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PRESENTA

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is located in the debate on human resources management in public administration. The low confidence that citizens have in the bureaucracy and government institutions has negative implications for agencies' human resource management—for instance, in attracting and retaining staff. Therefore, a deeper analysis of how public agencies are perceived, not only by citizens but by the different audiences that interact with them is needed. Within this debate, organizational reputation management is an alternative that works to protect organizations against potential external attacks, achieve superior results, or increase trust in institutions and administrative agents. It can also help public organizations to communicate with their audiences to, among other things, gain autonomy and power, better coordinate with other government entities, or improve human resources management. As public administration depends on bureaucracy as a critical element in delivering goods and services, it will be necessary for organizations to retain their best employees to improve their outcomes and thereby improve perceptions *vis-à-vis* their multiple audiences. In this sense, this thesis explores the concept of organizational reputation and analyzes reputation management as an alternative tool to retain valuable public employees. The first article in this work consists of a systematic literature review that analyzes the concept of organizational reputation in the context of public administration. This article answers essential questions to understand how the organizational reputation process develops in the public sector. The work analyzes 119 articles and seven books to review five critical aspects of this literature: its conceptualization, the types of reputation used in the literature, the antecedents identified as relevant in the process of organizational reputation, the results (or consequences) of using reputational lenses, and the multidimensionality of the concept. The second article focuses on studying the relationship between public organizations' audiences and the multidimensionality of reputation. This work questions whether all audiences perceive multidimensionality in the same way. To answer this question, the responses of two audiences to a survey that measures organizational reputation in the Constitutional Autonomous Agencies in Mexico are examined employing a factor analysis. The results show that the public does perceive reputation differently since each audience has different characteristics and interests that influence their evaluation of the agencies. Finally, the third article examines the relationship between organizational reputation and staff retