from the NGO ECOS, commented that the EU Taxonomy “includes substantial last-minute changes driven by politics, not science (. . .) As long as industry lobbies keep holding this taxonomy hostage, it risks becoming a massive greenwashing instrument” (ECOS, 2021).

In fact, recent research has shown that given the lack of ambitious climate policies in many European countries, it is reasonable to assume the presence of an influential opposition trying to influence climate policy (Vesa, Gronow, & Ylä-Anttila, 2020). Accordingly, in the political debate over the taxonomy regulation, large banks, investment funds and their lobbyists are intervening to oppose some key points of the regulation (Haar, 2020). A report published by Reclaim Finance and Change Finance (2020) on lobbying by business and financial institutions for an EU Taxonomy for polluting activities shows that financial institutions make up the largest block opposing the taxonomy, accounting for 45% of opponents (74 institutions out of a total of 169 opponents) (Schreiber, Pinson & Ileri, 2020). Many influential global financial institutions and various professional organizations or associations are at the forefront of opposing a taxonomy for environmentally harmful activities (Reclaim Finance, 2020).

As the financial industry is lobbying to advance its interests in the political arena regarding SF regulation (Azizuddin, 2020; Schwartz, 2021), investors are monitoring these strategies on various networks, including social media (e.g., Oliveira, Cortez, & Areal, 2013; Rakowski, Shirley, & Stark 2021). Consequently, the European Commission’s decision to appoint BlackRock – one of the outstanding lobbyists against strict SF regulations – as a supervisor for the EU Taxonomy has sparked strong debates (CEO, 2020) on social media. Investors increasingly use social media such as Twitter to learn about companies or to obtain trending investment ideas (Rakowski et al., 2021). Moreover, the community of users who utilize Twitter to learn and share about stock market topics has grown, making it potentially more representative of all investors, and civil society at large (Oliveira et al., 2013). Twitter thus provides various stakeholders not only with a platform to gather information and engage in dialogue with others (Lievonen, Bowden, & Luoma-aho, 2022), but also to express their dissatisfaction (Blankespoor, 2018; Hollebeek & Chen, 2014; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Rost, Stahel, & Frey, 2016). This can lead to negative engagement, which often manifests as active, deliberate, and purposeful action toward the object of engagement (Naumann, Bowden, & Gabbott, 2020; Lievonen, Luoma-aho, & Bowden, 2018), and can take on different behavioral forms depending on the situation (Azer & Alexander, 2018; 2020; Lievonen et. al., 2022).

However, research on financial lobbying and its role in generating public discourse and negative engagement behavior is lacking. Although there is a body of research in economics and political science that has investigated corporates' use of lobbying to shape policy (e.g., Waterhouse, 2013; Woll, 2019; Yasar, Rejesus, Chen, & Chakravorty, 2011), and among others, the concept of negative engagement (Dolan, Conduit, & Fahy, 2016; Hollebeek & Chen, 2014; Naumann, Bowden, & Gabbott, 2017), a theoretical and empirical discussion of the role of financial lobbying on negative engagement behavior in the public sphere, particularly in the realm of SF, has not been researched so far. In this paper, we therefore aim to examine how financial lobbying potentially backfires and leads civil society to respond through negative engagement behavior. In this context, we investigate the following three research questions: (RQ1) *How did BlackRock lobby against the EU Taxonomy and what kind of strategic communication did the asset manager use?,* (RQ2) *How did civil society react to BlackRock's lobbying activities on the EU Taxonomy on Twitter?,* and (RQ3) *What were the effects of negative engagement behavior by civil society on the discourse about the EU Taxonomy on Twitter?*

Method, Data, and Timeline of the Study

To answer the guiding research questions, a mixed methods approach is applied. First, a case description of the lobbying efforts of BlackRock –

world's largest asset manager – in the EU and specifically in the context of the EU Taxonomy is presented. Then, a content analysis is conducted on the social media platform Twitter, in which civil societal actors in SF react to BlackRock's lobbying efforts regarding the EU Taxonomy. The tweets will be captured using the rtweet package in R, which will collect the text data with the selected hashtags #BlackRock and #EUTaxonomy in April 2020, when BlackRock was contracted by the European Commission. An appropriate subset of the collected tweets is then selected for the analysis of negative engagement behavior (cf., Hollebeek & Chen, 2014). Due to the novelty of the concept, we choose an inductive approach, and the content analysis will follow the methodological framework of Miles and Huberman (1994). The process will consist of 1) reduction, 2) clustering, and 3) abstraction of the content. The selected tweets will be individually coded using NVivo analysis software, which is used as a qualitative analysis tool to identify and highlight various negative behaviors related to lobbying activities and BlackRock's collaboration with the European Commission. We will examine how negative engagement behavior is expressed by analyzing the textual content of each tweet, retweet, user data, and number of likes. This will give us information about the potential reach of the negative tweets. The results can then be compared to some of the few previous studies that have provided some preliminary categorizations for negative engagement related to social media. These include, for example, the work of scholars such as Azer and Alexander (2018; 2020), Dolan, et al. (2015), Lievonen et al. (2022), and Vargo (2016).

In parallel to the content analysis, expert interviews are conducted with representatives of civil society (e.g., the Brussels-based NGO *FinanceWatch*). By using snowball-sampling, the goal is to get insights on BlackRock's role in EU policymaking on sustainable finance from civil society representatives in various EU countries on SF issues. The preliminary findings of the case description show that BlackRock has a very influential position in the European SF regulation through its lobbying activities. Furthermore, the content analysis will provide evidence on negative engagement behavior in the context of SF on social media. Moreover, the expert interviews will shed light on the strategic use of communication strategies by BlackRock when lobbying on the EU Taxonomy, put in place by the European Commission. The findings provide useful implications for corporate lobbying research and the potentials and challenges of negative engagement on social media by civil society.

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THE CHALLENGES OF COMMUNICATING THE ITALIAN RECOVERY PLAN: INVESTIGATING MODELS, STRATEGIES, PRACTICES, AND RHETORICS

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Public sector communication in Italy is undergoing intense transformation. The COVID-19 pandemic has opened new challenges in this field, reshaping communication models and practices (Faccioli et al., 2020; Lilleker et al., 2021) and bringing to light or accelerating tensions and innovation processes that had previously gone unnoticed.

Among these, the expansion of digitization processes (van Dijck et al., 2018) is particularly salient (Lovari & Ducci, 2021). As a matter of fact, the national lockdown announced in the spring of 2020 in Italy has forced public administrations to abruptly transition to digital communication in their everyday practices, professional languages, expressive repertoires, technical tools, and organizational arrangements — and to do so quickly in order to provide citizens and the media with timely and clear answers. Public sector communication has thus become ever more strategic for institutions. The pandemic crisis has also accelerated the processes of domestication of digital technologies for public sector communication, underlining the existence of best practices and resilience tactics among many public communicators

(Massa et al., 2022). At the same time, the emergency also highlighted multiple forms of delay in digitization processes, as well as organizational resistance to digital transformation, and short-circuits between public sector and political communication in the online and social media environments overseen by public administrations.

European governments were also faced with another major (communication) challenge. They had to set up and kick-start the communication programs for the national qualification plans for NextGenerationEU, i.e., the European fund for post-pandemic recovery. These are inherently multi-actor projects that interconnect institutions, enterprises, and citizens. Therefore, the establishment of cooperative and concerted communication governance models is required. It is indeed necessary to activate complex processes of multi-stakeholder coordination (Janssen & Estevez, 2013) in order to effectively and inclusively communicate these multilevel plans (OECD, 2021; Lovari & Belluati, 2023), not least for accountability and transparency imperatives. These governance models have to inform both intra-organizational and professional cultures (Massa et al., 2022; Comunello et al., 2021) and the public administration's own governance logics (Johansson & Raunio, 2019). As for Italy, the Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza – PNRR (National Recovery and Resilience Plan) was launched on July 13, 2021, by the Italian Council of Ministers after a complex set of steps on the political, social, and economic levels in post-pandemic Italy. This reform project produced new challenges for public sector communication since it enforces the need for multilevel communication and, therefore, for concerted communication that empowers the actors in the system to engage as active participants in the opportunities brought into play by the reform project.

In these scenarios, communication ecologies are becoming increasingly complex and interconnected while the boundaries between genres, languages and professions are increasingly blurred. In other words, (public) sector communication processes in Italy are becoming ever more 'hybrid' (Rizzuto, 2020; Lovari, 2022). Through this concept, Chadwick (2013) intends to address the ways in which the disintegration of unitary actors in the political arena and fuzzy organizational frontiers are reshaping the arrangements through which communicative power is distributed in contemporary democracies. This notion thus attempts to move beyond categories that have long governed thinking in social science in order to question boundaries in communication as an organizational issue rather than as something that can be assumed prior to the start of any analysis. In this sense, hybridity is an analytical tool that aims at "capturing and explaining the significance of processes that might be obscured by the dichotomous, essentialist, or simply less flexible orientations" (*ibid.*, p. 6). Three areas can be highlighted in which these aspects of hybridity are particularly evident in the public sector communication arena in Italy (Lovari, 2022): the porosity between public- sector communication and political communication, the hybridization of communicators' knowledge and professionalism, and the fluidity in communication formats and genres. Regarding the first area, the debate about the relationship between public communication and political communication is still open, with different positions on which of the two would encompass the other (Canel & Luoma-aho, 2019; Graber, 2003). It has also been noted how the "platformization of public sector communication" (Lovari & Ducci, 2021) has bolstered these processes with detrimental effects on citizens' perceptions of institutional communication (Materassi & Solito, 2015; Leone & Paoli, 2016; Lovari, 2016). The second area of hybridization concerns communication professionals in Italy. Digital communication has made the distinction between information and communication activities more complex, and it has challenged legitimate knowledge, tasks, and professionalism (Solito & Materassi, 2018). Finally, a further liminal space emerges from the hybridization between communication formats and genres (Sorrentino et al., 2020). The subsumption in public communication of the languages, communicative practices, and expressive codes of corporate communication are of particular interest here. They sometimes coexist with or replace the pomposity that has long characterized public administration communication, and sometimes give rise to new forms of expression (Ducci et al., 2019; Lovari & Righetti, 2020).

The tensions brought about by COVID-19, as well as the challenges of multilevel communication set by the post-pandemic recovery plans and the hybridization in contemporary communication ecologies, puts public sector communication in Italy in-between complex transformation processes. Caught amidst this transition, it moves in a liminal terrain that could lead to technocratic or managerial drifts as well as to the unfolding of creative potential and experimentation.

Research questions

Against this background, this contribution focuses on the strategic and organizational communication set up by the Italian government around the Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza – National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), i.e., the Italian plan to qualify for the NextGenerationEU fund for post-pandemic recovery. In particular, we investigate which communicative innovations the PNRR has brought and what are the existing vulnerabilities that it is perpetuating. To this end, we inquire into the communication governance models and into the hybridization processes that are embedded in and (re)produced through the PNRR project in Italy.

Specifically, through a multi-method analysis via in-depth interviews with élite publics and content analysis on institutional Facebook posts, we elaborate on the following research questions:

- RQ 1: Which communication governance model has been adopted for the PNRR? Has any multi-stakeholder and multilevel model been embedded, and with what local articulations?
- RQ 2: Which forms of hybridization can be found in languages, genres, rhetoric figures, narratives, themes, identities, etc., among public sector, political and corporate communication?

This contribution is based on a larger triennial research project that is currently ongoing.

Methodological steps

At the methodological level, we chose to proceed by setting our analysis on the PNRR official communication project launched by the Italian government, that is, Italia Domani. Italia Domani was assigned the task of promoting the allocation of the funds granted by NextGenerationEU. Therefore, it served as an important articulation hub for the PNRR communication, interconnecting government, ministries, regions, municipalities, citizens, and companies. Italia Domani, which was created in July 2022 with the approval of the PNRR project in Bruxelles, was formed by a task force of communication professionals appointed by the Italian government.

We proceeded through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques. First, we conducted two in-depth interviews with élite publics who coordinated the Italia Domani project. The interview was based on a thematic guide based on professional training, online and offline communication practices in the PNRR project, organization and coordination between structures and stakeholders, and visions of public communication between normative imperatives and corporate languages.

As a second step, the Meta Crowdtangle monitoring and analysis tool was employed to extract all the posts issued by the Italia Domani Facebook page in the time range spanning from the approval of the PNRR to the installation of the new government, which decided to stop updating the channel (14/07/2022-17/10/2022). Specifically, data referring to the keywords "National Recovery and Resilience Plan" and "PNRR" were extracted, cleaned and consolidated. These data were elaborated through a content analysis technique (Krippendorff, 1983) and examined through interpretive and statistical analysis. Content analysis is frequently used for online data since it allows for effective elaboration through qualitative and quantitative approaches. Although web content poses inherent challenges mainly related to the instability and multiformity of texts (McMillan, 2000), content analysis is broadly used for the investigation of data corpora extracted from social network sites (Stemler, 2015).

At the operational level, a codebook was constructed that aimed at detecting thematic and semantic dimensions in the data extracted. Methodological (Carley, 1993; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; McMillan, 2000) and analytical (Gadotti & Bernocchi, 2010; DePaula et al., 2018) insights found in relevant literature were considered in the development of this tool. In order to ensure maximum inter-coder reliability (Krippendorff, 1983) and address the aforementioned challenges posed by web content, several joint sessions were conducted among the researchers to define the sample, ascertain mutual understanding of the codebook, and determine the approach. The codebook was refined through a series of pre-tests conducted by the researchers on a small sample of the available data.

Triangulation of qualitative data collected through interviews and data collected through content analysis on Facebook posts allowed the research team to obtain a richer picture of the object of study and thereby add depth and breadth to the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Preliminary results

Interviews and content analysis on Facebook posts yielded useful preliminary results. In particular, they allowed to obtain 'thick' data and evidence regarding communication governance models and processes of hybridization between public sector, political, and corporate communication.

The qualitative data outline relevant information about the governance of communication in the PNRR. Notably, the lack of shared standards on communication both in the NextGenerationUE program (on the European level) and in the PNRR (on the Italian level) resulted in the Italia Domani agency having wide margins of discretionality when designing and implementing communication strategies for the PNRR project and its stakeholders. A fluid and networked communication model thus emerged that intertwined different actors – ministries, municipalities, citizens, businesses – across a variety of communication tools: the official website, the official Facebook page, an Instagram page, a newsletter, and a roadshow in several Italian municipalities.

The content analysis on Facebook posts also yielded useful evidence regarding the semantics of public communication and its forms of hybridization with political and corporate communication. Content analysis has focused on subjects, purposes, genres, modes of engagement and languages of the posts, and highlighted the presence and characteristics of references to 'authoritative' political figures in textual or iconographic form. Complete research data will be presented at the conference.

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THE PARADOX OF CSR COMMUNICATION: BEST PRACTICES TO COMBAT THE PARADOX

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The contemporary concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), although still highly non-consensual, is the output of a path of academic research and social and political pressures that stem from the 1950's to today (Carroll, 2021; Ihlen et al., 2011).

In one of the most consensual definitions, CSR is seen as the "economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations in a given point in time" (Carroll, 1979, p. 500). This conceptualization was also adopted at large by the Green Book of the European Commission (2001) and the 2030 UN Agenda, which identify organizations as leading actors to attain for Sustainable Development, with a set of responsibilities that overflow their legal obligations.

Due to these expectations, companies have reinforced their CSR activities in the last decades, and, consequently, their CSR communication. Stakeholders are increasingly informed and demanding, thus communication is key to convey information and properly interact with them, work on reputation and company performance, as well as raise stakeholders' satisfaction to keep business sound (Viererbl & Koch, 2022; Ihlen *et al.*, 2011).

However, CSR communication sometimes increases skepticism about the organization, instead of reaching the desired goal of demonstrating its contribution to society's well-being (Waddock & Googins, 2011). Nowadays, there's an overall sense of lack of trust, where stakeholders view CSR communication as a PR move, a marketing strategy, a tool for maintaining a status quo, or even greenwashing. And yet, companies are also believed to be essential in solving current social issues (Viererbl & Koch, 2022; Waddock & Googins, 2011).

This phenomenon generates a paradox around CSR communication that makes communication professionals' job difficult. This study aims to deepen the understanding of this paradox of CSR communication, what efforts in this area are worth investing in and what tools and strategies are a more adequate fit for CSR communication.

To reach these goals a mixed methodology was chosen. Firstly, qualitative exploratory research was conducted, using literature research about Corporate Social Responsibility and its communication. This allowed us to understand what work has been done so far and it was possible to identify some of the factors that influence stakeholders' perception and acceptance of CSR Communication.

With our research we found that the importance of communicating CSR is undeniable and widely accepted by the academic community. Communicating CSR efforts can contribute to the creation of positive perceptions and opinions towards the organization. It can help to build legitimacy, support the development of trusting relationships with stakeholders, communicate the organization's abstract and intangible characteristics and provide true and transparent information to increasingly demanding and participatory stakeholders (Viererblr & Kosh, 2022; Crane & Glozer, 2016).

After all, as mentioned in the United Nations 2030 Agenda, sustainable development is only possible through partnership and communication between citizens, government and businesses. Companies need to communicate their Social Responsibility efforts in order to inform all interested parties about their contributions to society and their role in this path to sustainable development.

However, studies also show that this type of communication can result in stakeholders' skepticism and distrust. In this context of lack of trust, communicating CSR is complicated, and creates a paradoxical dilemma: organizations want to respond to the growing demands of accountability and transparency by the public, but they also experience negative effects with the increase in CSR communication (Viererbl & Koch, 2022; Bachmann & Ingenhoff, 2016; Waddock & Googins, 2011; Ihlen, *et al.*, 2011; Du *et al.*, 2010).

According to researchers, type of industry, communication extent and motives perceived by stakeholders (extrinsic or intrinsic) are the main factors that affect the impact of CSR Communication on consumers (Viererblr & Koch, 2022; Waddock & Googins, 2011; Du *et al.*, 2010; Morsing *et al.*, 2008). The message content, communication channels and stakeholder's participation were also other relevant factors identified in our research (Du *et al.*, 2010; Morsing & Schultz, 2006).

In order to deepen and prove these conclusions, the perspective of one of companies' main stakeholders – consumers – was analyzed, since they are in the domain of perception. To do that, an online survey to Portuguese consumers is to be conducted. On the other hand, the perspective of organizations (which act in the domain of intention) was also considered, by conducting interviews to communication professionals or company representatives.

After analyzing different studies conducted about this topic (Viererbl & Koch, 2022; Bachmann & Ingenhoff, 2016; Ingenhoff & Sommer, 2011), it was considered pertinent to carry out a 2x2 between-subjects design survey, where two of the identified main influencing factors of the success of CSR Communication are manipulated. Those key features that are under specific study are both the communication extent (Factor 1: low vs. high extent of CSR communication) and type of industry (Factor 2: trustworthy vs. untrustworthy industries).

The inquiries are designed in such a way that the participants have to read a website of a fictitious company that provides information about the company's Social Responsibility. Participants are randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions: the first one has a long text about CSR activities of a fictitious company in the energy sector; the second presents a shorter description of CSR activities of the same fictitious company; the third shows a long description of CSR activities of a food company; lastly, the fourth experimental scenario, has a shorter text of the CSR activities of the same food company.

In each experimental condition, using a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree-strongly agree) factors like perceived persuasive intent, psychological reactance, perception of social responsibility, perception of the amount of CSR-related communication, corporate legitimacy and content credibility are to be measured (Viererbl & Koch, 2022; Bachmann & Ingenhoff, 2016).

The questionnaire results indicated that in an Industry with lower levels of trust, a low extent of CSR Communication appears to lead to bigger consumer's perception of persuasive intent and worse psychological reactance against the company. The results also indicate that it can lead to a more negative perception of the company's social responsibility efforts and its legitimacy and credibility.

On the other hand, a high extent of CSR Communication appears to lead to an even bigger consumer's perception of persuasive intent. However, respondents show a more positive perception of the company's social responsibility efforts and its legitimacy and credibility.

When comparing the results between low and high extent of CSR communication of the trustworthy company created for the survey, there isn't as big of a difference as the comparison between the sceneries of the untrustworthy company created. A higher extent of communication seems to lead to corporate legitimacy and credibility, a more positive perception of the CSR and less reactance against the company. However, with a higher extent of communication, respondents identify a bigger persuasive intent of the company. But when connecting all these results, the persuasive intent identified by the consumers don't seem to prevent them from acknowledging the CSR efforts of the company.

As mentioned before, to enrich the empirical study, the perspective of organizations was also considered, through interviews with communication professionals of companies that have a clear CSR posture. To help segment the sample and analyse companies who are actively trying to get perceived as socially responsible, the companies were selected within GRACE, a Portuguese non-profit business association that works in the area of Social Responsibility and Sustainability. GRACE integrates the European networks EVPA and CSR Europe, leader in sustainability and corporate responsibility, supporting industry sectors and companies globally, in the transformation and search for practical solutions for sustainable growth.

In order to have a diverse sample, companies were selected between five sectors: Food; Electricity and Gas; Wholesale and Retail; Financial and Insurance Activities; and Transport Sector. Communication professionals or company's representatives were sent an interview via email with six questions regarding the company's CSR Communication main goals, biggest challenges, preferred means of communication, considered factors of success and the importance of CSR inside the company strategy (Howaniec & Kasinski, 2021; Ingenhoff & Sommer, 2011; Nielson & Thomsen, 2009).

In terms of motives for CSR Communication, the interviewed companies pointed out the following: recognition of the company's impact and responsibility towards society; concern for the sustainability and future of the company; need to attract and retain talent; need to create and maintain relations with the communities.

When asked about challenges, companies pointed out difficulties aligned with the Social Responsibility Communication Paradox: there's a concern for consumer perception and creating a balance between actions and communication to create an organic reputation. There're also other challenges like making sure all stakeholders understand the company's purpose and creating innovative and differentiated initiatives that stand out.

Lastly, in terms of success factors, the interviewed companies point out: transparency and authenticity; coherence between the purpose, values and culture of the company with the CSR efforts communicated; importance of an internal culture; importance of involvement of all stakeholders; communicating regularly with the community, not only in the good moments.

The mixed methodology chosen allowed us to better understand the paradoxical dilemma of CSR Communication and the multiple factors associated with it. Even though each instrument of research can have several limitations, by triangulating all information gathered in the exploratory research with the survey and interviews results, we were able to produce a set of guidelines on how companies should approach CSR Communication, considering the perspectives of companies, consumers and researchers.

A holistic view of CSR within the company, importance of the definition of the Company's Culture, the alignment between the organization's rhetoric and practice, a careful use of CSR communication extent and stakeholders' participation are the main guidelines we reflected on our conclusions of the present study.

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility; CSR communication; Organizational communication.

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PORTUGUESE WOMEN IN THE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INDUSTRY: PERCEPTIONS ON GENDER EQUALITY DIMENSIONS

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Considering strategic communication and the UN sustainable development goals, we focus on goal number five, set out to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (UN Global Compact, 2023). The issue of gender in strategic communication may be addressed not only from *what* is being communicated, as from *who* works in the field, trying to "ascertain the gendered relations of power that control media industries" (Byerly, 2016, p. 15).

Research into the role of women in strategic communication, and particularly in public relations (PR), has been conducted since the 1980s, but the 21st century, especially from 2010 onwards, has brought an increase on academic research concerning the experiences of women working in the industry (Polić & Holy, 2020; Yeomans, 2019; Topić et al., 2020). The fact that the European Communication Monitor has been logging issues in gender, surveying communications practitioners in Europe since the beginning of this century also contributed to highlight the importance of how the feminization of this field may still entangle career progression and structural barriers (Topić, 2022), which in turn may influence what is being communicated to audiences.

An extensive literature review on women in the strategic communication field, especially in PR, showed the theoretical development of studies in this area (Topić et al., 2020). This study highlighted the importance of the 1986 Velvet Ghetto study, which pointed out that women saw themselves as technical staff, expecting less payment than men, and attracted further academic studies. Some of the identified issues include the glass ceiling, pay gap, lack of mentorship opportunities and stereotyped expectations of a masculine leadership style. Topić et al. (2020) examined the evolution of theories, with a special emphasis, in the 1990's, on the development of feminist theories of public relations, and the organizational theory in public relations, focusing on themes that ranged from radical feminist perspective, women as symmetrical communicators, the criticism of liberal feminism, glass ceiling and pay gap, work experiences and satisfaction, and power. Studies from the first decade of the 21st century were marked by professionalism and feminist theory, focusing on old and new themes (the position of women and the position of public relations, technical vs. managerial positions, criticism of liberal feminism, feminist values and PR excellence, power, women more inclined to do research and still the radical feminist perspective). Finally, Topić et al. (2020) identified as main research themes in the second decade of this century work discrimination and bias against women, including issues of technical vs managerial positions, glass ceiling and pay gap, masculine work culture, diversity, stereotypes about women's organizational skills, power, stereotypes on communication skills, and intersectionality and criticism of liberal feminism. The repetition and continuation of issues under study is well revealing of the persisting problems in attaining the UN goal of gender equality in this industry.

Departing from EUPRERA project concerning women in public relations (Women in PR) (https://euprera.org/what-we-do/projects/women-in-public-relations/, retrieved 27 Februray, 2023), this research on the Portuguese context followed its European counterparts that aimed at understanding the barriers and challenges women face at the workplace, namely issues of equity in promotions, salaries, and work-life balance.

This study therefore focuses on the perceptions and experiences of Portuguese female practitioners in strategic communication and public relations regarding gender equality dimensions, which include personal life, career, leadership, and communication.

The context for this study is relevant because historically Portuguese women have gone through times of both progress and setbacks trying to grant their rights. They have however, always lived in a condition of inequality in relation to mean (Vaquinhas, 2011). Despite evidence of women participating in the labor market during the dictatorship (1926-1974) (Cabreira & Braga de Macedo, 2022), the regime encouraged women to refer only to the private sphere, restricting them to social roles of wife/mother and housewife (Aboim, 2010; Wall, 2011). As a result of the April Revolution of 1974, the Portuguese political, economic, social, and cultural structures underwent profound changes (Barreto, 2005), with significant progress being made in the areas of equality and women's rights (Rêgo, 2012). Being a member-state of the EU since 1986, this southern European country adopted the UN sustainable goals, though it still presents lower salaries when compared to European average. Gender inequalities, as significant gender pay gaps (Torres et al., 2018) and glass ceilings are widespread, while since the 1970's feminization has been growing in many activity sectors and particularly in the strategic communication and PR industry.

This research used a qualitative method of in-depth interviews to 19 Portuguese female practitioners in the strategic communication field, eight of which in leadership positions. Interviews were conducted from April 15 until November 30, 2020, and due to the pandemic context, occurred mostly online. Ethic procedures were followed, as informed consent forms were signed, and anonymity was granted. The chosen research technique was discourse analysis to derive meaning from words, using the voice given to women.

Participants included a variety of professional titles, from PR specialists, consultants, and managers, to press, corporate and public affairs officers, communication board advisors and junior practitioners. Ages ranged from 21 to 52 years-old with up to 30 years of experience in the field, all with at least one academic degree. This study managed to get answers that enabled different working environments and perspectives, including women from the public and private sectors, although the latter predominated. Main dimensions were structured around personal life and expectations; career progression and structural barriers; leadership; and communication – verbal and non-verbal.

Results show that female practitioners in strategic communication and PR industries are less represented in top leadership positions. Not only for the number of interviewed women, but also according to their reported experiences. And this situation intersects with all the dimensions involved in this research.

Regarding the professional dimension, most interviewees over 30 stated that "many times they weren't taken seriously" because they were women. Though reporting male colleagues never insinuated any lack of gender-based lack of competence, they perceived it "through tasks distribution". Women even had to "change their behavior to be heard and to have their skills respected". One of the leaders (43-year-old) reported feeling, when she began coordinating teams, people questioned her capabilities due to being a woman and black.

In general, results show younger women not perceiving a differential treatment due to gender, but rather to the "generational gap", and they even normalized the situation. Conversely, younger, and less experienced professionals, and some in leadership positions, tended to have a more gender egalitarian perception of the profession, considering both internal functioning and career opportunities. On the other hand, most older women and female leaders say that women have a longer way than men to prove themselves and be promoted. One 42-year-old interviewee claimed, "to progress women have to stop being women, in the sense of sensitivity, caring and tenderness, characteristics of the female gender". Another 44-year-old professional stated that "in terms of salaries, women still earn less than men and are still penalized, sometimes in a disguised way, when they have small children or get pregnant". Family issues are generally perceived as the greatest career obstacles for women. Especially if "women do not have a personal support network or if organizations are not sensitive". Most of them postponed maternity due to the difficulty of balancing their careers demanding schedules. They all stated they worked more than eight hours a day and at weekends. And not all of them are paid for it. Nevertheless, they recognized the importance of this time for networking, which is essential to "establish contacts and grow in the profession". Concerning leadership, most of them did not express any preference for bosses being men or women. But some highlighted the pragmatism and seriousness, typical of male leadership, and others underlined the advantage of working with female bosses, because they were more supportive and empathetic.

In the communication dimension, almost all women perceived it was not good for their careers to be extroverted, spontaneous or direct. Even though among the respondents many admitted to having a direct, assertive, or institutional communication style, several admitted to having become more thoughtful and introverted over time. However, most women in leadership positions said they had a more masculine communication and leadership profile.

The way they dress is also well thought. Although in most cases there are no dress codes, they all know how to fit into their formal and informal work functions. However, they are careful to not wear clothes "too revealing or that expose the body", to avoid being "misinterpreted". Also, at the level of verbal communication, and especially among older women, they report having "heard many sexist comments" throughout their careers. This occurred especially in work environments with male bosses. In general, younger women claimed not to engage in different conversations with male colleagues when they are the same age, talking about "mundane things and parenthood". And they considered some sexist expressions to be "jokes without malice". Both younger and older women agree that, when socializing only with women, they prefer to talk about "girly world" issues.

Within the personal dimension, most interviewees mentioned having had a typical "girl" socialization, more supported by their mother or grandmothers. Some older women and leaders, between 40 and 55 years old, grew up more with men - fathers and brothers, either because they socialized more in the street or because of the sport they practiced.

These results show how the political history of the 50 years of dictatorship that placed women in a domestic context, without public or private voice, still affects female practitioners in the strategic communication industry. Their discourses were still marked by the assumption of career obstacles, especially related to maternity. And even though in the 21st century all higher education in communication areas is feminized, gender equality does not mean increasing quantitative representation (Morley et al., 2016), so this goal of the UN needs further research and policies.

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UNIVERSITY FOURTH MISSION AND NOWADAYS SOCIETY. ETHIC IMPERATIVE AND RELATIONAL CHALLENGES IN THE CONTEXT OF HIGH EDUCATION IN ITALY

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Scope and context

The paper aims at investigating the concept of "Fourth Mission", which is nowadays emerging in the University context both in Italy and abroad. Studies dedicated to this issue – whose conceptual perimeters are dynamic and not clear-cut – have focused on some major dimensions and analytic perspectives converging in exploring, by several disciplines and points of view, the socio-cultural values of high education in contemporary society.

According to the European University Association, we refer to a new mission universities are starting to consider in their own strategic management and communication planning. Such an emerging dimension is oriented to the service of civic development and sustainability, by "evaluating and being accountable for the appropriate adjustment of principles and values, as well as policies and activities" (EUA 2021, p.6).

In particular, the Fourth Mission includes an additional and varied set of scopes and activities carried on by universities to express responsibility towards their internal and external stakeholders, also in the key of social inclusion and innovation, collective well-being and sustainability (RUS 2021). This function, emerging especially after the Covid-19 pandemic and remaining only scarcely institutionalized in Italy, integrates and completes the other three traditional missions of university: research, teaching and, not least, Third Mission and public engagement (Loi & Di Guardo 2015; Martino 2016; Mazza & Valentini 2020).

Recently, the National Recovery and Resilience Plan has defined “Education and Research” as a strategic sector to enhance the role of universities, promoting the Fourth Mission as an ethical imperative to develop a knowledge-based economy, competitive and resilient. For universities the “burning question” of the 21st century revolves around two fundamental assumptions. Universities are nowadays called to cope with challenges arising from the so-called “knowledge society” and a rapid global competition; at the same time, University, as a cultural and “ethical” institution, has a responsibility to become an institutional player in the advocacy for social justice, inclusion and wellbeing.

The major crisis in society, inequalities, diversity, social mismatches, challenges posed by the hyper-complex society in the relationship between the global and local: all these are crucial challenges for University (Goddard & Vallance 2013), which can no longer estrange itself in a distant world of self-referential knowledge (Mazzei 2000, 2004).

The Fourth Mission, in this meaning, can be considered more accurately as a “fourth dimension” (D’Alessandro 2015) universities are called to get through in order to answer society’s demands more effectively and to contribute decisively - as common good in themselves - to the growth of Common Good for citizens (Milani 2017). The Fourth Mission is thus a form of *political* commitment by academic institutions, as it should represent one of the strategic purposes of the University and aim at connecting the sense and scopes of the other three “traditional” missions.

In fact, the Fourth Mission is part of the more general framework of University’s relationships with society, including the community and other non-academic stakeholders, which in the past – and still today – has been declined and valued especially in the key of “Third Mission” (Martino 2016). But in comparison with the Third Mission, it takes on a more pronounced social significance, not least in the light of the profound changes that have taken place in high-educational institutions because of the pandemic emergency (Lovari 2022). Crisis and changes have forced to review the relational model that the academic system is called upon to cultivate with society and to copy in an innovative way the challenges descending from them. Indeed, the context in which Italian universities operate today is no longer merely that of a "place of learning" (Corsi & Magnier 2016), where knowledge is brought into dialogue in order to "pour" over students concepts and formulas that can be assimilated – in addition to the traditional teaching and training activities – also in a surrounding hybrid media environment (for example, from social media, blogs or forums, highly innovative tools such as podcasts or platforms, like Twitch or others). Rather, universities today represent the place where to educate aware citizens, capable of critical thinking and to feel engaged at both the national and global level (Boffo & Moscati 2015).

In this context, corporate and public communication can play a strategic role for the University in managing new relationships with the academic community and society and disseminating knowledge and activities which have social and economic spillovers (Boffo & Cocorullo 2019; Lovari 2010; Morcellini & Martino 2005). Several studies point out how, for public and scientific organizations, the opportunities related to an inclusive and ethical communication and of listening to citizens can represent one of the most important areas to reinforce trust and social cohesion (Canel & Luoma-aho 2019; Ducci *et al.* 2020; Lovari *et al.* 2020). In particular, public engagement in decision making is a necessary condition for effective governance (OECD 2009), to improve university policy performance to be competitive and entrepreneurial (Kretz & Sá 2013).

Research methods

In front of such an evolving scenario, a multi-stage research programme aims at exploring both the conceptual dimensions and the operational and evaluation activities which define as a whole the field of University's Fourth Mission and its evolution in Italy. Many research questions arise in such a context: has the Fourth Mission been institutionalized in the Italian universities' governance and communication planning? What are the strategic performance indicators? Is it possible to define a measurable and comparable Fourth Mission management model inside universities?

Major trends will include investigating to retrace the state of the art in Italy and comparing it at different levels: with the international situation in other countries and high-education systems, where the concept of University Forth Mission is also arising; with the long-standing tradition of universities, distinguishing themselves as the most resilient and ethic kinds of organizations of the modern age; and, not least, with the evolution involving nowadays other kinds of *purpose-driven organizations* both in the public and private field.

From such an explorative intent, the research programme will be based on a multi-method strategy and three specific stages of investigation.

At first, an interdisciplinary review will be developed and discussed. On the one side, scientific literature and theoretical models in the field of public relations and strategic communication, regarding both private and public organizations, will allow to better focus previous studies and emerging topics which can be usefully applied and put in connection one another to study University's Fourth Mission. Thus, according to a normative framework and an emerging *strategic-behavioral* paradigm of communication and public relations (Grunig 2016): among the most relevant analytic perspectives it is possible to mention, indeed, those of corporate ethics and responsibility, public and stakeholder engagement, reputation management, purpose-driven management and shared value creation process (Invernizzi e Romenti 2020). On the other side, a review of the scientific and specialized contributions investigating universities' management and communication processes will be developed to focus those features and situational conditions distinguishing universities' case and making their own communication and relational models so unique in respect to any other public, private and no-profit organizations.

At a second stage of investigation, major trends, experiences, best practices and opportunities will be retraced at the national level, by a wide-range observation of Italian universities' corporate websites. In this way, it will be possible to evaluate the online official mentions that every university dedicates to its own Fourth Mission activities, the way each one defines such an activity into its own corporate strategic planning and, not least, the degree this new mission is institutionalized by the university governance and finally communicated to stakeholders and strategic publics. In particular, in the exploratory stage of the research, significant space will be given to some best practices and experiences within the Italian university system in order to devote to them specific in-depth studies and case histories in the field.

The third and final stage of analysis will involve some experts and opinion leaders both in Italy and abroad, to explore the first-hand experiences and points of view expressed by those actors directly participating in the management and innovation process within universities. In particular, this stage will see the partnership with the major associative networks in the field of university communication: among them, it is possible to mention AICUN (Italian Association of University Communicators) and, at the international level, EUPRIO (European Association of communication professionals in Higher Education). Qualitative in-depth interviews with pro-rectors and delegates committed for the Third and Fourth mission in several universities will also be gathered to reconstruct the experiences and degree of institutionalization of the issue and the management processes which are associated with it. This will allow to retrace the evolution of the contemporary debate around Fourth Mission from different descriptive perspectives: its distinctive contents and scopes; the potential of innovation in comparison with the elements of continuity with the past and University's tradition; the opportunities and value for the stakeholders and universities themselves; not least, the challenges and risks concerning the way the Fourth Mission is communicated and promoted towards universities' internal and external publics.

Keywords: University communication; Impact; Corporate communication; Academic community; University value, Public Relations

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FROM ENGAGEMENT TO ACTIVISM: WHAT PUBLICS ARE DEMANDING OF ORGANISATIONS

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The field of Public Relations is grounded on a conceptualization of the publics as active. Publics have specific interests in the activities of certain organisations, and organisations strive to keep their interest. Publics are also referred to as stakeholders, in the sense that they have something "at stake" when it comes to the performance of a certain organization, which can be positive or negative for them, beneficial or harmful.

Organizations strive to keep the interest of their publics, and to take this bond to the next level, building a strong, meaningful, and long-lasting relationships. The contours of such relationships have changed throughout the times, having these changes been driven by the technological development of media, by new trends in consumption behaviour, and by specific political and economic contexts that frame human activity. Thus, our communication sets out to answer the following research questions: What are contemporary publics requiring from organizations to engage in meaningful and long-lasting relationships with them? How can contemporary publics be characterized? And how are organizations changing in order to meet their requirements and preferences

Currently, organisations are adopting missions and purposes that go beyond survival or profit. The contemporary conceptualization of organizations regards them as complexly intertwined with their publics, partners, community, and context, at a global scale. As organizations started to own responsibility for their actions and their impact on others and the planet, publics started to hold organizations accountable for those very same actions (Cizsek, 2015).

Strategic Communication publics have been guided by a core of central questions that Botan and Soto (1998) identify as (a) definition, what are the publics; (b) segmentation, how to significantly differentiate publics; (c) function, what roles different publics play in society; (d) process, how publics come into existence and respond in a certain way. These issues have been addressed by authors from different perspectives with evident hegemony of the situational perspective introduced by Grunig and Repper (1992). According to this point of view, a public is considered to result from a state motivated by a problematic situation and does not constitute a permanent state of consciousness. It is believed that publics appear as responses to problematic situations and that they self-organize to solve them. This perspective considers the segmentation of publics through certain variables. The variables pointed out by Grunig and Repper (1992) are inferred (cognitions, attitudes, and perceptions) and objectivized (demographics, media usage patterns, geographic location). The construction of this model is associated with most studies in Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations.

The situational theory of publics by Grunig and Repper (1992) is part of a broader context, seeking to defend a strategic management model for Strategic Communication. The main concern was to build a reference framework to explain the evolution of the behavior of certain social groups towards a given organization. Three states of development of these groups were defined: the stakeholder state, the public state, and the subject state. Stakeholders are understood as those who affect an organization with their decisions or are affected by the organization's decisions. When stakeholders recognize a problem, they increase their level of involvement, and if they are willing to get involved to address that problem, they move to a state of publics, and may stay there for a longer or shorter time. Finally, if the publics are not satisfied with the behavior of a particular organization, one may reach the state of issues or controversies (Eiró-Gomes & Duarte, 2005). The situational variables that are involved in the shift from stakeholders to publics include (a) problem recognition, which leads to information seeking, (b) constraint recognition, which discourages communication since people do not communicate about issues, they feel they cannot do anything about, and (c) level of involvement, as an individual's cognitive perception of his or her connection to a given situation. An audience is more likely to be active when its constituents perceive that what an organization does involves them (Level of Involvement), that the consequences of what an organization does constitute a problem (Problem Recognition), and that they will not be embarrassed if they do something about the problem (Constraint Recognition) (Eiró-Gomes & Duarte, 2005).

Contemporary publics are deeply informed and highly demanding. Not only do they have instant access to online information and recommendations, but they also have a wide selection of competing offers to chose from. They are empowered and have the necessary media literacy to understand the messages that organizations direct at them, identifying the underlying persuasive intent that is embedded in most of them (Demetrius, 2013).

Corporate social responsibility, in the traditional sense that organizations "give back" part of their profits to their community by supporting specific solidarity causes and initiatives, is not enough for the contemporary publics, who can spot if such causes are aligned with the values that drive the organization or not. Environmental responsibility, when adopted partially and at convenience, is not enough for the contemporary publics, who can easily scrutinize if organizations are doing what they are communicating, and to which extent.

With the advance of information and communication technologies and, observing the transformation of the publics, it makes sense to report to the Communication Strategy the proposal of Sonia Livingstone (2005), who presents the notion of audiences and publics not as opposite contexts, although they are different notions, with many similarities. For the author, "the analysis of publics focuses on an attempt to understand the meaning and consequences of public, as opposed to private, forms of activity or spaces for that activity" (Livingstone, 2005, p. 35). According to Livingstone, media (traditional and new media) provide a window into the world (Livingstone, 2005, p. 21) mediatize, select, assign priorities, shape, according to the institutions, information and communication technologies, and discursive conventions of the media industry. Sonia Livingstone refers to civic citizenship (Livingstone, 2005, p. 34) to speak of a withdrawn public, from privacy, that can generate social capital to achieve greater engagement, with forms of identity.

At the organizational level, crisis and risk management requires special attention to the public, both internally and externally. Therefore, in terms of communication, it is convenient for the manager to define priority groups for informative action. However, with the development of the new media and the Internet, and the increasing movement of people, the management of information flows can no longer be viewed only locally or regionally. The globalization of markets and societies in general suggests considering audiences on a more global level, including both actual and potential audiences.

As publics become increasingly activists, in the sense that the current post-pandemic trend of searching for self-growth and self-fulfilment is driven by value-led action, they feel that the attempts of organizations to catch their attention, hold their interest, foster engagement, and nurture a relationship are not enough. They are demanding that organizations become activists themselves (Holtzhausen, 2011), and act, in all their scope, according to the values upon which they are grounded. Concomitantly, publics are demanding transparency from organisations. They prefer an organization that admits it is attempting to become more sustainable, more accountable, more solidarist, even if there is still a long way ahead, than an organization that claims to be sustainable, accountable, or solidary, but is only partially so (Meyer, 2021).

In our communication, we explore and discuss how publics have changed, particularly in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic (Grant & Smith, 2021), and how these changes are consequently driving change in organizations, and particularly in strategic communication (Gallicano et al., 2021). As a departure point, we take the international reports from Activist Insight, a US-based consultancy firm specialized in activism and corporate governance, between 2019 and 2022, as an empirical base to explore how stakeholders are becoming more activists and how organizations are becoming more vulnerable to such activism. Following an interpretivist and hermeneutical approach, we explore and discuss this data in the light of the state of the art of research on this topic that we present in our theoretical framework, aiming to point relevant directions for future applied research.

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THE IMPACT OF CEO ACTIVISM IN BRAND REPUTATION: THE PROZIS CASE

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With marketing changing from a logic of purpose to a logic of action, and with consumers becoming more belief driven and increasingly assuming their social positions, organizations have been also asked to position themselves and choose a side on controversial, often divisive, sociopolitical issues. According to Rumstadt and Kanbach (2022), the public expects CEOs to take stances on social debates, independent of their business relatedness, with 65% of consumers assuming that they want CEOs to speak on major social issues (Hou & Poliquin, 2023).

Although conventional wisdom holds that CEOs should avoid wading into society's debates (Hambrick & Wowak, 2021), nevertheless, all over the world, CEOs from huge companies, such as Disney, Nike, IBM, Starbucks, GAP, Amazon, Patagonia, Microsoft, Unilever, Siemens, Netflix, or Apple, among others, have taken public positions on some controversial issues, such as politics, diversity, gun control, immigration, abortion, or equal pay, just to name a few. Mark Benioff, the Salesforce CEO, for example, use to hold periodic dinners to explain why he views public activism as part of the modern CEO's job.

By publishing a list of numerous CEOs who have become involved in socio-political causes in recent times, Mkrtchyan et al. (2022) showed an upward trend in the proportion of CEOs who engaged in some form of activism, rising from 0.98% in 2011 to 37.53% in 2019. In fact, CEOs speaking out to try to influence social issues appears to be something that is here to stay, as every day the number of leaders talking about causes that are not directly related to the organizations' core business they lead, on topics ranging from climate change to respect for sexual orientation, from racial issues to gender equality, among others (Chatterji & Toffel, 2019), is increasing.

Furthermore, CEOs' socio-political activism attracts a great public interest, essentially due to their extreme influence, a consequence of their huge public visibility and positional power (Branicki et al., 2020). These public positions gave rise to the so-called "CEO activism", that Hambrick and Wowak (2021, p.34) have defined as "a business leader's personal and public expression of a stance on some matter of current social or political debate, with the primary aims of visibly weighing in on the issue and influencing opinions in the espoused direction". This definition highlights the "*symbolic dimension*" of the role of a leader, whose actions affect the trajectories of their organizations at least as much as their substantive actions (Pfeffer, 1977, 1981, cited in Wowak et al., 2022).

Although Kathy Bloomgarden (2019) have questioned, on the World Economic Forum website, whether CEOs – whom she dubbed activists – should talk about social causes that concern the entire community and, ultimately, the entire planet, the fact is that, probably because of its impact, CEO activism results in positive market reactions and higher valuations of the firms (Mkrtchyan et al., 2022). The same conclusions were reached by Rumstadt and Kanbach (2022) who found that CEO activism seems to have a direct influence on consumers' willingness to purchase from a company. Maybe because of this, over the last decade, business leaders have increasingly engaged in taking public stances on several social and political issues that affect their employees, customers, communities, the environment, and so on. Interestingly, as Melloni et al. (2019) refers, if a CEO takes a stand on some side of the debate, is considered as "CEO activism", but if it doesn't take any position, that can be seen as "strategic ambiguity".

Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that taking a stance on controversial issues is different than just support some social issues, even if they're related to global social problems, as it is the case of corporate social responsibility (CSR). It is commonly acknowledged that CSR is better accepted than corporate activism, especially because the first is usually associated to causes that everybody agrees (environment protection, support local communities, etc.), while the latter is connected to divisive questions that polarize society. Another difference is that activism is unapologetically visible, not hidden discreetly, like several other forms of corporate influence, as donation-giving or lobbying (Hambrick & Wowak, 2021), just to name a few.

But what prompts a CEO to speak out? For Hambrick and Wowak (2021), the CEO's own values system are of paramount importance, but CEOs also analyse the possible reactions of the closest and most important stakeholders, such as employees and customers, by weighing the degree by which these publics share the same values and would (or not) support a specific action. This way, they try to reduce possible backfire. Even so, taking a stand always raises several issues. For Melloni et al. (2019) there are at least two consequences: the first one is that of course there will be always audiences that don´t agree with the CEO's point of view and, therefore, may reject to buy products from that company. This is corroborated by Rumstadt and Kanbach (2022), who reminds us that one of the possible risks that executives take when publicly weighing in on political issues, is irritating stakeholders and that may lead to negative reactions or sales boycotts. This reaction of buying products to express an opinion or to make a statement, as an extension of their beliefs, values, and lifestyles is, for consumers, an opportunity to make an impact and exercise their power (Eyada, 2020) and is known as political consumerism (Clarke, 2008; Manfredi-Sánchez, 2019; van Deth, 2014, Vázquez, 2014).

The second consequence is that CEO activism may be seen as profit motivated, and if so, consumers tend to avoid or, at least, relativize CEOs communications.

Taking a public stance is, therefore, often a true double-edged sword, since organizations are made up of people, who are citizens above everything else, and the line between what is private and what is public often becomes diffuse. CEOs, the "most visible face" of organizations, are now facing this great dilemma, as their opinions and public attitudes are simultaneously from a citizen and from a leader, with no clear frontiers, as seen in the case with the CEO of Prozis, who issued a controversial personal opinion, by publicly welcoming the decision of the US Supreme Court to revoke the protection of the right to abortion. As a result, the company he leads had suffered consequences, having been the target of numerous censorships, cancellations of contracts with influencers and personalities who did not want to be associated with these statements, as well as thousands of common people who unfollowed the brand on social networks and publicly assumed that they would no longer consume products from that company. The author therefore postulates that the attitude of the CEO of Prozis had an impact on the reputation of the company he leads. By analysing the case of Prozis, this article seeks to explore the impact and consequences of CEO activism on brand reputation.

According to Herbig and Milewicz (1993), to be successful in the market, brands need to have a good reputation, since brands and organizations with a better reputation attract more customers. To this benefit, Doorley and Garcia (2020, p. 4), added the attraction of "more and better candidates for employment, pay less for supplies, gain essentially free press and social media coverage that can be worth much more than advertising, and accrue other benefits that actually contribute to profits."

For the present study, we'll use the definition of corporate reputation as "a collective assessment of the attractiveness of a company for a specific group of stakeholders relative to a reference group of companies with which the company competes for resources" (Fombrun, 2012: 100). Although the construct of corporate reputation has been defined in several different ways over the years, and therefore, makes it difficult to agree in a concrete and single definition, there is the notion that a good reputation enhances the value of the organization (Dowling, 2016). In 2019, Veh et al. have analysed 5885 publications on corporate reputation, published until 2016, and found that this construct is a valuable intangible asset that contributes to a competitive advantage in the market, which enhances a superior financial performance (p. 316).

Doorley and Garcia (2020, p.37) advanced with this interesting formula of reputation: R = (P+B+C) x A*f*. For the authors, Reputation is the sum of Performance, Behaviour and Communication, all of this multiplied by the Authenticity factor. Authenticity is the indicator of how well an organization lives up to its intrinsic identity. This is, when there is authenticity, the organization is whole, undiminished, but when it fails, its reputation will decline, once it will be a fraction of the sum of P + B + C. So, if any one of these factors is pinched, this has consequences on the company's reputation.

Since performance can be seen as the functionality (in this case of Prozis' products) and those didn´t have any functional problem, change, or decrease in quality, we will focus on communication and behaviour, to try to understand its impact in this specific case. By one hand, how the CEO statements were received by the consumers. On the other hand, which consequences it brought in terms of costumers' conduct, both in buying behaviour and attitude towards the brand.

To that end, an online survey with 550 valid answers were conducted between March 13th and April 12th, 2023. The sample included 1.8% of people that prefer not to answer to gender type, 60.9% of females and 37.3% of males. 8.9% are Baby Boomers, 35.8% Gen X, 22% Gen Y and 33,3% Gen Z. Regarding the professional situation, 47.5% are working for someone else, 25.3% are students, 11.8% are self-employed without dependent workers and 8.9% are self-employed with dependent workers. Finally, 2.9% are unemployed and 3.6% are trainees. As to their political position, the distribution is almost perfect with 0.5%, 7.3%, 23.8%, 37.6%, 21.6%, 7.8% and 1.3% of the extreme left, left, centre-left, centre, centre-right, right, and extreme right, respectively.

As for the results, the participants didn't show any differences when asked if they think a CEO should take a public position on a cause that concerns him or her personally (72.4%) or causes involving their organization or their employees (72.4%).

Although 73.5% assumes that any CEO should have the right to express their personal opinions, in this specific case of Prozis' CEO declarations, 76.7% of the respondents consider that the reputation of the brand was affected, and 69.1% disagree or strongly disagree with those statements. Even so, more than half (51.6%) stated that they did not (or would not) stop buying Prozis products due to those declarations of its CEO.

Finally, 55.8% of respondents assumed that, even if Prozis changed the CEO, the Image/Reputation of the brand would not be the same again, which reinforces the idea that the attitudes of the leaders have a direct impact on companies' reputation.

Moreover, 69.8% consider that if this CEO moved to another company, the new organization would be affected, showing that despite the direct correlation between leaders' attitudes/organizations' reputation, people can still differentiate a personal opinion from an organizational position, and associate the socio-political positions to those who state them.

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BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE MATCHMAKING BETWEEN PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT SECTOR AND CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS DURING PANDEMIC. ADDED VALUE, MOTIVATIONS, AND COMPANIES' BENEFITS TO JOIN THE PORTUGAL #ENTRAEMCENA PLATFORM

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The motivations and role of private agents and companies in funding culture was debated along centuries until our times (Rouzé, 2019; Santos and Conde, 1990), an historical moment where brands are increasingly associated with cultural products due to their symbolic value (Schroeder et al., 2010)and where there is an increasing appropriation of culture and creativity as a useful tool for multiple sectors businesses (Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Gehman & Soublière, 2017).

Even if they usually respond to specific objectives and units, CSR policies and marketing strategies are often blended along multiple actions of funding, sponsoring and communication (Foà and Ribeiro, 2013) to enhance brand promises and to engage people with companies' culture and values.

Culture and arts are very sensitive targets in the era of attention economy (Davenport and Beck, 2001; Falkinger, 2007) and reputation economy (Gandini, 2016) due to their communicational power and financial instability and dependency.

The study follows a multi-stakeholder approach and adopts a mixed-methods design (Bryman, 2012) to explore the dynamics hidden behind the creation, adoption and end of an innovative digital marketplace (Rangaswamy et al., 2020) for cultural and creative sectors in Portugal, promoted by the institutional sponsorship of the Ministry of Culture and fuelled by the economic investment of agents from private and for-profit sector.

In 2020, during the pandemic crisis, Portugal #Entraemcena (PEC) was presented as a "movement" aiming to promote the matchmaking – encounter and exchanges (Cusumano et al., 2019) – between agents from the cultural and creative sectors and the commercial private sector, as well as, to support a change within the relational paradigm between the two sides of the market (the offer and the demand of funding) through the implementation of a digital, neutral intermediary.

The objectives of financing or purchasing artistic products/services were realized through specific operational models, called Ideas (launched by artists and cultural organizations) and Challenges (launched by companies and commercial brands).

PEC raised the expectations of the cultural and creative sector for the easiness and apparent effectiveness of this model, which contrasted with what was done in parallel at the government level, during a time of great uncertainty and constraints.

Our study considers PEC's immediate but fleeting media impact (exploration phase 2020: userexperience and news coverage analysis) and proposes to deepen the knowledge about the phenomenon, describing the types of agents and relations that sustain the composition of this ecosystem, analysing its' effective forms of use, the motivations, resources and added value of the different players enrolled.

We map the entire PEC ecosystem using a three-phased research design, based on the platformization of society and cultural production theories (van Dijck, 2018; Nieborg and Poell, 2018) to identify the purposes of:

1. the technological infrastructure: platform's communication affordances, channels, management.
2. the economical dimension: funding sources, policies, agreement, expectation and outcomes from investors' perspective;
3. the social dimension: rules, benefits, duties, application, and assessment criteria from artists' perspective.

We first analyse, using content analysis and user experience's tests, the affordances and the contents from PEC online sources, its social media and related news media coverage, to identify quoted agents, covered themes and respective benefits and added value of the initiative.

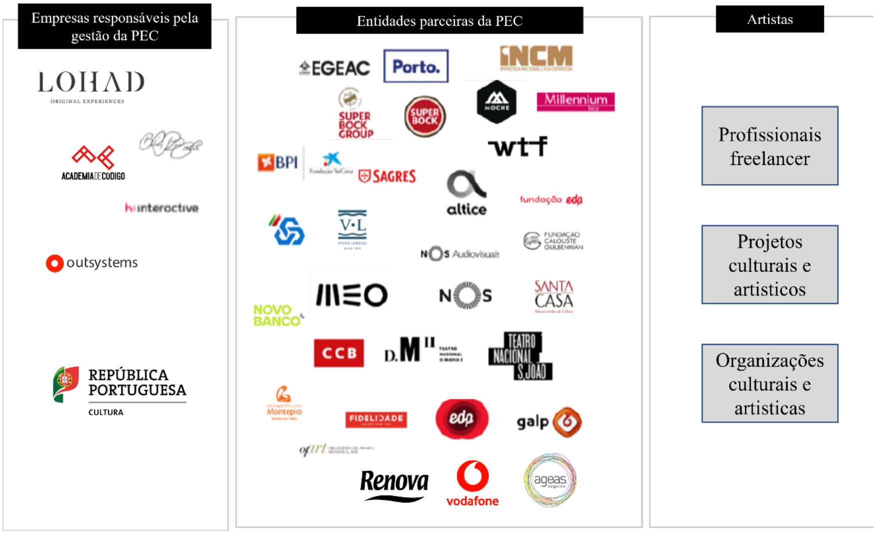
During this phase some doubts raise and persist about the source and allocation of the announced amount of money, the type of involvement and commitment warranted by exposed public agents andbodies, as well as the responsibilities of platform and procedures management.

Then we did 3 focus groups with awarded and not awarded artists to clarify the occurred proceduresand experiences. We clarify details about IP, privacy, budgeting and how the platform was just a first- contact instrument to develop relations between brand companies and artists, being totally externalto any type of exchanges.

Thus, we identify a set of relevant agents who were "behind the scenes" responsible for the PEC launch and functioning.

We distinguish the ecosystem stakeholders among managers, partners, and artists as in the following Figure 1.

Figure 1. The PEC ecosystem



Source: own elaboration

We could identify among partners some public companies not only CEO's and founders of dozens of companies listed on the homepage but also the relevance of managers as the CEO of a communicationand cultural events agency who coordinate all operations, some IT managers, and coders from tech- academies, start-ups and unicorn based in Portugal.

We interview the CEO coordinator who provides us a global perspective about the initiative, advocating a win-win situation as PEC creation was answering both to a social emergency (lack of sustainability for cultural and creative sector workers) and to a political challenge (reduce budget to directly answer to the crisis). The pivotal role of the coordinator in mobilizing the private sector decision makers (CEO) and his capacity to "build bridges" impelled the necessity to collect more information for the investors' side.

We define the PEC as sectorial platform, which business model is platform-based to create and deliver, particularly emotional and social value, according to Täuscher e Laudien (2018), as it is not so much efficient in transaction cost reduction but enhance the creation of a digital product community for an on-demand offline-service. Our results show that the technological infrastructure was a goal and nota medium for institutional and commercial players involved in its creation, as it servedcommunicational objectives more than business/philanthropic/public service purposes.

This paper presents in-dept results from multiple cases- study (Yin, 2018) focused on three Challenges launched by three major companies of retail, telcos and insurance sectors, sampled from a progressive stakeholders' clustering process (Miles et al., 2019).

We analyse each Challenge and conduct other semi-structured interviews with brand and/ormarketing managers of these three companies to discuss following themes:

- the reasons for joining the PEC movement;
- the previous commitment with art funding and usage of CSR or marketing budget topurchase/support artworks;

- the commitment and system of relations between the company, the platform and the PEC managers;
- the contents and rules of each Challenge (some include a compulsory usage of company brandname for the artistic composition title, IP restriction or other similar criteria);
- the funding process and the source of funds from company budget;
- the level of participation/the role of company CEO/management in the artistic selection;
- the inclusion of other artist directors;
- challenges, opportunities, interferences within operations and production of the fundedartworks;
- impact assessment, media coverage and public/institutional relations outcomes.

Our results include the evaluation of each Challenge according five categories, composing our analytical framework, which allow comparisons between Challenges, and point to the relevance of previous commercial and personal relations between some of the PEC management players for the creation of this platform. The communication strategy and brand equity are key drivers of motivation for all involved companies. The main invested volume come from marketing budget, and it was part of a reallocation strategy, it means that it was instrumental and specifically reduced to pandemic-times.

We observe the presence of positive *feedback loop* (Cusumano & Gawer, 2015) driven by the Ministryand a mutual influence among investors, even if they were competitors on their main business sector.

The investors claim evident benefits from their participation in terms of tangible and intangible value. Media attention and coverage branded artistic product and positive multi-media storytelling contents are some of the most relevant benefits according to marketing managers and CEO's.

The most include this initiative within a wider strategy to position their brand according to its value and mission of being art-supporters, digital-oriented and innovators, particularly during pandemic times. PEC represent a great opportunity in term of marketing communication as well as corporate communication (Kim, 2011) and desired positive impacts reach multiple segments, since no-profit and artistic sectors strongly affected and looking for quick and effective answers, to employees involved with the PEC, it Challenge and the artworks' lifecycle (call, selection production, dissemination), as well as loyal customers and social media followers.

Often one of the main "not-public" reason to join was also the soft power and/or the institutional relations involved within the invitation to join the PEC.

Most of independent artists were taking forward a protest against the lack of political protection to their professional status (Neves et al, 2020), and in many cases were highly engaged and hopefully about PEC on that time, pointing to companies good-practices and spreading the good-new online.

The same happened with news media, and our analysis identify the presence of a strategical orchestration of media relations, and how some recurrent themes were covered, and some brands often mentioned, even if not all artworks were completed or produced, when the PEC ends its activities due to the lack of sustainable business model for itself.

The PEC was a model offering a value retention system only for the investors (Täuscher & Laudien, 2018) but did not ensure sustainability to provide artist an innovative system to market their art and to establish mid-long or term relation with investors.

The platform slowly ends to function, maintaining its landing page online, with no communications, rumours, or follow-up. Companies and public body still benefit from the launching and disseminationof artwork and related events.

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ONE THOUSAND AND ONE DAYS. THE ROLE OF TRUST SIGNALS FOR TRUSTWORTHINESS PERCEPTION IN STARTUPS AND EMERGING BRANDS

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Introduction

The significance of trust in human interactions is widely acknowledged. However, with the world facing unprecedentedly low levels of trust, it is paramount that action is taken to restore a better sense of dispositional trust (Mcknight, Cummings and Chervany, 2000) in society. The way companies communicate and present themselves through brand narratives has become even more critical as consumers seek brands they trust. As a result, companies that understand the role of trust in building customer relationships are better positioned to succeed in today's market.

Data shows that the global community is deeply divided due to a lack of trust, driven by factors such as economic uncertainty, widespread disinformation, and growing social class divides; This has made businesses seem the most trustworthy entities compared to NGOs, governments, and media (Edelman, 2023) and suggests that companies should take advantage of this trust to help restore economic confidence and promote integrity.

Creating a trustworthy and reliable image through brand narratives is beneficial and cost-effective, especially for startups and emerging brands that need to establish trust with customers from the beginning. Brand narratives and rhetoric are vital for driving perceived trust and triggering initial trust among customers. By telling a story about themselves, startups and emerging brands can showcase their values and mission, creating a sense of connection and shared beliefs and increasing trust in that brand. However, it is essential to note that brand narratives and rhetoric must be authentic to build trust effectively. If a company's message does not align with its actions, customers will quickly lose trust in the brand.

By practicing the “story doing” long before storytelling, startups and emerging brands will prove their predisposition to respond to society’s needs and demands. Companies that achieve this are seen as trustworthy since they go beyond revenue generation and into positive social impact and transformation.

Still dealing with a devasted post-pandemic economy, entrepreneurship in Brazil offers resistance, with over 13,000 registered startups as of September 2020. Nevertheless, by counting on an ecosystem of innovation and the promotion of entrepreneurship, the country can benefit from a more trusting society that opens the way to security, development, and prosperity.

In light of all these aspects, this paper examines the anatomy of a trustworthy narrative aimed at leveraging dispositional trust through brand rhetoric and its role in building trust in startups and emerging Brazilian brands.

Theoretical framework

1. Brand trust

Trust, not money, is the currency of business and life (Horsager, 2012). Brand Trust is crucial in building customer relationships and overcoming uncertainty in human interactions, business arrangements, and economic transactions (Bromiley & Harris, 2006). The relationship between customers and brands deserves attention, especially with the current low level of public trust (Edelman, 2023) however, the trust of consumers is a crucial factor that should not be overlooked.

Trust is built through various signals that demonstrate trustworthiness and result in trustworthy interactions (Gambetta & Székely, 2014). Although public distrust is considered to be at extremely high rates, consumers’ trust is a strong validation and brands that understand the importance of trust in their narratives and communication with customers will be better positioned in the competitive market (Peppers & Rogers, 2018).

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been changes in consumer behavior and the communication of trustworthiness signals by brands (Batista et al., 2020). This is particularly important for startups, who must establish trust with customers from the beginning (Gambetta & Székely, 2014). Considering these developments, this paper aims to explore the impact of trustworthiness perception on society and the role brand rhetoric and narratives play in building trust in startups and emerging brands in Brazil.

2. One thousand and one days

The reference to the well-known fictional tale *One Thousand and One Nights* highlights the significance of trustworthiness in building successful relationships. The story of Scheherazade, who captivates the heart of a king through her unique storytelling, parallels the journey of new companies in building their brand identity within the first three years, or the "1000 days game" (Nackra, 2018). During this critical period, trustworthiness cues are vital for long-term success, particularly for startups and emerging brands lacking effective communication. During the time an early-stage brand is being built (Witt & Rode, 2005), companies aim to position their corporate brand identity firmly within the first two to three years (Timmons, 1999) to increase their chances of survival (Wiesenberg et al., 2020). The early stages of any business can be a crucial period between its launch and a fork in the road that determines its success or failure, and brand narratives are intrinsically attached to the outcome.

Just like Scheherazade, entrepreneurs face intense pressure to make accurate and timely decisions. To achieve success, founders and managers must have a framework that guides their perception of trustworthiness, even before they engage in storytelling. This framework is crucial, especially in the increasingly important realm of "story doing," which refers to the actions and experiences a brand creates for its customers, paving the way for storytelling, the art of communicating ideas and messages through narrative, potentializing trust promotion, and connecting the brand with the consumer's personal life (Gosline et al., 2017). "Story doing" creates experiences for its customers and can be seen as the practical application of storytelling through a narrative aligned with its values. What the company says in its stories should ally with its identity. Similar to the concept of "walking the talk," it highlights the importance of consistent, authentic behavior to build and maintain trust with customers instead of just telling a good story.

In both "story doing" and storytelling, trustworthiness cues play a crucial role in long-term sustainability (Hegner & Jevons, 2016), especially during a startup's early years when they may face communication challenges and need to improve their projection quickly. In addition, a strong narrative can help establish a consumer-brand relationship based on personal experiences, leading to a deeper connection rooted in trust (Hess, J. Story, 2005).

3. Brazil: the case of low trust, high hopes

The post2020 scenario has shown that trust is at an all-time low. According to a report from the Inter-American Development Bank in 2022, Brazilians are becoming increasingly concerned that others will take advantage of them, resulting in a widespread lack of trust in society and significantly affecting the private sector. Moreover, this lack of interpersonal trust directly impacts the economy, as critical decisions driving economic growth, such as investing, employing, producing, buying, or selling, depend on trust (IADB, 2022).

An increase in trust can positively impact society and the economy by creating a more favorable environment for innovation and growth. Two essential factors in building and maintaining trust are dispositional trust, an individual's general tendency to trust others, and system trust, which is belief in the institutions and systems governing society (Mcknight, Cummings and Chervany, 1995). By promoting both forms of trust, society can foster an environment more conducive to economic growth and innovation.

Research methodology

The study aimed to understand the anatomy of a trustworthy narrative, identifying communication factors that behave as trust triggers in the construction of the narrative of a new brand.

Three objectives were set:

(1) to identify the elements that establish trust in a new brand, (2) to determine the weight of communication among the most critical elements of brand trust, and (3) to identify which trust components can be associated with brand narrative.

The study followed an exploratory approach with five phases that evolved from comprehensive desk research and 20 in-depth interviews that led to 300 trustworthiness cues generated through thematic analysis. First, the data was submitted for correction due to multiple repeating factors and then underwent a frequency analysis that generated the final pool of 96 unique items.

The next phase involved a panel of five experts with proficiency in research on Brazilian entrepreneurship and mentoring startups and brand launches. They evaluated relevance in the pool of 96 trustworthiness cues using a five-point Likert scale. Only items that received consistently high scores and no grade below three were considered and were in the final pool of 60 items.

The 60 items with the highest score were then brought into discussion with a focus group for validation. The focus group comprised 6 participants, three men and three women, selected to share their perceptions as consumers from different age groups. After discussions and individual presentations, the participants evaluated the pool of 60 items in a questionnaire using a five-level Likert scale, finally generating the 46-item framework of trustworthiness perception.

Results and discussion

1. The Dynamics of Trustworthiness Perception: Presentation and Analysis of Data

Thematic analysis of the in-depth interviews in the initial data access phase indicated four dimensions – Communication, Brand Image, Design, and Customer Experience – where the perception of trust in the initial structure and brand narrative occurs through perceivable plugged elements that work as trust triggers, as seem in Table 1.

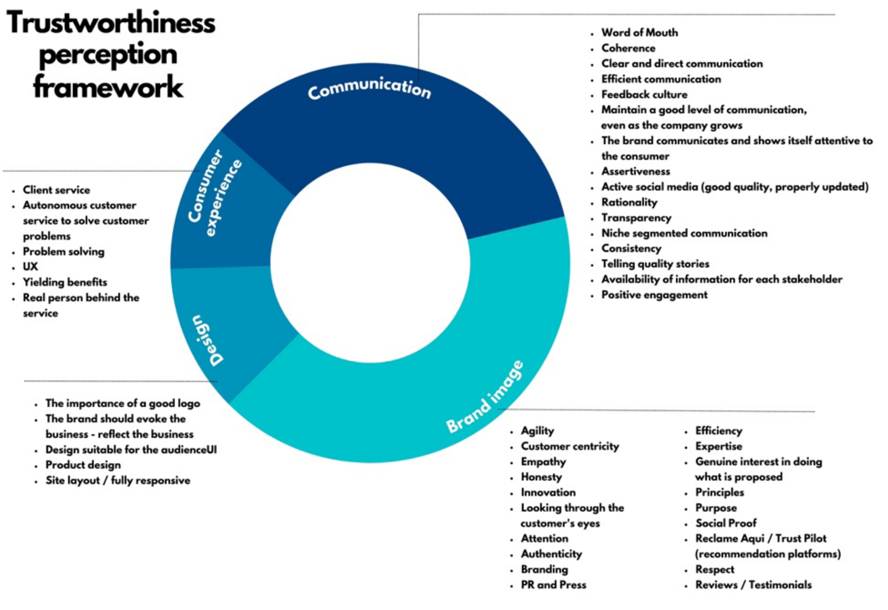

Table 1 - Data graphic for Trustworthiness Perception in Dimensions - Communication, Brand Image, Design, and Customer Experience

1.1. Communication

The communication dimension is where all other elements can be expressed through message articulation. Through communication, attitudes and identity of the brand can be publicized and consequently work their way up to become trust recognition.

Communication Strategy	Spontaneous Communication	Organizational Communication
coherence	word-of-mouth	feedback culture
clear and direct communication	positive engagement	maintains a good level of communication, even as the company grows
efficient communication		availability of information for each stakeholder
the brand communicates and shows itself attentive to the consumer		
assertiveness		
segmented communication per niche		
consistency		
it tells quality stories		
active, good quality, up-to-date social media		
rationality		
transparency		

Table 2 - Drivers of Trust in the Communication Dimension

1.2. Brand image

The brand image dimension is the underpinning of the general perception from the first interactions with the public, forming the impression behind the new brand. Aspects of culture and relational capabilities (stakeholders, community, government, and media) are associated with an idea in formation that feeds on signals emitted through the brand attitude, where the "story doing" takes place.

Drivers of trust for communication strategy in brand image dimension	Drivers of trust in spontaneous communication
agility	social proof
customer centricity	recommendation platforms *"Reclame Aqui"* / *"Trust Pilot"*
empathy	reviews / testimonials / comments
honesty	
innovation	
looking with the customer's eyes	
attention	
authenticity	
branding	
efficiency	
expertise	
genuine interest in accomplishing what is proposed	
principles	
purpose	
respect	
PR and press relations	

Table 3 - Drivers of Trust in the Brand Image Dimension

1.3. Customer experience

Customer experience and perceived trustworthiness are closely intertwined. Positive experiences are catalysts for perceived trust because they create a sense of competence and integrity, two critical factors in building trust. Trust is established and strengthened when startups and emerging brands provide exceptional experiences at all touchpoints.

Drivers of trust for communication strategy in customer experience dimension
client service
customer service with autonomy to solve problems
yielding benefits
problem-solving
it is possible to communicate with a real person
UX – User experience

Table 4 - Drivers of Trust in the Customer Experience Dimension

1.4. Design

Brand design is essential to building trust and shaping perceptions of trustworthiness among customers. The design includes elements that together create a cohesive brand image. When designed adequately, a brand's visual identity can communicate a sense of professionalism and credibility that directly impacts trustworthiness perception.

Drivers of trust for communication strategy in design dimension
logo
the branding evokes/reflect the business
Design is suitable for the audience
Product design and presentation
Website layout / responsiveness
UI – user interface

Table 5 - Drivers of Trust in the Design Dimension

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of brand narrative coupled with trust triggers to stimulate initial trust. Furthermore, "story doing" emphasizes the importance of consistent and authentic behavior aligned with brand identity and communication, leading to deeper connections and customer relationships.

From four key dimensions – communication, brand image, design, and customer experience – we identify trust triggers that contribute to developing a brand narrative imbued with perceived trustworthiness. We also allocated these triggers into subcategories: drivers of trust for communication strategy and spontaneous communication. For strategic narrative planning, it is advisable to use the triggers to solidify the perception of trust in the critical first three years of a startup's emerging brand.

Finally, companies and brands that strengthen trust positively impact dispositional trust in society, which can significantly impact the economy and the development of startups, promoting a more favorable environment for innovation and growth and creating benefits for Brazilian society and the country's economy.

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CORPORATE PURPOSE AND ITS COMMUNICATION IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES - HOW PURPOSE ORIENTATION HELPS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION GOALS

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Relevance and theoretical background

In recent years, companies have found themselves increasingly under pressure to take a stance on socio-political issues and to continuously renew their social license to operate (van der Mer & Jonkman, 2021). With the rise of social media and the growing influence of younger generations who value responsible behavior, businesses have begun to realize that they cannot remain neutral on issues that impact their critical stakeholders. Many consumers today want to buy from companies that align with their values and are committed to making a positive impact on society, leading to forms of political consumerism such as buycotting or boycotting (Copeland & Boulianne, 2022; Jungblut & Johnen, 2022).

This development has led to a broad and rapidly growing discussion in organizational and strategic communication research and practice on various forms of corporate stance-taking and ethical leadership, ranging from political corporate social responsibility (e.g., Ingenhoff & Marschlich, 2019; Wickert, 2014), corporate political activity (e.g., Brown et al., 2022), corporate social advocacy (Parcha & Kingsley Westerman, 2020; Rim et al., 2020), to corporate political advocacy (Klostermann et al., 2022; You & Hon, 2022).

Although there is ample empirical evidence of the implementation and effects of these forms of corporate socio-political positioning, less is known about its drivers and the specific question of "why" companies do so. One concept that explicitly addresses the "why" and that has been discussed almost exclusively in management literature is *corporate purpose*. The concept of *corporate purpose* refers to a company's reason for existing beyond just making a profit. Based on a review of previous purpose literature (e.g., Atif, 2019; Basu, 2017; Jimenez et al., 2021; Rey et al., 2019), we define *corporate purpose* as (1) the societal contribution of a company beyond pure economic performance that (2) addresses all stakeholders, (3) is reflected in all products or services of a company, (4) serves as fundament for a company's strategic decisions, and (5) is formulated in a comprehensible way.

A company's purpose often includes a commitment to sustainability, social justice, and other issues that impact society. In other words, companies are expected to be good corporate citizens and to make a positive impact on society. The concept of corporate purpose is not just a feel-good idea; it has become a critical factor in a company's long-term success. Purpose-oriented companies are expected to attract and retain employees, build and maintain customer relationships, and deliver sustainable returns to shareholders (e.g., Basu, 2017; Rey et al., 2019). In contrast, only little is known about how corporate purpose and strategic communication are intertwined and how purpose communication helps to achieve strategic communication goals.

Research questions

To gain more insights into the relevance of corporate purpose for strategic communication, this study tackles a first empirical exploration of the relationship between a company's purpose and its relevance for achieving strategic communication goals. Specifically, we aim at investigating the state of purpose and purpose orientation in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Germany. By focusing on SMEs, this study also aims to shed light on typically neglected areas of organizational and strategic communication (e.g., Agyemang & Ansong, 2017; Graham Spickett-Jones & Eng, 2006; Zerfass & Winkler, 2016). This goal is also underpinned by the fact that in Germany in particular, 99 percent of all companies are SMEs and account for almost 60 percent of all jobs in the national market (Schubert, 2021).

In doing so, this study is one of the pioneering empirical investigations that attempts to measure SMEs' purpose orientation. It seeks to explore the extent to which a company's purpose can be connected to strategic communication efforts. The study highlights the growing recognition of the importance of purpose-oriented communication in the corporate world, and how it can be leveraged to achieve strategic communication goals. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the state of strategic communication in German SMEs?
RQ2: To what extent do German SMEs have a corporate purpose?
RQ3: How do German SMEs communicate their corporate purpose?
RQ4: How does purpose-driven communication in German SMEs affect the achievement of their strategic communication goals?

Methods

To answer the research questions, we conducted a quantitative survey among leading SMEs in Germany from November 2022 to February 2023. The population was the so-called *Mittelstand 10000* list representing the 10,000 most successful SMEs in Germany. The online questionnaire was sent to the persons responsible for communication in the SMEs. In total n = 207 SMEs participated in the survey representing a response rate of 2 percent. The rather low response rate can be compared to the response rates of related large-scale surveys in the context of large companies (Zerfass et al., 2022) and SMEs (Zerfass & Winkler, 2016).

The indicators for the specific constructs in the questionnaire were derived from related research on strategic communication in SMEs. To measure the value of strategic communication in SMEs (RQ1) the respondents were asked to rate the following four statements on a five-point Likert scale from '1 – strongly disagree' to '5 – strongly agree': "Communication and public opinion are essential to the success of our company", "Communication is essential for us to achieve our corporate goals", "Active communication has a high priority in our company", and "Having our own communications department is worthwhile for our company" (Zerfass & Winkler, 2016). Based on these indications, we calculated an index for strategic communication (*M* = 3.80; *SD* = .86; α = .73). To measure the achievement of strategic communication goals we measured value creation through communication using the communication value circle. The respondents should rate on a five-point Likert scale from '1 – strongly disagree' to '5 – strongly agree' whether they perceive an achievement of the following twelve communication goals: "publicity", "customer preferences", "employee commitment", "relationships", "trust", "legitimacy", "thought leadership", "innovation potential", "crisis resilience", "reputation", "brands", and "corporate culture" (Zerfass & Viertmann, 2017). Again, we calculated an index for the perceived value creation (*M* = 3.73; *SD* = .60; α = .91). Finally, we also asked for the financial and personnel resources for strategic communication in the SMEs.

To measure purpose orientation and the presence of a corporate purpose we developed a scale with five items leaning on previous literature on corporate and organizational purpose (e.g., Atif, 2019; Basu, 2017; Jimenez et al., 2021; Rey et al., 2019). The respondents should rate on a five-point Likert scale ranging from '1 – strongly disagree' to '5 – strongly agree' whether their company pursues a fundamental, meaningful aspiration that "guides our day-to-day entrepreneurial activities", "that makes a societal contribution beyond pure economic success", "that is reflected in our products/services", "that is addressed at all our stakeholders", and "that represents the starting point for our corporate strategy". The mean values were then aggregated to an index for purpose orientation (*M* = 3.50; *SD* = .89; α = .85). After the purpose orientation scale, we asked the respondents in the questionnaire whether they have defined a specific corporate purpose, through which internal and external channels they communicate their purpose, and who is responsible for the purpose communication.

Results and discussion

Overall, most respondents were CEOs (47%) or in a leading position (24%) in the SMEs while only a minority were other employees (29%). This is a first indicator that communication is a managerial task in SMEs. 61 percent of the respondents identified themselves as male, and 39 percent as female. SMEs are generally defined by their limited size in terms of employees and/or turnover (EU Commission, 2003). 22 percent of the examined companies have less than 9 employees. 21 percent have 10 to 49 employees, while 32 percent have between 50 and 249 employees. 12 percent have 250 to 499 employees. 13 percent have more than 500 employees. In terms of SME turnover, 31 percent reported a yearly turnover of fewer than 2 million euros. 25 percent reach a turnover of 2–10 million euros, and 27 percent 10–50 million euros. 16 percent reported a turnover of more than 50 million euros.

Regarding the state of strategic communication in SMEs (RQ1) there is evidence for the relevance of communication and public opinion, the value of communication for achieving organizational goals, and active communication. At the same time, SMEs lack of particular communication departments (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Relevance of strategic communication for SMEs (n = 207)

This is also reflected in the resources SMEs dedicate to communication efforts. While over half (57%) of the interviewed SMEs reported flexible financial resources for corporate communication, only a minority has a fixed budget for communication (15%). Over a quarter (27%) even has no budget for communication. Regarding personnel resources, most SMEs (71%) have one or more persons who are responsible for communication among other tasks. Less companies (20%) involve agencies to support corporate communication. 15 percent have a team, and 12 percent have one single person with an exclusive focus on communication.

The concept of corporate purpose is already known and applied in SMEs (RQ2). While 58 percent have explicitly defined a purpose (e.g., in the form of a sentence, or general guidelines), there is a high share of companies which are guided by purpose orientation on various dimensions (see Figure 2).

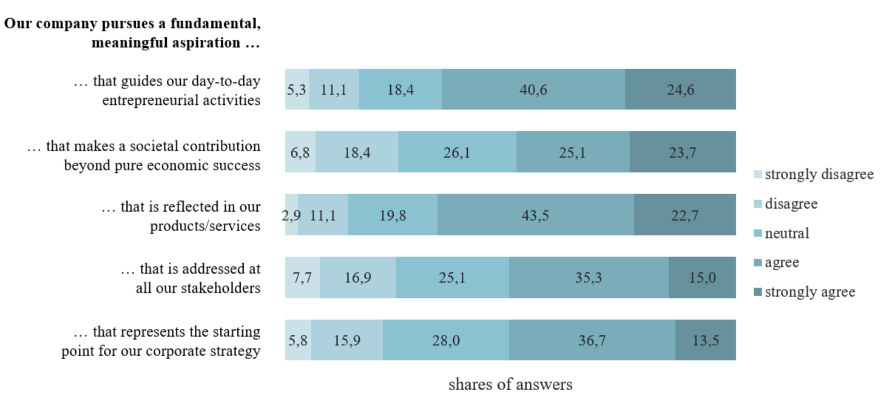

Figure 2: Relevance of purpose orientation in SMEs (n = 207)

In terms of purpose communication (RQ3), most SMEs with an explicitly defined purpose integrate it into both internal and external communication. In internal communication, the purpose is mainly communicated in feedback and personnel interviews (63%), in recruitment and onboarding processes (53%), and in communication via the intranet (48%). In external communication, SMEs mainly integrate their purpose into online communication (82%), face-to-face communication (78%), and corporate events (49%). When it comes to responsibility for purpose communication, the data indicate that purpose communication is clearly linked to the managerial level (85%). Only in 34 percent of the interviewed SMEs, corporate communication is responsible for purpose communication.

Looking at the relevance of purpose and purpose orientation for value creation through communication (RQ4) it can be concluded that SMEs with an explicitly defined purpose (M = 3.85; SD = 0.52) report significantly higher value creation through communication than SMEs without purpose (M = 3.58; SD = 0.66) (t(158) = 3.14; p = .001). The data analysis further reveals that SMEs with an explicitly defined purpose are more effective in creating trust among stakeholders and building a brand among customers (see Figure 3).

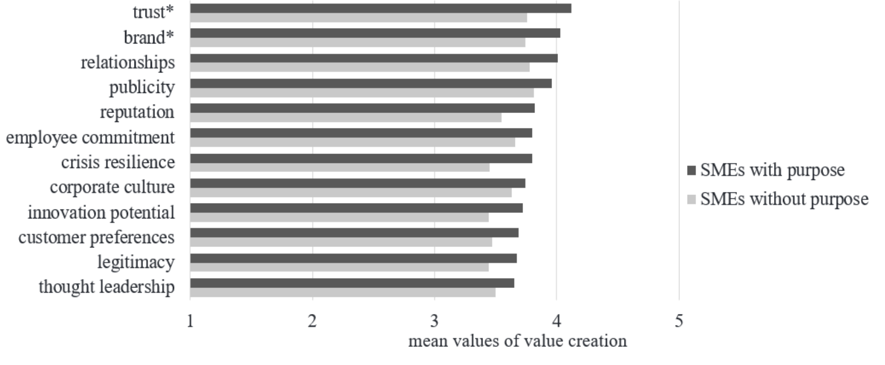

Figure 3: Value creation through communication in SMEs with and without purpose (n = 207) (* p < .05)

Apart from having an explicitly defined purpose, the data indicate that purpose orientation is key when it comes to value creation: purpose orientation has a significant positive effect on the overall achievement of strategic communication goals (F(1;206) = 9.43; p = .006; B = .14; R^2 = .04).

Taken together, this study reinforces the relevance of corporate purpose for achieving SMEs' strategic communication goals. At the same time, we observe unused potential when it comes to the allocation of financial and personnel resources for strategic communication in general and purpose communication in particular. In the presentation, we will argue that purpose communication can be the missing link between a company's mission/vision and creating sustainable business value. Moreover, the study's implications refer to the potential of purpose and purpose communication for creating trust both internally (e.g., in recruitment campaigns) and externally (e.g., in public relations campaigns). The study's findings also have significant implications for businesses seeking to enhance their communication efforts and align them with their overall strategic objectives. By providing empirical evidence linking purpose and purpose communication to strategic communication goals, this study is poised to make a valuable contribution to the field of the normative imperative in organizational and strategic communication. Given the growing pressure on companies to continuously renew their social license to operate, corporate purpose can serve as the driving force for legitimacy and success. Limitations and future directions for research will be addressed.

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GOING BEYOND OBLIGATORY DISCLOSURE – THE IDENTITY PROJECTION OF PUBLIC AGENCIES AS INVITATION FOR SOCIAL JUDGEMENT

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Public agencies are subject to the actual normative imperative of compulsory disclosure. The obligatory transparency and accountability requirements are foreseen by the law as the 'countermeasure' of the independence attributed to public authorities in order to guarantee objectivity and to eliminate conflict of – political or economic – interest, bias, or undue influence while carrying out their mandates (OECD, 2016). They are the built-in mechanisms to safeguard democratic principles by providing indirect social control over the institutions holding legislative and normative power. On the other hand, literature implies that voluntary – and more detailed – disclosure is a key element of developing institutional credibility and trust with stakeholders forming their judgements on the general attractiveness (i.e., reputation) and appropriateness (i.e., legitimacy) of the entity, traits that are deemed "critically important for organizations" (Bitektine, 2011, p. 160).

It has been already demonstrated that, by going beyond the obligatory disclosure and deliberately exposing themselves to social judgement, public sector entities significantly benefit from obtaining strong positive reputation and socio-political legitimacy (Kaponya, 2019). These gains reveal in the form of higher credibility, recognition, and trust granted by the members of the society that translates into enhanced, voluntary deference and higher acceptance of the authority's decisions leading to the widening of the room for manoeuvre at the authority's disposal. In normal times, this implies the reduction of implementing costs of regulatory changes or that of interventions and the prospect to pursue long-term aims instead of focusing on confrontations in the present. Moreover, due to the protective buffer ensured by strong legitimacy and reputation, techniques of issues and crisis management strategies applied in turbulent times become more efficient and effective.

Furthermore, in the era of online-driven communication, along with the growing dominance of digital text and web-based communicational solutions, organisations opt overwhelmingly for digital technologies to engage with their audiences, turning the Internet as the primary channel for the implementation of communication strategies (Creswell, 2015; Gonçalves, 2014; Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Saxton & Guo, 2012). At the same time, resulting from the public's call for increased – corporate and public sector – transparency, entities sense the pressure to exhibit more openness. Subsequently, empirical evidence confirms that one of the three main strategies of cultivating stakeholder relationship is that of disclosure (Waters et al., 2009).

In the endeavour of full disclosure by providing detailed description of the organisation, the presentation of core values and traits – i.e., the projection of organisational identity – is a critical element. Organisational identity, as the 'soul of the organisation', is essential "to help make sense and explain action" (Gioia et al., 2013, p. 125). As a 'self-referential meaning', it is "an entity's attempt[s] to define itself" (Corley et al., 2006, p.87), and is regarded as both a self-definitional and a self-differentiating concept (Albert & Whetten, 1985). Considering the necessary interplay and the inherent interdependent relationships with others, communicating (on) the organisation's soul ('identity') and knowing the relevant parties' feedback thereon ('image' and 'reputation') are of fundamental importance (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Cornelissen, 2004; Hatch & Schultz, 1997; Hatch & Schultz, 2000; Ravasi, 2016; Sequeira & Ruão, 2012). Therefore, one of the key pragmatic challenges of organisations' is "to translate their internally held organizational identity into an intended organizational image that external stakeholders will likely find attractive" (Bartel et al., 2016, p. 475). In line with this observation, recent empirical evidence also confirms that public organisations "have become increasingly aware of their identity, values, and central characteristics and how they are perceived as well as how they want to be perceived" (Waeraas, 2010, p. 530).

Accordingly, identity projection has the objective of creating the intended (positive) image – constituting the base for external audiences' initial assessment of an organisation's attractiveness (Bartel et al., 2016; Bronn, 2002; Gray & Balmer, 1998) that also leads to perceptions on legitimacy and value congruence (Scott & Lane, 2000). It is achieved through the articulation of identity claims expressing the values and traits that are considered the most adequate to describe its desirable organisational personality which would create positive impressions – i.e., favourable image – in the eyes of its most relevant stakeholders (Balmer & Soenen, 1999; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Fombrun, 1996; Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Gray & Balmer, 1998; Hatch & Schultz, 1997). It is to keep in mind, however, that the observable projected identity is rather based on the ideal organisational identity defined by the management of the organisation, providing base for the 'desired image' – i.e., the way how the leaders of an organisation want the entity to be seen (Balmer & Greyser, 2002; Balmer & Soenen, 1999; Bronn, 2002; Brown et al., 2006). It is of critical importance for entities to keep these identities not only aligned, but sufficiently close to each other, since bias between the desired and the actual organisational identity might lead to severe tensions and culminate in identification and integrity problems (Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Hatch & Schultz, 1997). Thus, having a clear understanding on the organisation's identity and the intended perception the entity expects to generate is an essential prerequisite for the construction of a credible organisational image (Sequeira & Ruão, 2012).

The importance of identity projection in the reputation and legitimacy building process lies in its controllable characteristic. Since identity projection is the very element of the reputation creation process over which the organisation has the highest level of control (Frandsen, 2017), and as such, it can be strategically managed, projected identity constitutes an interesting subject matter for organisational communication related research. In the dominance of digital communication techniques, it is of common ground that “official websites are the rhetorical products of organisations-as-rhetors” that provide access to the projected identities (Sillince & Brown, 2009, pp. 1835-1836). Considering the high reliance on written text, on the contrary to the other concepts involved in the judgement formation process, identity clues and referents are observable and directly deductible from the institution’s website.

Notwithstanding the importance of the respective audiences’ feedback, public entities’ ability to accommodate stakeholder preference on their mission and identity is strictly limited, if not non-existent (Waeraas & Byrkjeflot, 2012). Established by the force of law with the aim to serve the public interest with a well-defined responsibility, public agencies’ *raison d’être* and mission, as the central aspects of their organisational identity, are mostly predetermined. Regardless of stakeholders’ perception on the appeal of the mission – which is reflected in citizens judgements on the agency itself – it must be pursued. The resulting lack of flexibility and dependence on the prearranged attributes are termed as the ‘politics problem’ of public agencies (Waeraas & Byrkjeflot, 2012), culminating in challenges both in identification and in the quest of bureaucratic reputation. Meanwhile, agencies face diverse stakeholder structure and oftentimes contradicting expectations, considered as the most prominent external factors among the constituting sources of multiple organisational identity (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Maor, 2018; Waeraas, 2008). On the contrary to private entities, due to their mission defined in terms of the social good, public organisations do not have the option to choose a target audience or prioritise permanently the stakes of certain groups over those of others. The multiplicity and contradicting stakes of audiences imply trade-offs, that ultimately lead to conflict or to the projection of ambiguity and the dissemination of vague messages that leave sufficient room for diverse interpretations (Canel & Luoma-aho, 2019; Carpenter & Krause, 2012; Waeraas, 2008; Waeraas, 2020).

While conceptual simplifications – such as focusing excessively on the discrete and instrumental notions in message-transmission and self-expression – might ensue narrow framing of communication by neglecting to reflect on its interactive meaning creation function (Grunig, 2001; Grunig & White, 1992; Koschmann & Kopczynski, 2017), the above referred specificities of public entities provide essential justification for the application of such approach in the analysis of the projected identity. Amidst these circumstances, the warning regarding the potential adverse implications of a superficial or overly instrumental stakeholder dialogue leading to distrust and cynicism, or cacophony and contradiction is deemed highly relevant (Crane & Livesey, 2003), further supporting the applied approach putting the disseminating entity in the spotlight.

It is argued, therefore, that public agencies' identity projection can be considered the first and essential step to invite stakeholders to form social judgements on the entity, paving the way to related assessments culminating in reputation and legitimacy. It is also the very element over which the entity has the highest level of control that is also traceable on the main communicational channel, the institutional website. Subsequently, investigation of projected organisational identity provides valuable insight on the way how the leaders of a public organisation want the entity to be seen by its most important stakeholders – the desired organisational identity – and the key attributes that it considers relevant to guide its reputation and legitimacy. Due to the above referred organisational specificities – namely, that identity creation (or change) cannot be considered as a joint meaning-making process between the authority and its stakeholders – focusing the analysis on the disseminated clues and messages is considered to be an adequate perspective.

In order to provide an illustrative case study, the self-presentation of a particular financial supervisory agency, that of Banco de Portugal (hereinafter, the Bank) was concluded. Through the identification of the key dimensions of its self-definition presented in the permanent sections of the institutional website, the case study revealed the 'central, enduring, distinguishing' identity characteristics projected by the Bank.

Following a pragmatical perspective to the choice on the applied method (Neuendorf, 2017; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003), a blended approach applying a two-stage research design featuring discourse analysis and computer-assisted content analysis was applied. Accordingly, as preliminary qualitative research, the first stage aimed to provide practical identification and determination of the appropriate dimensions of the complex, underlying construct of the agency's organisational identity by the application of discourse analysis. The findings of this exploration then served as a base for the second, computer-assisted phase aiming to assess in more depth the central aspects of the organisation on a larger corpus by using techniques of content analysis within a discourse analytic approach (Hardy et al., 2004). The relevant dataset was defined as the written permanent text presented in the menus of the Bank's website.

Findings regarding the key dimensions of the Bank's self-definition turned out to be relevant and in line with the stylised facts. The importance of authority, as institutional form, the strong interference of the surrounding institutional framework in which the agency is embedded, and the transversal dominance of the functional perspective mirroring the diverse responsibilities of the Bank was identified. The reliance on the creating legislative act, the statue, was also found prevalent, along with the emphasized reference on the legally defined dual mission. Regarding this aspect, findings also confirm the relevance of the institutional nexus and its consequences on the distribution of competences between the Bank and the European supranational organisations, attributing more emphasis on financial stability considerations. Among the organisational values, only 'effectiveness' was traceable in the permanent sections.

Keywords: Public agency; Projected organisational identity; Discourse analysis; Content analysis; Multi-method approach

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SOCIAL PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATION: A CASE STUDY OF SANTA CATARINA'S PROSECUTOR OFFICE (MPSC)

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This article aims to answer the question – Does Santa Catarina's Prosecutor Office (MPSC) promote social participation through its communication channels? - To assess the level of social participation in organization, we analyzed the content and interactions on MPSC's social media. The Prosecutor Office is a public organization in Brazil, and it is responsible for safeguarding individual and collective citizens' rights. Public administration is guided by some principles established by Article 37 of Brazil Federative Republic Constitution. Among them, we have the principle of publicity. This principle attends citizen's legal right of supervising and controlling the public administration.

From the Communicative Constitution of Organization (CCO) perspective, "communication is not just one of the many factors involved in an organization, but rather the means through which organizations are established, composed, designed, and sustained" (Seixas, 2017, p. 147).

Following the law and assuming communication plays a central role in democratic systems (Habermas, 2022), and should be treated strategically by public organizations (Dornelles & Bifignandi, 2018; Kunsch, 2012; Seixas, 2017), MPSC created, in 2013, a digital communication project called "*MPSC em Rede*" to talk directly to citizen. The profiles created by the organization and analyzed in this article are Twitter, Facebook and Youtube.

The participation's concept considered in this article is supported by Pateman (1992) studies. It is a process where two or more interlocutors influence each other reciprocally in decision-making. The process is similar as described by (Habermas, 2012a, 2012b) for public sphere. According to Pateman (1992), in a hypothetical situation, individual A influences B and vice versa. The final decision taken by A and/or B will be the result of their previous ideas combined by the new ideas that came out of a conversation.

Pateman (1992) also emphasizes the educational role of participation. Participation in civil society is consonant to better competences in political sphere (Krick, 2022). Here, the Almond & Verba (1963) studies stand out. They observed a correlation between participation in civil society and political attitudes. By looking at individuals' behavior in five nations – USA, England, Germany, Italy, and Mexico – Almond & Verba identified highest degrees of political competence in places where institutional participation occurs with more frequency and quality.

The MPSC's option for social media is linked up to the ideas of Litschka & Krainer (2022), who advocate organizations are influenced by the structures under they work. Nowadays, the structures of digital world are decentralized and connected. In this scenario, Kunsch (2012) bets that there is a renewal in management and communication styles, oriented by decentralization and participation. As organizations respond to the growing influence of the public/user/customer/consumer, they are adopting new operational, visibility, and engagement models, leading to fresh approaches in practicing, conceptualizing, and studying Organizational Communication in today's context (Terra et al., 2017).

In Brazil, public management does not use information and communication technologies (ICTs) for participation and deliberation purposes (Brandão, 2007). For the time being, organizations use ICTs as a one-hand communication channel and has no data on impact of these ICTs on audience engagement (Agostino, 2012; Criado, 2021). Despite the social media potential, public organizations still do not use them effectively as participation tools (Sutton, 2009). As a management improvement tool, social media could (i) increase transparency, (ii) support inter and intra-organizational collaboration, and (iii) promote innovative forms of participation (Mergel, 2012). "ICTs are rarely implemented to support participatory processes due to high costs, a lack of political support and the insufficient technical expertise of technical staff to engage with residents using ICTs" (Alvarado Vazquez et al., 2023, p. 1) .

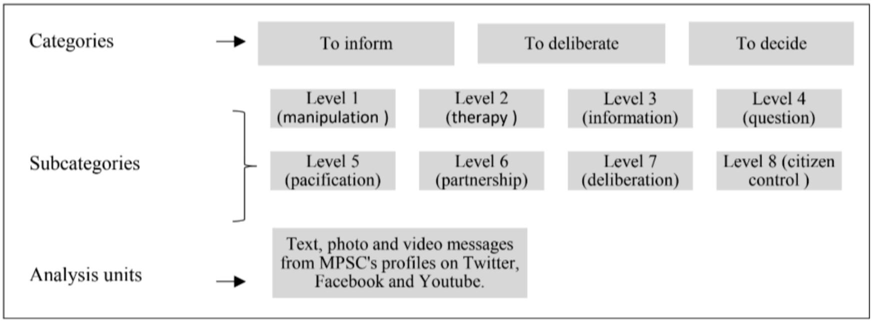
For Ribeiro (2013), the organization's challenge in the digital environment of communication relates to the ability of talking directly to audiences. Communication practices, previously under responsibility of specialized sectors and professionals, must be incorporated by the organization as part of its culture.

To verify if communication on MPSC's social media allows citizen participation, this article applies the framework designed by Luque (2012) and the scale proposed by Arnstein (2002). Luque (2012) suggest analyzing how the organization explores the information and communication technologies (ICTs) to involve citizens in decision-making processes. He created a framework with three dimensions of the ICTs uses: (i) information, when organizations provide information to citizens; (ii) deliberation, when organizations adopt feedback tools and channels for dialogue and debate; (iii) decision, when organizations allow citizen to have decision-making power via ICT tools.

Arnstein (2002) also addressed the issue of participation and created an 8-level scale for citizen participation: level 1, manipulation (non-participation); level 2, therapy (non-participation); level 3, information (minimum concession of power); level 4, question (minimum concession of power); level 5, pacification (minimum grant of power); level 6, partnership (citizen power); level 7, deliberation (citizen power); and level 8, citizen control (citizen power). From Luque's framework and Arnstein's scale, we created the analysis' categories and subcategories for social media content of MPSC, as you can see on Figure 1. On Table 1 is possible to see the classification planner for the units.

Figure 1

Categories and subcategories of content analysis of MPSC's social media.



Note. Created by the author.

Table 1

Classification planner for content analysis.

Dimension of the use of social media by the MPSC	**Participation level**
To inform All posts with the purpose of informing citizens have been classified as an informative dimension.	Level 1 (manipulation) Posts with no interaction between the institution and citizen (no likes, shares or comments) have been classified as level 1. Furthermore, the content analysis shows that citizen is invited to participate, but his opinion is not considered in decision-making.
To deliberate Posts that allow citizen feedback, encourage debate, dialogue and participation have been classified as a deliberative dimension.	Level 2 (therapy) Posts with no interaction between the institution and citizen (no likes, shares or comments) have been classified as level 2. Furthermore, the content analysis shows MPSC consider the citizen technical or even mentally incapable.
To decide Posts that allow effective participation in organizational processes have been classified as a decision-making dimension. Examples of ICT tools in this dimension are online polls, petitions, and referendums.	Level 3 (information) Posts with likes and/or shares have been classified as level 3. In this content, MPSC uses informative language.

	Level 4 (question) Posts with comments have been classified as level 4. Regardless of the content, the citizen has used the space for participation. Despite that, the dialogue does not go beyond the virtual environment. There is only interaction in the digital channel.
	Level 5 (pacification) Posts with comments and participation goes beyond the virtual environment have been classified as level 5. In this case, MPSC takes some practical action, even if the outcome is not the one expected by the citizen.
	Level 6 (partnership) Posts with comments and dialogue between citizens and organization have been classified as level 6.
	Level 7 (deliberation) Posts with comments and deliberation between citizens and organization have been classified as level 7.
	Level 8 (citizen control) Posts with comments and the citizen has some local decision-making powers were classified as level 8.

Note. Created by the author, based on Luque (2012) & Arnstein (1992).

Data collection took place between 2015 and 2017 and resulted in a sample of 453 posts on MPCS's social media. The data collection protocol followed different rules for each of the social media channel - Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

On Twitter, a non-probabilistic sample of 205 posts was chosen, according to two criteria: (i) period from April 2015 to June 2017, and (ii) the systematic selection of objects (posts). The systematic selection was carried out as follows: taking the last post published on the day of data collection (June 26th, 2017) and, from it, the previous elements of three by three (example:

if the last object published is a post on Monday, the next one would be the publication of three days before, that is to say, Friday, and so on, until April 1st, 2015). On Facebook the same sample selection rule was applied. It was reached 198 posts between June 29th, 2017, and April 1st, 2015. In that period, MPSC published twice a day on Facebook and this research considered once post a day, alternating mornings, and afternoons.

The selection on YouTube followed a different basis. The 50 videos with the highest number of views up to the date of data collection were selected. The data collection was on June 26th, 2017.

Data analysis revealed that the MPSC's Twitter profile is notably informative, maintaining a participation level categorized as level 3 (information). Among the 205 Twitter posts scrutinized, 204 are informative, while 1 is deliberative. Notably, none of the posts attained a level of decision-making.

According to the research, MPSC's Facebook profile has more success on dialogue with society than Twitter. People seems to be more comfortable on expressing their opinions (Dahlberg, 2001; Dean, 2001; Gomes, 2005). Despite organization uses its profile for informative proposes (93% of the posts are in the informative dimension), many citizens feel encouraged to participate (45%). Out of the 198 posts analyzed, 184 fit into the informative dimension, and 14 into the deliberative dimension. None of the analyzed posts meet the dimension of decision-making.

Out of the 50 YouTube videos examined, merely three fall within the deliberative dimension as they actively prompt citizens to engage in dialogue and share their opinions. In the remaining 47 videos, the predominant tone is informative and educational. The interactions between the organization and the public primarily align with level 4 (participation). While the organization may not necessarily incorporate these comments into its decision-making process, it provides a platform for citizens to express their opinions and initiate meaningful conversations.

Citizen participation's level on MPSC's social media remained at 3 or 4 level, except some outliers. In the scale designed by Arnstein (2002), there are 8 levels. Level 3 is the information, the first step for effective participation, where institution starts to inform citizens about their rights, responsibilities, and options. It is a one-way communication, but it is essential to get the next steps. Level 4 is the question and in this situation, citizens are required about organization's public policies, projects, and programs. The citizen's opinion is requested, but not necessarily considered in decision-making. MPSC profiles allow people to like, share, and comment, but they don't promote deliberation or decision-makes.

Backing to the main question - Does Santa Catarina's Prosecutor Office (MPSC) promote social participation through its communication channels? - we can say MPSC's project on social media has been successful at establishing a dialogue with the citizenship. It has also contributed to create a sense of belonging among audience, which is fundamental for public sphere and democratic process. However, the organization communication is restricted by providing information to the public and not engaging them in participation or decision-make. We did not find, in sample analysis, deeper levels of participation. Indeed, citizenship cannot take part on organization's process of deliberation and decision-make. MPSC uses ICTs for informational purposes. It is an important stage of communication. However, until the end of this study, MPSC didn't have ongoing communication projects to increase this level of participation.

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COMMUNICATING FOR CHANGE: STRATEGIES USED BY PORTUGUESE FEMINISTS GROUPS – SUCCESS AND CHALLENGES

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Feminist groups and/or organizations have been at the forefront of social and political movements, advocating for gender equality and fighting against structural oppressions. As a result, feminist activism and activists have been critical in achieving a more just and equitable society (hooks, 2000) challenging multiple forms of oppression (Davis, 1981).

As "sources of power and counter-power, of domination and social change" (Castells, 2007, p. 238), communication and information strategies are fundamental for feminist groups and/or organizations to effectively reach the public sphere, advocate for their causes, attract new supporters, mobilize existing members, foster a sense of community among followers, and promote civic engagement and public debate. In a society which Castells (2015) conceptualized as a "network society", both social movements and political organizations have been affected by communication technologies that, in the digital age, experience continuous evolution and transformation, expanding their reach through digital and face-to-face networks that are simultaneously global and local (Castells, 2015). In such societies, power is multifaceted and structured around the various networks built surrounding each facet of the human experience, which has helped transform the mere idea of city (and how one can reclaim their space in it), turning static places into points of confluence between several cities which form a circuit, or network, set on power and communication. Furthermore, the use of successful communication strategies by feminist groups and/or organizations has an amplifying effect, bringing to light and giving voice to the experiences of marginalized and invisible groups that are sometimes suppressed and muted by hegemonic discourses (Mohanty, 1991).

Successful communication strategies are those that are able to disseminate feminist ideas and mobilize people. According to Banet-Wiser (2018), “feminism manifests in discourses and practices that are circulated in popular and commercial media, such as digital spaces like blogs, Instagram, and Twitter, as well as broadcast media” (p. 1), helping it reach broader audiences and become what the author calls “popular feminism”. Feminist groups and/or organizations have resorted to a wide range of media platforms and channels to communicate over the years, including social media, traditional media, online news sites, podcasts, interpersonal communication, grassroots activism, slogans, etc. This has helped boost feminist agendas' visibility, however:

> the visibility of popular feminism, the way it occupies a spotlight in multiple media platforms, brings into bold relief gender asymmetries in culture, politics, and economics. The focus, in turn, incurs a misogynistic reaction, marshaling the tropes of injury and capacity emanating from feminism and transforming these into specific injuries felt by men (Banet-Weiser, 2018, p. 171)

The expression of feminism and feminist groups and/or organizations in the public sphere frequently elicits a sexist response, which can undermine the effectiveness of the selected communication tactics.

Social media and digital activism (cyberactivism) have played a central role in giving feminist groups and/or organizations increased visibility, and in creating online global identities for them (Fotopoulou, 2016; Gajjala & Mamidipudi, 1999). These cyber spaces' new communication and activist paradigms allow for the creation of online communities, boosting user interaction and the dissemination of messages across and beyond national borders. Despite concerns about a lack of access, accessibility, and literacy in the use of ICTs (which may prevent certain groups of people from accessing certain forms of communication), the obvious potential of online spheres in providing a space where marginalized and silenced voices may find a forum to communicate across borders cannot be overlooked. As such, feminist groups and/or organizations have used online platforms and spaces to raise societal consciousness regarding feminist goals, foster a feeling of community, encourage online and face-to-face activism, and allow for the debate of important issues. These cyber spaces not only provide a venue for members and followers to communicate, share ideas, resources, and information, debate specific issues and/or events, but also appear to be safe spaces where the community supports one another. Similarly, cyberspaces have aided in the development of social movements, particularly feminist movements, by encouraging social participation and mobilizing individuals in actions that extend beyond online realms. Such is the case of the hashtag feminist movements Slutwalk (2011) and #MeToo (2017). As for the later one, #MeToo, while being founded back in 2006 by African American activist Tarana Burke, it gained global prominence and visibility only in 2017 after actress Alyssa Milano exposed and denounced Harvey Weinstein in a tweet. Through the use of the hashtag and social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, this movement gave people, particularly women, a global forum in which they could discuss and share their experiences of sexual violence and harassment, which, in turn, resulted in the creation of online communities of survivors (Hillstrom, 2019). Furthermore, because the movement went viral online, its visibility in traditional media increased, allowing its communication strategies (which also took to the streets) to promote significant national and international, social and cultural, shifts in how sexual harassment and violence are perceived, discussed, addressed, and criminalized.

Yet, despite the growing importance of social media, online platforms, and digital activism in the communication methods employed by feminist groups and/or organizations, the coordination and planning of public demonstrations and protests remains a critical strategy. They perform as effective visual representations of the movement's key concerns, goals, agendas, and values, whilst also attracting media attention. In Spain, for example, the 2018 "Huelga Feminista" (Feminist Strike) brought an estimated 5 million people to the streets, making it one of the largest feminist demonstrations in Spanish history. The protests, which were organized by several organizations, unions, and political parties, drew national and international attention, and sparked a bigger debate in Spain about gender equality and women's rights.

Recognizing the significance of communication strategies in the success of feminist activism, activists, groups, and/or organizations, this paper will look into communication strategies used by feminist groups and/or organizations in Portugal and how they have influenced the success of their agendas and overall goals.

Portugal is a conservative country with a colonial and dictatorial past etched in its memory, society, and culture, and with a feminist history that has yet to be thoroughly explored (Tavares, 2011). Moreover, Twitter (a platform that has helped launch hashtag feminist activist movements) is not commonly used in Portugal, nor is hashtag and online feminism (Almeida, 2019), or using one's own voice to speak up (Gouveia, 2022). These factors have affected how feminist groups and/or organizations have been perceived in the country, as well as how the particularities of Portuguese feminism have been registered and analyzed.

This paper integrates a wider research project that aims to contribute to the recovery of feminist movements' historical memory of social invisibility in Portugal, focusing on (but not being limited to) social mobilization (digital and face-to-face), and communication and media visibility strategies. Given the scarcity of national research on the relationship between digital networked action and feminist activist movements, the intersections between the global and the local, the digital and the face-to-face, this research project will take a situational approach to analyze the challenges confronting contemporary feminist movements. Given the transnational nature of modern feminist movements (and their communication tactics), the project will be able to track their manifestation in Portugal, exploring the peculiarities of Portuguese feminism, namely of the feminist groups and/or organizations that are active in the country.

Within the scope of the aforementioned research project, an online survey directed at members and/or activists from Portuguese feminist groups and/or organizations was conducted between November 21 2022 and January 10 2023, with the goal of better understanding Portuguese feminist groups and/or organizations, their key characteristics and communication strategies. With this proposal we intend to answer the following four main research questions.

RQ1: What are the central communication strategies used by feminist groups and/or organizations in Portugal?
RQ2: How might we characterize Portuguese feminist movements? Where are they? How many activists do they have? What challenges do they face?
RQ3: What has changed in online communication strategies to convey agendas of feminist groups and/or organizations in Portugal, following the Covid-19 pandemic?
RQ4: How can online communication strategies enhance the collective action of feminist organizations and collectives?

The online survey, which was mostly circulated via direct email and social media, had 205 answers, with 74 (36%) deemed valid. Out of the valid replies, 85% (62) believe the organizations and/or groups with whom they cooperate are feminist. The preliminary findings of this survey are revealing. Most feminist groups and/or organizations in Portugal, particularly following the Covid-19 pandemic, make extensive use of online communication strategies to convey agendas, activities, and concerns, as well as to stimulate dialogue and debate. This despite the fact that online activism and feminism is said to be rare in the country (Almeida, 2019). Facebook and Instagram, in addition to institutional websites, are the social media platforms most commonly used by Portuguese feminist groups and/or organizations. This also demonstrates how feminist groups and/or organizations in certain smaller regions of Portugal might have a broader and national impact in their actions. Additionally, the data gathered in this survey may also allow us to reach significant conclusions on how feminist groups and/or organizations use traditional and online communication strategies in Portugal, and how the date of creation of each group and/or organization may influence their communication strategies. Considering that most of the movements and/or organizations are based in Lisbon and Porto, we can better understand the success of the communication strategies as well as the importance of geography for the chosen communication strategies and their impact. Themes such as intersectionality and intergenerationality are also present in the communication strategies used by Portuguese feminist groups.

Drawing from the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the survey on Portuguese feminist groups and/or organizations, as well as on literature review on the importance of communication strategies and tactics for feminist groups and/or organizations, this paper aims to analyze the main strategies deployed in this arena in Portugal and the challenges feminist groups and/or organizations still face to get their agendas and concerns across to the public sphere. Through a logic of situated knowledge (Haraway, 1991), this paper argues that the proper use of communication strategies is critical for the success of feminist groups and/or organizations in Portugal (and beyond borders), whilst also discussing the complex and ever-changing socio-political challenges these groups and/or organizations must overcome in order to continue to raise awareness, mobilize support, and create meaningful change among diverse, intersectional, and intergenerational groups.

Keywords: Feminist groups; Feminist organizations; Social movements; Communication strategies; Network society

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HABERMAS'S COMMUNICATIVE ACTION AND THE CONSTRUCTIVIST-RELATIONAL THEORY AS REFERENCES FOR THE COMMUNICATION OF SUSTAINABILITY IN ORGANIZATIONS

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From the second half of the last century, the society realized that nature does not allow itself to be imprisoned by traditional analysis tools, but requires a systemic, complex and non-linear look and "to be understood, calls for a new paradigm: organic, holistic, integrating" (Almeida, 2002, p. 23). This finding creates the need to rethink the dissemination of the concept of sustainable development as an "automatic and instrumentalized idea" that disregards deeper questions or reflections (Vizeu et al., 2012, p. 580). In this context, over organizations are the imperatives that environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) policies imposed on them, assuming priority in the market to follow this guideline, with capital looking for investments that take sustainability criteria into account. There is a worldwide movement of organizations and their investors that meet the sustainable development goals (SDGs) proposed by the United Nations until 2030.

In this social scenario, as an integral part of its structure, organizations are required to transform strategies, which must be guided by justice, transparency and authenticity (Galleli, 2015). That said, and aware that the organization and its communication have a symbiotic relationship with each other (Kunsch, 2008), organizational communication is responsible for disseminating information, stimulating collaborative interactions, promoting understanding for the construction of meaning and awareness of sustainability. From this perception, this study focused on the need to develop research in the field of organizational communication for sustainable development, inspired by several authors who highlight the urgency of organizations to rethink their communication strategies on the subject (Almeida, 2002; Batistella & Marchiori, 2013; Deetz, 2010; Henriques & Sant'Ana, 2013; Kunsch & Oliveira, 2009).

Converging on their opinions, Almeida (2002), Baldissera and Kaufmann (2013), Deetz (2010), Galleli (2015) and Kunsch (2009), recommend that, in order to communicate sustainability, organizations must follow certain premises, such as: ethical discourse, the construction of meaning emerging collectively from communicative interactions and consensus, coming from collaborative practices that arise with reciprocity. Such perceptions reinforce the importance of a new study about this subject, considering the undeniable fragility of communication in organizations, which are unable to build a social sphere in order to allow dialogue and shared experiences and perceptions (Vilaça, 2013) and seeking to evaluate a theoretical approach that can support an inclusive and collective model for the construction of meaning about sustainability.

Based on these findings, the investigation in question aims to legitimize the normative imperatives for a theory of Organizational Communication for Sustainability, based on the communicative rationality of Jurgen Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action (1984) and on the collaborative vision of communication based on Politically Attentive Relational Constructionism (PARC), by Stanley Deetz (2010), seeking between these two theoretical frameworks (Habermas, 1984; Deetz, 2010), points of convergence that allow guiding communication practices towards the construction of meaning about sustainability through a legitimate and collaborative movement for decision-making, whose focus is on understanding. In this sense, the study starts from the following research question: how can Habermas' Communicative Action (1984) perspective and Deetz's (2010) Constructivist-Relational Theory guide the construction of a strategy for sustainability communication? How can these theoretical perspectives contribute to the advancement of organizational communication and sustainability studies, placing “the reality construction process from the interaction between subjects, that is, through communication” at the center of the discussion? (Galleli, 2015, p. 148).

To respond to the objective and research question, this article was prepared according to the non-systematic literature review method. This methodology seems to be suitable for understanding the statements of the two theories in this study and for listing the premises of effective communication for sustainability, as well as for confronting the ideas of academics in the field of organizational communication about the two evaluated theories. The development of the work and the organization of the literature took place in four stages: 1) delimitation of the theme and scope of the study; 2) deepening the study of the two referenced theories; 3) selection of literature from summaries of articles published in scientific journals on the theme of sustainability and social responsibility; 4) selection of literature,

In order to verify the originality of the present study and to identify other studies developed under the same investigative direction, searches were carried out, on 02/15/2023, in the databases: Scopus, Science Direct and Sage, using the following descriptors: “Agir communicativo + Habermas + Theory + Constructivist + Relational + Sustainability + Communication + Organizational / Or / Communicative action + Habermas + Sustainability + Deetz. Concomitantly, a temporal cut was used through the search for articles, abstracts, keywords or books since 2014.

The results obtained in this search show the lack of literature with the same theme of the study. Thus, it can be concluded about the total originality of the present investigation.

Investigating the concepts involved in this work, we saw that Habermas dedicated his academic career to the search for a democratic model that could promote “discursive exchanges conducted by cooperatively motivated subjects to find fair solutions to moral problems” (Marques, 2015). In his study on the public sphere of discussion, he proposed a construction guided by dialogue and reciprocal negotiation, structured in networks of exchanges and discursive justifications (Oliveira, 2013), in which discourse ethics prevail as a standard of conduct. The Communicative Act, described by the author, is a communicative interaction in search of understanding. However, Habermas (1984), identifies that the interactions, equally, can sustain other rationalities and differentiates the communicative action of an instrumental or teleological action, or yet, of a normative action, claiming that these other models seek to reach a goal in a rational way, following a strategic and success-oriented direction.

> In communicative action, the participants are not primarily oriented towards their own individual success, they seek their individual goals respecting the condition that they can harmonize their plans of action on the basis of a common definition of the situation (Habermas, 1984, p. 285).

In the case of communication for sustainability, this targeting with oriented interests, admittedly, is an obstacle to progress towards understanding, since issues related to sustainability are still characterized by high levels of complexity and uncertainty, where communication plays a key role in sharing information among agents, suggesting greater dialogue and involvement of interested actors (Genç, 2017).

In turn, we perceive that the Constructivist-Relational Theory by Stanley Deetz (2010) argues about the importance of organizations evaluating new conceptions about their communication, considering that the focus is no longer the mere transmission of information, but the formation of meaning and knowledge, in addition to perceiving the level of openness of these processes to the inclusion and participation of people (Deetz, 2010). This model of relational construction of communication emphasizes the existence of different levels of inclusion of interlocutors in the interactive process (Deetz, 2010) and allows observing those practices that contribute to increased control and those that seek, in a more open way, to achieve the consensus (Deetz, 2010), as an analogy to the distinction made by Habermas (1984) between strategic action and communicative action, respectively.

In order to reach consensus, in Habermas' (1984) communicative action, the subject seek the agreement of the other, who in turn, may disagree. Thus, "consensus theory also contemplates dissent and is based on the principles of truth, veracity and correctness" (Marchiori & Galleli, 2017, p. 7). Still on this subject of communicative action, we emphasize in the study, the criticisms made to Habermas, highlighting a weakness in his theory. The claim of the critic lies in the fact that, necessarily, these subjects should previously have credentials that would enable them to defend their arguments safely (Marques, 2015) and under a high standard of cognition and language, which, admittedly, are not skills common to all people.

The communicative action model presupposes that development opportunities, whether personal or professional, are offered and available to all subjects and such a reality does not occur in the world of life, bringing to Habermas' model a vulnerability based on social inequalities and relations of power and domination, characterizing communicative asymmetries that will prevent the speaker from influencing the deliberation in the direction of his intention, even if he receives the opportunity to speak. In this regard, organizations become the biggest challenge for communicative action, where communicative and dialogical exchanges need to take into account the devaluation of the interlocutors and their arguments, given the asymmetries of status among the participants (Marques & Mafra, 2014).

On the other hand, we highlight in the theory proposed by Deetz (2010), the guarantee that all relevant positions are heard, that the formation of meaning takes place freely and openly and that pluralism and differences are maintained when meaning emerges based on the constructivist-relational concept, which defends its construction in a collective and collaborative way. In this proposal, collaborative interactions put prevailing opinions to the test, accept dissent and challenge the status quo, allowing to reformulate what was previously established as a rule, always through openly expressed opinions.

> Here, communication is not just part of the organization's life, but it is the foundation, inherently political and arising from the correlation of forces through which all understandings of organizational life emerge (Deetz, 2010, p. 91).

When we talk about sustainability, we need to consider that "the most important advance in the evolution of the concept is represented by the growing consensus that it requires and implies in political democracy and social equity" (Rattner, 1999, p. 240). Thus, in the present work, we bring the opinion of authors (Galleli, 2015; Marques & Mafra, 2014; Soares, 2009) who suggest not to despise dissent, nor the controversial aspect of the organizational structure, with regard to power and control, but they should be evaluated in what way communicative interactions can contribute to tracing negotiation paths.

Taking into account that the search aims to legitimize the normative imperatives for a theory of Organizational Communication for Sustainability based on the theories of Communicative Action, by Jurgen Habermas (1984) and Stanley Deetz's Relational Constructivist communicative rationality model (2010), the results achieved point to some of the following directions: Habermas' Communicative Act presents several positive characteristics in view of the requirements for communication for sustainability, the main one being the guarantee of a sphere for discussion and debate governed by ethics and respect for opinions. And it is at this particular point that Habermas' theory can converge with Stanley Deetz's (2010) perception, as such characteristics are also found in constructivist-relational theoretical perspectives on organizational communication. The Habermas' theory (1984) indicates that it is possible to reach mutual understanding, and not imposed, through openness to dialogue and negotiation, however, Deetz (2010, p. 96) argues that dialogue "is often very useful to reduce tensions and create a sense of community, but does not have a decision model and rarely generates creative choices". Thus, in the author's opinion, contemporary studies of communication have sought to consolidate processes that go beyond dialogue, but promote consensus based on a collaborative construction of meaning through communicative interactions, with the understanding that this would be the most authentic and productuve approach for decision-making and awareness about sustainability.

As future research opportunities, this study opens up the need for the development of new research, namely about a theoretical model resulting from the intersection of the social theory of Habermas's Communicative Acting and Deetz's Relational Constructivism of communication, as a basis for a collaborative theory of communication for sustainability, where the originality of this study was centered. These are the challenges of organizations to communicate sustainability, based on the objectives proposed in the UN's 2030 agenda, which should inspire academics and professionals in strategic and organizational communication to delve into this area for the future advancement of society and organizations.

Keywords: Act communicative; Habermas; Constructivism-relational; Stanley Deetz; Sustainability

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WHEN HUMAN RIGHTS ARE OUT OF THE GAME: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SILENCING OF NATIONAL TEAMS DURING THE 2022 WORLD CUP

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The 2022 Football World Cup was a controversial sports event. Accused of committing a series of human rights violations, the host country, Qatar, found itself surrounded by controversies and attempts to silence the actors involved, be they the media, federations, national teams or even athletes. This study proposes to verify the visibility and dimension that the 32 national teams of the World Cup gave to these violations in their official Facebook account, which, according to data from Ibope Repucom[1], is where concentrates, among all the platforms, most of the followers of these teams, which are managed by the respective football federations in each country. It is essential to highlight that these entities, according to Rocha & Bastos (2011), should be understood as organizations since they have the task of directing the activities of a class.

According to the 2021 Human Rights Watch (HRW) Report[2], current legislation in Qatar imposes discriminatory and submissive rules on women that, for example, do not allow them to make decisions about marriage, studies, work and even clothing. Likewise, the country's penal code[3] condemns, with imprisonment of up to seven years, men who eventually have intimate relationships with people of the same sex. It should be noted that these

1. Available online: https://www.iboperepucom.com/br/noticias/ranking-digital-das-selecoes-de-futebol-no-mundo-dez-2022/ Accessed on January 15th, 2023.
2. Available online: https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/03/29/everything-i-have-do-tied-man/women-and-qatars-male-guardianship-rules Accessed on January 15th, 2023.
3. Available online: https://www.almeezan.qa/LawArticles.aspx?LawTreeSectionID=255&lawId=26&language=en Accessed on January 15th, 2023.

violations are not restricted to the country's legislation. According to the report, "If we complain, we are fired"[4], produced by Equidem, an institution specialising in human and labour rights, for the construction of stadiums and infrastructure for the World Cup, working hours reached 18 hours a day in conditions inhuman and degrading. HRW, in the "Qatar: FIFA World Cup 2022 – Human Rights Guide for Reporters"[5], blames FIFA for the numerous deaths of migrant workers since the entity should have recognized that Qatar did not have the prior infrastructure to carry out an event of such magnitude and that thousands of migrant workers would be needed for the construction, from the football stadiums to the expansion of the airport, a new metro, hotels and other necessary infrastructures.

The theoretical discussion of the present work was based on the interlocution between concepts such as public opinion and the spiral of silence, authored by the German Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann (1993), invisibility strategies (Silva & Baldissera, 2019) and silencing of organizations (Rosen & Tesser, 1970; Morrison & Milliken, 2000), as well as agenda-setting and framing (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Goffman, 1974).

The theory of the spiral of silence was developed by Noelle-Neumann (1993) in the German electoral period from the 1960s to the 1980s, in the context of a nation fractured and divided by the Berlin Wall, suffering the effects of the cold war sententiously. Before, the author needed to deepen her studies on public opinion, which the spiral of silence would impact, a task that encountered resistance in academia since "it was said that public opinion was a fiction that belonged to the museum of the history of ideas" (Noelle-Neumann, 1993, p. 43). Therefore, public opinion becomes a collective thought that encourages individuals to express their opinions on controversial issues without fear of isolation (Noelle-Neumann, 1993, p. 47). This mechanism ends up triggering the spiral of silence insofar as that individual with an opinion contrary to the dominant current feels embarrassed

4. Available online: https://www.equidem.org/assets/downloads/Equidem_Qatar_World_Cup_Stadiums_Report_Final.pdf Accessed on January 15th, 2023.
5. Available online: https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2022/11/202211mena_qatar_worldcup_reportersguide_2.pdf Accessed on January 15th, 2023.

to express it freely, which Noelle-Neumann (1993) classifies as "the silence that influences the construction of public opinion" (p. 63).

Failure to communicate also highlights essential debates that potentially shape public opinion. Mendonça and Braga (2015) believe that, by abdicating from exposing specific facts, the message's sender can affect the perception of public opinion about the relevance of these events. "People, when they see the version presented in the media, understand whether or not their attitude matches what is socially accepted. Moreover, this same media tends to give voice to issues with a greater consensus" (Mendonça & Braga, 2015, p. 9). In this context, public opinion considers issues ignored by the media, organizations, or influencers, less critical. This prevents individuals from the supposed silent minority from addressing such cases for fear of isolation or rejection. "As people remain silent, they end up indirectly reinforcing the opinions of the media" (Temer & Nery, 2009, p. 95).

In this context of invisibility, this study focuses on understanding the importance that football federations, as organizations involved in the event of such great repercussion, give to the controversial issues of human rights violations in the host country of the 2022 World Cup. Silva (2018) defends that when organizations consider that being in the spotlight, through the approach of specific subjects, can be damaging, they activate "a set of strategies aimed at something like a "leave the scene", to reduce visibility. In more extreme cases, they may even seek total omission of involvement in a given situation and/or accountability before society" (p. 18). In this sense, the unrestricted use of invisibility strategies can prevent an organization from proposing, maturing, and debating matters of public interest (Silva & Baldissera, 2019).

A related concept of silencing organizations that we also consider in this study addresses the issue from an internal point of view. According to Moura-Paula (2014), in certain situations, "employees refrain from drawing attention to issues at work, whether economic (such as operational inefficiencies), social (such as different forms of harassment), moral (such as discrimination) or legal (such as corruption)" (p. 17). These incipient studies of silence in organizations still did not predict the organization's voice from the inside out, from its digital communication channels. However, they are essential to understand how silencing can serve organizational strategies. In the context of these studies, we found that Moura-Paula (2014) addresses the MUM Effect, a concept developed by Rosen and Tesser (1970), which advocated the reluctance to communicate messages considered harmful to a given audience. In this way, a parallel can be established between the needs and violations of the rights and well-being of employees, and the resistance to informing organizations insofar as, as minority and isolated voices, the most appropriate behaviour would be to refer to silence.

Choosing what to communicate or silence, and what framework should be given to the messages, also allows approaching the concept of agenda-setting that, although it was initially developed for journalism, can be adapted to organizational communication since the digital platforms of organizations reach and impact people through their messages, "having, namely, the power to tell people what to think about" (Cohen, 1963, p. 120). According to the agenda-setting hypothesis, the media can exercise, as Weaver (1981, p. 155) points out, "a didactic role, especially when people need guidance", such as, for example, to give visibility to flags of a social nature or alert to the violation of human rights. It is possible to state that this theory is, therefore, a transfer of what the media deem as relevant content and able to be in the public debate to the images we have of these subjects (McCombs, 2009). Now, the social context is often provided to people by the level of exposure and, more than that, by the salience that events gain in the communication channels. This salience is what Ervin Goffman (1974) defined as the concept of framing, a kind of extension of agenda-setting, focused on the selection and emphasis given to a news object, a primordial device to shed light on particular themes. Our proposal in this study is to transpose this theory, associated with journalism, to the role of mass communication, that is, not only a resource applicable to traditional media but, in the public space, to all channels with penetration in large audiences, as is the case of the profiles of national federations in digital platforms.

To ensure the achievement of the research objectives, we chose to use a mixed methodology, which determines the nature of the research as quali-quantitative through the use of the content analysis technique, in a case study that aims at questions to be answered such as “how?” and “why?”, as advocated by Yin (2015), author of the concept initially published in 1994, which aims to facilitate the understanding of social phenomena. In turn, the content analysis verifies this phenomenon and describes the content of any message, enabling a classification of the signals that occur in a communication (Janis, 1982, p. 53).

Therefore, the period comprising the event, from November 18, 2022, to December 21, 2022, was analysed, also considering, for research purposes, two days before the official opening of the competition and two days after the final, which represents a total of 5,069 publications, identified on the official Facebook account of each of the 32 national teams, represented by their respective federations. Of these thousands of publications, we identified only three that somehow, even if not explicitly, mention problems related to human rights violations or inhumane conditions of migrant workers in Qatar.

The first publication was posted on the Facebook of the Dutch National Team. The message deals with the team players’ welcome to migrant workers after training and emphasizes that they were there “to talk, draw extra attention to their situation and play football”[6]. It does not precisely explain the situation of the workers, but even if in a veiled way, it reveals a critique of their conditions. Along the same lines, the second publication is by the Belgian National Team, in a meeting also with migrant workers in Qatar, however, with a more forceful message, stating that the event is part of one of the actions that the Belgian Federation promoted to alert to the conditions of these workers[7]. The German National Team carried out the third publication, which may have been the most open criticism of human

6. Available online: https://www.facebook.com/onsoranje/posts/pfbid0Dr28sCuRqa6eM8nbprUL2Qku3TE8Fwxu5Aq7mmrHGKS1Uprfrqck1Fzi1WLvpZUWl Accessed on January 15th, 2023.
7. Available online: https://www.facebook.com/BelgianRedDevils/photos/a.125956844215729/2956557044489014/?type=3 Accessed on January 15th, 2023.

rights violations in the host country. After being banned from wearing the "OneLove" armband in support of the LGBTQIA+ community, the message, accompanied by a photo with the players covering their mouths, says that the team intended to defend diversity and mutual respect. He also warns that the message is not a political declaration but a defence of human rights[8].

It is interesting to note that, during the World Cup, some teams used their Facebook accounts to address specific issues involved in human rights violations in Qatar, however, without mentioning these problems in the country. The Brazilian National Team, for example, through the Brazilian Football Confederation, entered into a partnership with Grupo Arco Íris[9], to carry out actions to combat discrimination and protect LGBTQIA+ rights. However, on its digital platforms, it made no mention of the violation of the rights of LGBTQIA+ people in Qatar. Using this same expedient, the Portuguese National Team broadcast a video to mark a position on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women[10]. At the same time, the Wales National Team celebrated #WhiteRibbonDay[11], taking a stand against the abuse suffered by women, even though, in both cases, they have not made any association with discrimination in the treatment of women in the host country of the World Cup. It is precisely this wide gap between the recognition of the problems and their public communication, namely through social networks that we intend to explore in this study, which has the backdrop of the 2022 Football World Cup in Qatar and human rights violations.

8. Available online: https://www.facebook.com/DFBTeamEN/photos /a.565201890252548/5173722809400410/?type=3 Accessed on January 15th, 2023.
9. Available online: https://www.facebook.com/CBF/photos /a.10152477109412640/10160525778427640/?type=3 Accessed on January 15th, 2023.
10. Available online: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=634607158347362 Accessed on January 15th, 2023.
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ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP, COMPANIES AND PURPOSE: THE PERSPECTIVE OF SPANISH SOCIETY

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Introduction and theoretical framework

There is a debate about the need to reframe the current economic system (Canvas, 2022) towards one that is more inclusive and sustainable, providing an opportunity to take action and move towards the 2030 Agenda. An engaged citizenry and organizations seeking to (re)define their purpose will be vital to this.

In this emerging scenario, citizenship assumes an active and pollinating role (Fernández & Díaz, 2020; Theben et al., 2021), encouraging organizations to rethink their purpose, measuring beyond the financial dimensions. Purpose is the reason for an organization's existence: what positive impact does it generate on people and the environment?

Previous studies (Barroso et al., 2023; Barroso et al., 2020; Milano et al., 2020; Canvas & Corporate Excellence, 2022) have shown that companies that follow this approach have a positive impact on business, society and the planet. Purpose-driven companies (B Lab Spain & Gabeiras and Asociados, 2021), are aligned with the triple impact (Elkington, 2020; Abramovay et al., 2020) and stakeholder capitalism (Freeman, 1984; Ferreira et al., 2020). The triple impact approach involves a shift from business models that seek exclusively economic benefits, to models that balance such benefits with a positive impact on society and the environment (Correa, et al., 2020). It is a new genetics of business, which has a strong impact on trust and reputation (Barroso, 2021; Edelman, 2022) and represents an opportunity to respond to global demands.

Methodology

The research was designed with the aim of analyzing Spanish society's perception of the capitalist system; of purpose-driven companies; and the role of citizenship. In this context, our research questions are:

- How do people value the system we live in, what are they most concerned about, and what should be the priorities?
- What does the public expect from purpose-driven businesses?
- What is the population willing to do as an active part of society for sustainability?

Following a mixed approach, the survey technique was chosen, consisting of 25 closed questions following the three axes of the research: current economic system; purpose-driven companies and active citizenship. The fieldwork was carried out in the last quarter of 2022, obtaining 1004 valid responses from a representative sample from all over Spain. The study was conducted among women and men aged 18 to 65 in Spain. In the selection process, the aim was to have a representative universe of Spanish society by gender, age, social class and region.

Preliminary Results

There is a clear need for transformation and the realization of a general crisis in the way we organize ourselves as a society. 55.6% of Spanish citizens do not approve of the current capitalist system and 77% believe that the current system should undergo a major transformation, at the very least.

The lack of knowledge about purpose-driven companies is the same throughout Spain. However, it can be observed that there are people who have heard of them and who have had dealings with this type of company. In line with this lack of knowledge, a certain generalized distrust of the role of these companies is also observed.

64.5% of people say that they make small decisions in their daily lives to take care of the planet's resources, but 34.2% are not entirely satisfied with their own actions to impact the planet.

Discussions

The collected data allow us to discuss the following aspects:

a. *The valuation of the economics system continues to fall*
The trend of critical assessment of the socioeconomic system among citizens is ratified, falling from 4.02 in 2021 to 3.9 in 2022. The performance of the current model is increasingly far from the approved one, reflecting the widespread discontent of society. In addition, almost three quarters of the population say they are very or fairly concerned about the three areas of triple impact: economic (74.2%), social (73.2%) and environmental (70.4%).

b. *The need to transform the system is consolidated*
77% of the Spanish population agrees on the unavoidable need to transform the economic system to move towards more sustainable, resilient and inclusive models. This opinion is widely shared beyond differences in geography, age, gender or socioeconomic status, consolidating the 2021 analysis.

c. *Concern for the impact on people and the planet*
The fight against corruption and tax evasion is the main citizen concern (78.8%), followed by the protection of biodiversity and natural ecosystems (73.8%), at a third level, the population refers to the fight against poverty and inequality (71.8%), reflecting society's concern about the impacts of the economic system on both people and the planet.

d. *Leaving no one behind, the top priority*
When identifying which area should be a priority in the transformation of the economic system, 71.8% of the population points to the fight against poverty and inequality. A result that reflects citizens' aspiration

for equitable and inclusive growth, which increases social cohesion and generates prosperity for all sectors of the population.

e. Sustainability with a gender perspective

In terms of sensitization and awareness, women demonstrate a higher level of concern for sustainability, with differences of more than 10 points in some areas. The issue that registers the greatest difference is that of taking care of people's physical and mental health, where women are very and quite concerned in 78.5% and men in 65.3%.

f. Increase recognition of purposeful businesses

38.7% of citizens already know the model of purpose-driven companies (37% in 2021), an upward trend among younger groups (45.2% in the case of millennials and 41.6% among generation Z). The main sectors to which the companies most frequently identified as purpose-driven companies belong are energy, followed by two sectors linked to consumption: fashion and cosmetics and food and beverages.

g. New business models are considered necessary

70.7% of citizens consider it totally or quite necessary for companies to take the step towards more sustainable and responsible business models, which define purpose-driven companies. In turn, 45.2% of the population points to job creation and prosperity as the main area in which these companies should invest as a priority.

h. Trust in triple impact companies

53% of the Spanish population would be willing to buy and recommend products or services from a company that acts under principles of triple impact and sustainability. On the other hand, up to 50.7% would think about working for these types of companies or recommending them to work in them.

i. The driving role of the public sector

In order to achieve the degree of change necessary for the economic system, the Spanish population identifies the public sector as a driving agent.

75.8% believe that government bodies should stimulate and promote the model of purpose-driven companies to transform the system.

j. Evolution of the active citizenship profile

28.4% of all citizens respond to a more active profile with sustainability and carry out 9 or more activities with a positive impact on a regular basis. In this group of active citizenship, the presence of women stands out (59.3%), in addition to showing a more critical character with respect to the system (average rating of 3.3) and committed (more than 84% affirm that a purpose-driven companies would influence them to choose products and services).

Conclusions

When analyzing the different research questions, the study states that Spanish society shows a clear consensus that capitalism, as an economic and social model, needs a profound transformation towards a system that cares more about people and the planet.

It is considered that, within the process of transformation that is taking place in the current economic and social system, it is very necessary for companies to take the step towards business models driven by a purpose. Citizens in general consider that these companies are necessary to drive the development of a sustainable economic system.

Despite an apparent disinterest and apathetic climate, evidence shows that citizens are taking a more active and pollinating role, encouraging organizations to rethink their purpose and sense of success beyond the purely financial dimensions of their models and towards a more inclusive and sustainable economic system.

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THE SUSTAINABILITY NARRATIVE CHALLENGE: THE SECIL GROUP MEDIA FRAMING IN PORTUGAL

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Organisations are social actors. Even if they were created to solve some societal problem, they need the constant approval of other social actors to continue to exist. This need to obtain and maintain the licence to operate – the implicit and explicit consent of the authorities, communities, clients, suppliers, employees, and shareholders – means that organisations are permanently concerned with their legitimacy. Legitimacy is the condition for a company to exist, thrive and to be able to obtain the necessary resources to do so, such as investments, committed employees, business and sales partners, and political support (Rendtorff, 2020). Legitimacy ensures the institutionalisation of organisations in society, and all institutionalised conduct involves roles that participate in institutionalisation's controlling character (Berger & Luckmann, 2010).

In this sense, the role of the public relations (PR) professional is, in a planned and sustained manner, to establish and maintain mutual understanding between the organisation and its stakeholders (Black, 1962) and thus legitimise organisations in society (Meng & Berger, 2013). Through mutually beneficial relationships, this professional intentionally aims to create and maintain a positive image with stakeholders to influence their reputation. For Brown et al. (2006), the image of an organisation is the combination between the intended image and the interpreted image. The intended image is what the organisation wants others to think about it, thus being the result of the organisation's communication actions (Villafañe, 1999). The interpreted image is the idea that members of the organisation have about how stakeholders see the organisation (Brown et al., 2006). Reputation is more enduring and outside the organisation´s control. It is the overall assessment of external stakeholders based on several factors over time: how the organisation presents itself, how stakeholders perceive it and how the media represent it (Gilpin, 2010). Although it is somewhat influenced by the message the organisation intends to send (intended image), it also depends on external sources such as competitors, industry analysts, activists, and the media (Brown et al., 2006).

Being one of the influences of reputation, the media, in particular journalists who work in the media, have special attention from organisations and, therefore, the role of press officer or media advisor is often considered the main PR specialisation (Sebastião, 2021). The media influence organisations' reputations because they are a vital element in the public information system of a society. They remain one of the main spaces for discussing matters of public interest, even though recent technological advances have transformed how people inform, communicate, and construct social reality. The spread of the Internet, mobile communication and the variety of software tools have developed what Castells (2022) calls a network society, which has allowed the emergence of mass self-communication, where anyone can be a communication channel. However, it is precisely because of this context of information fragmentation in the digital environment and, mainly, the pollution of the information space by "fake news" that journalists working in the media have stood out since, even if they have limitations, they inform citizens (Castells, 2022), being regulated and following ethical and deontological precepts, which gives them credibility (Sebastião, 2021).

Since the organisational image is vital to building and managing the relationship among stakeholders and achieving legitimacy (Frandsen, 2017), organisations look to the media to disseminate the narrative of the intended organisational image and thus do reputation management (Gilpin, 2010). The environmental implications caused by the cement industry, such as waste generation, CO_2 emissions and damage to biodiversity, represent a particular challenge for the reputation of organisations in the sector since organisations in this industry are under permanent scrutiny by the public (including the media) and are increasingly subject to laws and regulations aimed at limiting their actions (Zuo et al., 2012). In this sense, PR professionals need to build the narrative of these organisations, highlighting the effort to mitigate the environmental implications and their contribution to society by building homes and infrastructure for people, generating jobs and the benefits it brings to the communities where they are present. The sustainable narrative must convince the journalists responsible for the news that will influence the public image of organisations.

This article aims to understand how the media frame the public image intended by the Secil Group in Portugal. Secil is a Portuguese cement company, present in eight countries, which completed 90 years in 2020. In 2022, it started a new strategic cycle, Ambition 2025 – Sustainable Growth, in which it scores sustainability as the organisation's focus for the coming years. According to Secil's CEO, Otmar Hübscher, at Secil "the theme of sustainability has gained, in recent years, a strong preponderance, and it is in this perspective that Secil will anchor its growth" (Secil, 2022a, p. 7). Sustainability is one of the strategic pillars of the Group, and its goal is "To be recognised as a responsible and sustainable company by 2025, committed to decarbonisation by 2050".

Beyond the environment, the Group intends to move in this cycle towards a more holistic approach to sustainability, which is to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Fontaine, 2013). To do this, it has been using the ESG methodology. ESG stands for environment, social and governance, and has become a key indicator of management competence, risk management and non-financial performance that is being demanded by the financial market for listed companies and is also a best practice to be adopted by organisations that are not listed (Galbreath, 2012). To achieve this goal, we present the following objectives:

1. Assess Secil's sustainability narrative in the intended public image through the advertising messages disclosed between January 2020 and February 2022.

2. Assess Secil's media image in Portugal between January 2020 and February 2022.
3. Compare Secil's media image with the intended public image.

In methodological terms, we resort to content analysis based on the framing theory (Entman, 1993) and the Hallahan´s (1999) attributes model. We use the quantitative method through content analysis of the journalistic and advertising pieces published about Secil in the media in Portugal between January 2020 and February 2022, the Sustainability Report 2020-2021 period, in which it positions the focus on sustainability. As sustainability is the framework desired by the Secil Group, it was considered a registration category in the analysis grid. The environment, social and governance, from the acronym ESG, the priorities highlighted by the Group in its Sustainability Report 2020 and 2021, were the attributes analysed in the journalistic and advertising pieces about Secil, identified as registration units.

The results show that in the analysed period, 201 journalistic pieces and 39 advertising pieces (N=240) published in the press, television, radio, and Internet in Portugal mentioned Secil. Of the total, the year 2020 concentrates 56.7% of the cases, and the media that published the most news and advertising pieces was the newspaper (38.3%). In the journalistic pieces, 43 out of 201 pieces frame sustainability, while in the advertising pieces, 15 out of 39 frame sustainability. Concerning the ESG attributes, the environment is the one that stands out the most, with 38.3% of the cases. Social was the second most highlighted attribute (31.6%), and the governance attribute was the least highlighted, being framed in only one case.

The conclusion is that an organisation that depends on the extraction of natural resources and the emission of greenhouse gases to make its products will always have an additional challenge when trying to achieve the image of a sustainable organisation. When comparing the intended image with the media image of the Secil Group, the general objective of this study, although the organisation's efforts to promote the intended image of a sustainable organisation are noticeable, the media image tends to position it as a polluting organisation. It is thus confirmed that organisations of this type of industry are under permanent scrutiny, having their actions limited (Zuo et al., 2012).

Our analysis clearly shows that the image intended by the Secil Group is that of a sustainable organisation. For us, this narrative, which the media have well received, should be constantly propagated, at every opportunity, to achieve a balance concerning less positive news in the environmental field, which will always exist given the type of activity carried out by Secil. Thus, the sustainability narrative must be present in the advertising pieces, whether institutional or on the product. In the period analysed, Secil's product advertisements only highlighted the quality of the products without mentioning sustainability.

Another opportunity is to address the sustainability narrative holistically, including the topic in social and governance content, going beyond the environmental content. The social attribute guarantees Secil a positive media image of an organisation that relates with its stakeholders and improves the life in its communities. Another opportunity is to position the company as sustainable in governance issues since, at least in the period analysed, only one piece of journalism about the organisation was identified in this attribute. Finally, especially in the radio and television media, the media image of Secil is of a polluting organisation. When these two media mention Secil, they usually do so with a negative focus. Secil's media advisory services can foster a better relationship with radio and television journalists. Although the media agenda is more attentive to the news with a negative focus on the environment, it is also receptive to positive issues.

The main contribution of this study is related to the use of ESG attributes to assess the sustainability framework in the communication of organisations with a polluting image and to highlight the difficulties in conveying an image that contradicts media prejudices.

Keywords: Intended image; Media image; Public relations; Sustainability; Framing; Cement companies

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PUBLIC SECTOR COMMUNICATION AND GENDER PERSPECTIVES. A PILOT STUDY ON SOCIAL MEDIA PRACTICES OF ITALIAN REGIONS

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Over the last few years, characterized by enduring crises and frequent emergencies, there has been growing attention in the public debate on gender-sensitive policies (UNESCO 2020; European Commission 2020), as well as for new forms of online activism (Pavan 2020; Jackson et al. 2020; Panarese et al. 2021), which pushes toward a more ethical and responsible dimension of public sector communication. This perspective is clearly outlined in the "inclusion and cohesion" mission of the Italian National Plan for Recovery and Resilience (PNRR), as well as in the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026, which reiterates the importance of reflecting on more inclusive and diversity-sensitive communication strategies and practices; taking into account the EIGE (European Institute for Gender Equality) Index where Italy ranked 15th in 2022, within the aim of escalating the ranking and positing the country at least in the first ten places in the near future.

Looking at the academic debate from a gender perspective, in communication and information studies, the analysis of gender representation in mainstream and digital media (Farci, Scarcelli 2022; Buonanno 2023, among many others) has been privileged along with the work of many scholars which have addressed this issue in political communication (Belluati 2020; Saccà, Massidda 2021; De Blasio et al. 2022). In the Italian public sector communication area, indeed, since the 1990s a significant emphasis on the topic has been placed on the use of non-discriminatory and gender-neutral language in institutional recommendations and local guidelines (Sabatini 1993; Robustelli 2012); with several initiatives implemented by municipalities, provinces and regions through protocols aimed at enhancing women identity in public sector communication against stereotyped and discriminating forms of representation (such as Piedmont Region 2002; Emilia-Romagna Region 2015; Apulia Region 2021).

Even so, the attention in public sector communication strategies towards gender issues emerged slowly, often appearing barely visible (Capecchi 2018; Faccioli 2020). Only recently, particularly during the pandemic, gender studies in public sector communication have intensified (Lovari, D'Ambrosi 2022; Faccioli, D'Ambrosi 2023), also due to the pressure of connected citizens. This different approach to the topic blends with a gradual recognition of institutional information and communication activity in Public Administration, which has also been accelerated by digitization processes (OECD 2021).

In fact, in the era of information disorder, with the evolution of the hybrid media system (Chadwick 2013) and the progressive fragmentation of the public sphere (Bentivegna, Boccia Artieri 2021), institutional public communication assumes increasing centrality from multiple viewpoints. Firstly, in its informative and service functions (Canel, Luoma-aho 2019; Materassi, Solito 2021) as well as in the cohesion and sharing of values. Secondly, in fostering social changes in a country strongly characterized by gender inequality, also through an aware use of institutional practices and communication strategies for the enhancement of gender equality. Lastly, the increasing adoption and use of digital platforms, social media and messaging apps by public institutions have shown an innovative function in the reconstruction of relations between institutions and citizens. This trend has further increased during the pandemic (Solito et al. 2020; Spalletta et al. 2021; Massa et al. 2022).

At the same time, in a landscape of profound socio-cultural transformation of the country, which includes innovative domains to consider and handle, such as gender mainstreaming and the intersectional paradigm – widely promoted by the European supranational institutional sphere (Crenshaw 1989; European Commission 2020) – several new challenges arise for public communicators and national institutions concerning the development of professionals' skills and capacities. Challenges enriched by the regional differences and the fragmented experiences around the country (Ducci 2021), such as enhanced by the new realm of self-produced (Mancini 2002) and disintermediated institutional communication, which, from a side allows greater proximity to citizens, encouraging their engagement; but it also exposes public sector communication and its strategies to prosumers' digital feedback, possible questioning, and criticism to manage (Coleman, Shane 2012; Bracciale 2022).

Based on this theoretical framework, the paper presents the results of a pilot study that addresses the topic of gender perspectives in public sector communication from a perspective hitherto just investigated in the Italian academic literature, that is, by focusing on the complex dynamics between the adoption of rules, the tendency to replicate established praxis, and development of a creative dimension in communication practices.

Our hypothesis is that there is no cause-and-effect relationship between the adoption of gender equality guidelines by public administrations and the production of gender inclusive institutional messages in both contents and languages. On the one hand, this is for reasons that are endogenous to the guidelines themselves (incompleteness, too "general" rules, inadequate reception and adoption at local level, etc.) (European Commission 2021; European Parliament 2021), and on the other, there are exogenous conditioning factors, such as the complex (and sometimes troubling) relationship between the communication structure and political and/or administrative leadership (Solito 2018), the autonomy and discretion attributed to the public communicator and the strategic role of the communication structure in respect to other sectors of the Administration (Grunig 2016). On the contrary, and this constitutes the second hypothesis that the study aims to discuss, the adoption of a gender-sensitive approach in public administrations communication practices depends also on public communicator awareness and responsiveness, which take shape in established praxis even before depending on fixed rules, and often express themselves in communication strategies enhancing creative choices (Eisenberg et al. 2016).

To confirm these hypotheses, the study is structured in two parts, corresponding to as many research questions. The first concerns the way in which the relationship between institutional languages and gender perspectives takes shape in public sector communication messages, by:

a. analyzing the potential differences between media hypes (i.e., those days when gender issues are the main object of communication) and ordinary coverage (i.e., in the constant and repeated adoption of a gender-sensitive approach)

b. detecting the creative choices through which public communication deals with gender issues, both in themselves and in a broader perspective of enhancing diversity.

The second question asks which are the influencing factors that enhance and/or hinder the relationship between institutional languages and gender perspectives, by:

a. distinguishing the endogenous dimension (specifically related to communication practices) from the exogenous dimension (which often depends on context)

b. investigating the way in which they affect both the adoption of the rules (what rules, addressed to whom, allowing what level of discretionary power, etc.) and their implementation in everyday communication (with specific reference to professional practices involving public communicators).

Following the logic of a pilot study, at this stage our research focuses on some selected Italian regions, and investigates their communication practices conveyed through official Facebook accounts.

The choice to focus on the regional dimension stems from a range of evidence supported in the literature (Negri Zamagna 2000; Ducci 2021). In the organization of the Italian state, regions play a central role because of the powers that are conferred on them and the areas in which they are exercised (starting with health care); consequently, they represent a crucial hub in the relationship between institutions and citizens and, as the pandemic has clearly shown (think of the management of the vaccination campaign), their communication is of paramount importance in the life of the citizen. By considering the piloting dimension of this research, we decided to select 4 case studies, basing our choice on pre-established criteria such as: the geographic representativeness, the recurrent or emerging approach to gender issues, the political orientation of the head of the administration, and the level of social media use.

Referring to the decision of focusing on the public communication shared through social media, it depends on the strategic role that, over the last decade, they have achieved in public sector communication both as information tools and as spaces for active citizen participation in public policy co-design processes (Linder 2012; Bartoletti, Faccioli 2020). The specific choice to focus the analysis on Facebook depends both on the need to acquire a sufficiently heterogeneous textual corpus with regard to the different languages (verbal, visual, audiovisual, etc.), and on the well-established use of this platform by Italian public administrations (Lovari, Righetti 2020; Ducci 2021).

From a methodological point of view, the study refers to a mixed methods approach (Creswell 2015), which blends different research tools:

a. background analysis, to map the Italian regions in respect to the adoption of specific guidelines for a gender sensitive communication

b. social media content analysis, to detect communication strategies and practices, referring to verbal, visual and audio-visual languages

c. in-depth interviews to key informants, to approach the analysis of the relation between institutional languages, gender perspectives and communication strategies by the institutional communication professionals' point of view.

Although the study is still in progress, the research's first findings confirm the existence of a "sensitive" balance between the rules governing the gender-sensitive approach and the ways through which it takes shape in communication practices, partly because of the different impact of the creative variable as well as the empowerment of public communication professionals. It is also interesting to point out that the research's first findings confirm the effectiveness of the pilot study, especially aiming at testing a methodology that can then be replicated for other regions and/or for other local contexts (municipalities, provinces, etc.) or extended in a comparative perspective.

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ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES ON GREEN HYDROGEN IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION

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Home to a growing population of over 500 million people, the Mediterranean region is facing today serious challenges regarding the climate crisis and the fast depletion of fossil energy sources. Over the next 25 years, there will be a significant increase in the region's main energy consumption, driven by economic expansion, population growth, and fast urbanization. Having one of the best available renewable energy sources in the world such as solar energy and wind power, the Mediterranean region displays great potential to develop Green Hydrogen (GH) in the long term. Furthermore, the area is strategically located and represents an opportunity for both shores of the Mediterranean to increase GH partnerships to decarbonize the region and secure a fast energy transition. The European Commission (EC) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) have both developed GH strategies to accelerate the deployment of the technology in the region. Currently, there are several barriers that need to be tackled in order to reach the desired levels of policy implementation. Strategic Communication plays an essential role in effectively implementing these strategies and reinforce sustainable collaborations in the Euro-Mediterranean paradigm. The research first presents the current situation of Renewable Energy and GH in the Mediterranean and how policy instruments play a key role in the development of the technology. Then we dive into Strategic Communication to analyze how the EC and UfM implement their communication strategies on GH and we go through four case studies of countries (Algeria, France, Morocco and Spain) which have recently been increasing their energy collaborations in the Mediterranean. We position the theoretical framework of the study within Strategic Communication applied to energy policies referencing authors such as Hatch (1997), Hallahan (2007), Whittington

(2001), Mintzberg (1987), Koch (2011), Tagliapietra & Zachmann (2016) and Escribano & Lazaro (2020). We follow a methodology involving a relational content analysis for our institutional documents and the media articles from the most read digital newspaper in each of our target countries.

The Mediterranean region is characterized by the occurrence of several environmental disasters, which have become a major threat due to the fast growth of the population throughout the basin. The region has a moderate weather with plenty of sunshine and strong winds. Summers with temperatures ranging from 25 to 40 degrees, which can induce droughts, and warm, rainy winters with varied precipitation. Significant rainfall events occur in the spring and fall, which can result in violent incidents caused by climate change, such as floods and landslides. We have already witnessed the rise in temperatures and the growing number of extreme catastrophic natural events such as wild fires, heatwaves, rise of the sea level, floods, storms, etc. These events are becoming recurrent and more intense each year, which could have a terrible impact on human activities, agriculture, infrastructure and dramatic economic losses. They tend to grow more severe as a result of global warming, which will be worse in the Mediterranean than elsewhere (IEA, 2021). Indeed, the territory's location between two air masses (arid in North Africa and cool in Europe) as well as its topographical characteristics make it particularly vulnerable. Climate change may also result in the emergence of new threats, such as sea level rise ranging from 40cm to 1m by the end of the century, as well as water acidification caused by excessive carbon dioxide absorption. As a result, it is critical for the entire Mediterranean Basin to work toward sustainable development and to create methods for resilience and adaptation to climate change.

Renewable energy sources usage started in response to the different challenges facing the shortage of fossil energy supply and the devastating consequences of climate change affecting most of the regions in the world. Governments and civil society organizations play a key role in defining the future of the energy transition and finding solutions to the climate crisis. On an international level, the rise of greenhouse gas (GHG) concentration in the atmosphere has been pointed out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as the consequence of energy consumption and production and that global temperatures are rising subsequently. In the coming years, the Mediterranean region will be more affected by climate change than any other region of the world (FEMIP, 2018). The Mediterranean area now consumes 9% of the world's energy and is projected to do so for the foreseeable future at a 1,5% annual growth rate (IEMED, 2020). Furthermore, the energy transition in the Mediterranean is far from being homogenic. Indeed, there are important disparities among northern and southern countries which are more and more apparent given the urgency of the climate crisis (MEDENER, 2020). In the north, energy transition programmes for renewable energies are already well on their way and defined by the European Commission with set objectives and policy tools that ensure the implementation of the projected targets in 2030 and 2050. National Energy Climate Plans (NECPs) are an example of how the energy transition is structured in the Northern Mediterranean with clear binding targets for each country and a follow-up every 2 years by the EC with sanctions and fines if the sustainable targets are not attained. In the south, current objectives are undefined and frequently only suggestive, rarely having concrete action strategies.

For the majority of the southern Mediterranean countries, there is little made for planning the energy transition in the coming years even if countries like Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia already showed interest in collaborating with EU countries for the development of solar, wind power and green hydrogen. The region has no choice but to speed its transition to a low-carbon energy future if it wants to be sustainable, peaceful, and stable. Without a significant change in energy policy and strategy, GHG emissions from the energy sector will gradually increase in the Mediterranean and double by 2030. Much work needs to be done, and the urgency of the climate situation necessitates a much faster transformation. Many attempts have already been made, particularly in the subject of climate change adaptation, with promising results and countless examples of effective practices that have surmounted economic, political, and societal constraints. Nonetheless, a significant climate change mitigation policy is required. The energy transition in the Mediterranean region needs to be secured and fast due to numerous parameters that could only deteriorate if not seriously answered by local governments and decision makers. Therefore, cooperation and partnerships between northern and southern Mediterranean countries are necessary for the overall success of the energy transition in the region.

The European Commission (EC) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) are the two main institutions that will be considered in this study. There is fifty years of difference between both since their establishment, the EC being the oldest, and it will be quite appealing to understand the evolution of their communication objectives regarding GH through strategic communication. Green Hydrogen (GH) as an enabler of the energy transition in Europe and the Mediterranean is becoming an important theme that both are discussing, and new communication platforms will certainly emerge from their corporations. Energy and climate action general deputy, Grammenos Mastrojeni, and Executive Vice-President and Commissioner for Trade for the EC, have highlighted the importance of this technology in the region and encouraged progress to increase energy trades between the north and south of the Mediterranean (EC, 2020). Strategic Communication is an emerging area of study in the Communication field. Researchers like Hallahan, van Ruler, Verčič, and Sriramesh define strategic communication as “the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission”. Thus, if an organization (or institution) has a specific mission for the future, strategic communication can be the tool that favors the achievement of set targets and has the purpose of enhancing the organization’s mission (Hallahhan, 2007). In our case, GH is presented by the EC and the UfM in their communication reports and have a certain mission to achieve. Our study will dive into the strategic communication of these institutions and understand the strategy regarding the deployment of GH in the Euro-Med region.

We position the theoretical framework of the study within strategic communication applied to energy policies (Escribano & Lazaro, 2020). Strategic communication can play a significant part in the promotion and implementation of policies related to sustainable energy in the Mediterranean area. For instance, effective messaging can generate support and agreement for sustainable energy policy and can also promote awareness or knowledge of the advantages of renewable energy sources and GH. One further essential component of messaging is drawing attention to the possible financial benefits that might result from making investments in GH. For example, solar and wind energy are quickly approaching the point where they can compete in terms of price with traditional fossil fuels (IRENA, 2022) and they can be used as a source of cheap renewable electricity to power an electrolyser and produce green H2 (IEA, 2022). Policymakers and governments can be encouraged to regard GH as a smart investment in the long-term sustainability of the region's energy industry if they are informed about these cost benefits, which can be conveyed through a strategic communication plan. Furthermore, engagement with stakeholders, such as governments, industry representatives, and organisations representing civil society, could establish agreement and support for energy policies, as well as help identify and remove obstacles to the policies' implementation. Involving stakeholders in the process of developing a policy allows for them to contribute to the identification of their needs and concerns, as well as the provision of useful input and feedback on the practicability and efficacy of the policy. This can assist to identify and address any possible implementation issues, and it can also help to develop confidence and support for the policy

In this research we will have a relational content analysis of the selected institutional documents and national media press articles (the most read digital newspaper of each of our targeted countries). We use KH Coder in order to conduct the analysis according to our variables (targets, strategies and barriers) and draw a co-occurrence network graph but also a cognitive mapping showing the relation between institutions (EC and UfM) and our targeted countries (Algeria, France, Morocco and Spain). KH Coder is an open-source software for quantitative content analysis that has been well received by researchers around the world (Sciencedirect, 2017). Furthermore, for the collection of the Media articles, we use the electronic database platform Factiva to have access to a large corpus of data and make use of various filters to narrow down my search to a more specific and targeted spectrum.

The development of the EC strategies' is complex and requires a deep analysis of the process and how it is carried out during its lifetime. Some variations can obviously occur but generally, it is admitted there are certain steps to follow by organizations to elaborate their strategic communication and the EC is no exception to that (Steyn, 2000). Also, The UfM's goal is to enhance regional cooperation and dialogue, as well as the implementation of concrete projects and initiatives with tangible impact on the citizens in order to address the three strategic objectives of the region: stability, human development and integration. Like the EC, the UfM has strategic plans to put forward their energy plans in the Mediterranean. Its communication strategy on GH examines organizational communication from an integrated, multidisciplinary perspective by extending ideas and energy issues grounded in various traditional communications disciplines (Hallahan et al., 2007). This suggests that this type of strategic communication is about organizational communication from a specific perspective that can be assisted with efficiency and goal driven ambitions (Perrow, 1992). Recent research has indicated that the organization privileges influencing the publics opinion particularly by urging the organization to adhere to the dominant value systems presented by the EC (Holtzhausen, 2018). For our case studies, we will be using the available results of the Political and Societal levels of maturity regarding GH for each targeted country in our study.

The first objective of our research is to analyse, through a relational content analysis, the communication plans of the EC and UfM on green H_2 considering three variables (strategies, targets and barriers) while presenting their similarities and differences. Then, point out the gaps and barriers that these institutions need to overcome to have a successful and effective communication strategy on GH. Several obstacles can be encountered (social or political) and need to be addressed in order to reach a better level of implementation of GH in the Mediterranean basin. The EC's European Hydrogen strategy and the National Energy Climate Plans (NECPs) are analysed along with the Communication reports and Energy declaration of the UfM.

The second objective is to show that overcoming communication barriers for the deployment of GH in the Mediterranean could build stronger and more stable energy relations for the future between northern and southern Mediterranean countries. Four case studies are presented, two Mediterranean countries from the North (Spain and France), and two from the South (Algeria and Morocco) which show their respective Political Readiness Level (PRL) and Social Readiness Level (SRL) and also the ongoing exchanges on GH between North-South and South-North with the immense potential for southern Mediterranean countries to meet their local energy demands and be exporters of GH to Europe.

Finally, the third objective is to understand the potential effect (positive or negative) that the institutional communication reports of GH of the EC and UfM have on the national media of our targeted countries which in turn can also help us define, at small scale, the social acceptance of the technology by the public. We select the most read digital newspaper in our targeted countries and apply a content analysis of the articles mentioning green H_2.

Keywords: Strategic communication; Green hydrogen; European Commission, Union for the Mediterranean; Sustainability Goals, Energy Policy

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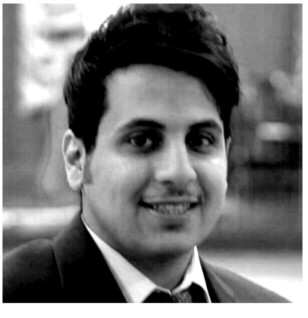

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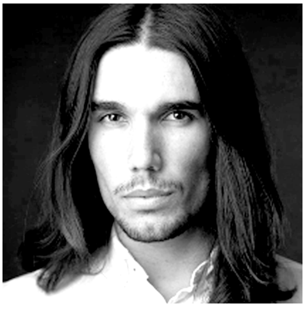

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Paolo Brescia is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Dep. of Communication and Social Research of Sapienza University in Rome (CoRiS), and a member of the interdisciplinary research community of the Sapienza School for Advanced Studies (SSAS). His research interests are centred on the communication of public administrations and the dialogue activities of administrations with citizens through social networks. His doctoral thesis is entitled 'The communication of Italian universities, between reputation and public engagement', supervised by CoRiS Sapienza Dep. Associate Professor Lucia D'Ambrosi.

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Carla Cerqueira holds a PhD in Communication Sciences from the University of Minho (2012). She is an Associate Professor at Lusófona University and an integrated researcher at CICANT. Her research areas include gender, feminisms, activism, intersectionality, media, and communication. She has published in national and international journals and books, participated in conferences and research and practice-based projects, both as a researcher and as a consultant. Currently she is the principal investigator of the projects FEMglocal - Global feminist movements: Interactions and Contradictions (PTDC/COM-CSS/4049/2021) and Network voices: Women's Participation in development processes (COFAC/ILIND/CICANT/1/2021). She is the chair of the Research and Policy Committee of GAMAG and a board member of APEM. She is part of the Opinion Council of RTP representing NGOs from the Advisory Council of the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality. She integrates the Ethics Committee of ECREA.

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Her work has been published in journals like *New Media and Society*, *Information Communication and Society*, *Media, Culture and Society*, *International Journal of Press/Politics*, *The Sociological Review*, *The Communication Review*, *Ageing and Society*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, and *Violence Against Women*, among others.

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Maria João Cunha is Associate professor in Communication Sciences at ISCSP – University of Lisbon. Co-founding member and integrated researcher of CIEG, in matters related to gender, media, and communication. PhD in Communication Sciences, specialized in Sociology of Communication. Master in Sociology and graduated in Social Communication in ISCSP, University of Lisbon. She is the author of scientific papers, and several books on communication sociology, the body, and image. Main research areas focus on gender and media, the body, socially vulnerable groups, and more recently cyberfeminisms.

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Patrícia Dias, PhD in Communication Sciences by Universidade Católica Portuguesa, coordinates the post-graduate course Social Brands - Communication and Marketing in a Digital Environment. In 2019, she was a visiting researcher at the Arctic University of Norway. She is a researcher at CECC, currently coordinates the project "0-3 DigiKids - Use of Touchscreen Devices by Children up to 3 years old" and leads the Portuguese team of the project "Use of Digital Technologies by Children and Teenagers during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Europe", coordinated by the JRC-European Commission. Her main research interests are the use of digital media by children and also within organizational communication, marketing and branding. She is author of several publications about the social impact of digital media and the use of smartphones.

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Holding a PhD in Communication Sciences (*specialization in Organizational and Strategic communications)* from Universidade do Minho, a Master degree in Communication and Image, and Bachelor in Marketing and Advertising from IADE, Alexandre Duarte is an Assistant Professor at Universidade Nova de Lisboa, researcher at ICNOVA/UNL and Invited Professor at Universidade Católica Portuguesa, where he coordinates the Postgraduation Courses in *Communication and Advertising Creativity*, and *Service Design*. He has worked in several multinational advertising agencies, such as TBWA, Saatchi & Saatchi, W/Brasil, Lowe&Partners or Ogilvy for more than 20 years as a Senior Creative Copywriter. He was Tutor of the *Young Marketers Academy* of the EUROBEST Festival, CEO of RESTART – *Institute of Arts and Creativity* and advisor to SUPERBRANDS Portugal. Since 2018, is a member of the Board of EDCOM - *European Institute for Commercial Communications Education.*

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Caterina Foà holds a PhD in Communication Sciences from ISCTE-IUL, University Institute of Lisbon (Portugal) and Bocconi University (Italy). The thesis *Cultural crowdfunding: online practices of collaboration and intermediation in Portugal* and focuses on the platformization of creative industries, and its implications on communication and funding strategies. She is visiting assistant professor at ISCTE-IUL and teaches on the master's courses in New Media Management and Studies and Management of Culture. She is integrated researcher at CIES-IUL research center, at OPAC - Portuguese Observatory on Cultural Activities – and at OberCom - Portuguese Communication Observatory. Caterina works at research projects such as EUMEPLAT, IBERIFIER and AFROPRENEURS publishing results in national and international peer-reviewed journals.

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Jeong-Nam Kim (Ph.D., University of Oklahoma) is a communication theorist who focuses on the study of communicative action and informatics among lay problem solvers, in contrast to expert/scientific problem solvers. He is known for his contributions to the development of the situational theory of problem solving (STOPS) and a model of cognitive arrest and epistemic inertia among lay problem solvers with James E. Grunig. Kim is the founder and leader of the DaLI (Debiasing and

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Master of Strategic Communication (2019)and Master of Economics (2006). Éva Kaponya is a PhD Candidate and FCT grant holder as of 2020 at NOVA FCSH, with primary research interest in strategic communication, reputation, and legitimacy of public agencies. In her doctorate research she investigates the problems related to the identity projection of national financial supervisors, with particular focus on the application of multiple organisational identities. During her current academic career, Éva is taking advantage of her nearly fifteen years of professional experience in central banking, financial supervision, and institutional communication gained at the National Bank of Hungary (MNB) and the Portuguese Securities Market Commission (CMVM).

Éva Kaponya graduated with the “Best Master Award” in Strategic Communication at NOVA FCSH in 2019 (thesis: “The importance of reputation and legitimacy for financial supervisors”) and with distinction in Economics at the Corvinus University of Budapest in 2006 (thesis: “Theoretical approaches of inflation targeting”).

Kelin, Gisiela
University of Coimbra (Portugal)

Gisiela Klein is a PhD student at Coimbra University’s Faculty of Arts and Humanities, conducting research on the topic of information disorder/fake news in the climate change context. With a solid foundation as a local journalist in Brazil, she has extensive experience in reporting and storytelling. Her work in advocacy campaigns within the Brazilian government and the third sector has provided her with valuable insights into social issues and effective strategies for driving positive change. She completed her Master’s degree at Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina, focusing on the impact of digital media on democracy. During her studies, she actively participated in research projects, enhancing her understanding of the evolving digital landscape.

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Sónia Lamy holds a Ph.D. in Communication Sciences from Nova University Lisbon. She is an Assistant Professor at Lusófona University and a researcher in CICANT, and integrates the research team working on the FCT Project "FEMglocal - Glocal feminist movements: interactions and contradictions" (PTDC/COM-CSS/4049/2021) and FEM-ABLE – Promoting women's participation in the political domain (101088295 — FEM-ABLE). She was the Scientific Coordinator in Portugal, of "FSEU – Fake the System: EU tools against disinformations" an Erasmus+ Program and collaborated with the Project World Reading Academy Project Journalism, communication, and me, financed by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in 2020. Sónia Lamy was an Adjunct Teacher at Polytechnic Institute of Portalegre, between 2006 and 2021, where she coordinated the Media and Society Master Degree (2015-2021). She was also journalist for about ten years. She is dedicated to the research of journalism studies, and especially on the relationship between media and non-governmental organizations in general, and specifically on feminist organizations.

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Since 2002, Alexandra Leandro has been a member of the faculty of the Polytechnic of Coimbra (School of Higher Education) as a professor of Communication Sciences, Organizations and Media. Usually teaches curricular units of Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations. Currently, she also coordinates the new Post-Graduation in Strategic Communication for Municipalities (ESEC / IPC). Previously, Alexandra has had the opportunity to work in several Marketing departments, mainly in the Food Industry. In 1998, graduated in Social Communication (specialization in Advertising) by the University of Minho. Afterwards, Alexandra post-graduated in Communication Law (Faculty of Law of the University of Coimbra), has become an MBA in Marketing and concluded the master's degree in Management (Porto Business School, University of Porto). In 2017, has successfully concluded her Doctoral degree in the University of Minho. Alexandra's PhD dissertation was entitled:"The communication of socially responsible organizations: an analysis of CSR reports".

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Kyoungmin Lee is a Ph.D candidate in Management and International Business at the Price college of Business, in the University of Oklahoma. Kyoungmin earned her bachelor's degree from Kyunghee University in Korea and her master's degree from the University of Minnesota. Her research focuses on motivation, socialization, and international human resources management.

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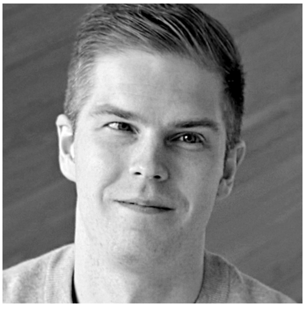

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His research interests are public sector communication, public relations, health communication and the transformation of communicative models and practices among institutions, mass media and citizens. He also studies the impact of social media on organizations and publics' behaviors during crises and emergency situations. He was visiting research scholar at Purdue University, University of Cincinnati, University of South Carolina, and Virginia Commonwealth (USA).

He authored or co-authored more than 90 publications, publishing in international journals like *Health Communication, American Behavioral Scientist, Public Relations Review, International Journal of Communication, Journal of Public Affairs, International Journal of Strategic Communication, Corporate Communication and International Journal, Media and Communication*, among others.

Marinelli, Alessandro
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Ricardo Morais holds a Ph.D. in Communication Sciences and a Master's degree in Journalism from the University of Beira Interior (UBI). He is currently an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Porto. He is a researcher in the "MediaTrust.Lab - Laboratory of Regional Media for Civic Trust and Literacy" project. He is an integrated researcher at the research unit LabCom - Communication and Arts, where he is part of the Communication and Media group. He is also a collaborating researcher at CITCEM - Center for Transdisciplinary Research in Culture, Space, and Memory, where he is part of the Information, Communication, and Digital Culture group. Since 2022, he has been the Coordinator of the Communication and Politics Working Group of the Portuguese Association of Communication Sciences - SOPCOM. His research and publications have focused on the field of journalism, new media, radio, podcasts, participation, and political communication.

Morante, Luis Morales

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Luís Morales Morante is a distinguished expert in the domain of Lenguajes Comunicativos Escritos y Audiovisuales (Written and Audiovisual Communicative Languages). He specializes in Montaje y Realización Audiovisual Publicitaria

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Leonardo Piromalli (PhD) is a postdoc researcher at the Sapienza University of Rome and an adjunct professor at the University of Cagliari and at the University of L'Aquila. His research focuses on the interrelationships between digital technology and social life, with special reference to the fields of education and communication. In particular, he works on the role of data in society, the digital governance of education, and public and political communication in contemporary social worlds.

He has published research articles in various academic journals and has authored a book about digitalization processes in contemporary higher education.

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CECS, University of Minho and University of Coimbra

Lauralice Ribeiro is a doctoral student in Communication Sciences at Coimbra University, where she develops a project on organizational communication for sustainability, and an integrated researcher at the Communication and Society Research Centre (CECS) of the University of Minho. In 2022, she completed a master's degree in communication at Coimbra University, with research that evaluated the presence of the discipline of organizational communication in business schools, in Brazil and Portugal. She is graduated in Business Administration from the Sociology and Politics Foundation of the State of São Paulo and post-graduated in Organizational Communication at Casper Líbero Foundation. As an entrepreneur in Brazil, in the last 30 years, she has accumulated vast experience in the management of institutional communication, internal communication and endomarketing, in addition to developing projects for corporate education, international events management and digital communication in public organizations and multinational companies.

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She has actively participated in research and development projects as a researcher, including the "Factory of the future: Smart Manufacturing" project, and in International Network of Technical Higher Education (ITHEN.eu). Member of the Portuguese Society of Communication Sciences, founding advisor of Lusofonia Digital and volunteer at the Food Bank Against Hunger contributing to social responsibility.

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Marica Spalletta (Ph.D) is associate professor at Link Campus University of Rome, where she teaches "Media and Politics" and "Public Communication", and she is scientific manager of Link LAB (Social Research Center). Over the last 20 years she has participated and directed several research in the field of media sociology, funded by Institutions and organizations; from 2022 she serves has principal investigator in the EU international project GEMINI-Gender Equality through Media Investigation and New training Insights (CERV-2022-GE). Her works have been published in national and international books and journals such as *European Journal of Communication*, *Comunicazione politica*, *Catalan Journal of Communication and Cultural Studies*, *Problemi dell'informazione*, *Comunicazioni sociali*.

Strauß, Nadine

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Nadine Strauß, PhD, has been Assistant Professor of Strategic Communication and Media Management at the Department of Communication and Media Research at the University of Zurich since April 2021. Previously, she completed a Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellowship at the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at the University of Oxford (September 2019 – March 2021), where she studied the role of the news media for sustainable finance. Strauß is currently a board member of the Brussel-based NGO "Finance-Watch" where she advocates for a fair, transparent and sustainable financial system. Since spring 2021, she also serves as an editorial board member of the International Journal of Strategic Communication. Between 2018 and 2019, she worked as a postdoc at the Media Innovation Lab at the Department of Communication at the University of Vienna. Her research interests include, among others: sustainability communication, corporate communication, financial communication, journalism studies, media management, news use in the digital environment.

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In this proceedings book, we can find 29 extended abstracts selected for presentation and discussion at the interim ECREA Organizational and Strategic Communication thematic session conference that took place from 5th to 7th of July 2023 at the Autonomous University of Lisbon, in a joint organisation with LabCom – Research centre, from the University of Beira Interior. Some of the topics debated along the conference were: normative governance for organizational communication and strategic communication; impact of rhetoric, persuasion and brand narratives on society; public sector implications of normative dimensions; nonprofit and hypocrisy; impact of communication on consumers identity and well-being; B-corps as a new relationship management approach; accountability, integrated reporting and communication; greenwashing and other "image" washing; internal relationship management and well-being; corporate social advocacy and CEO activism.

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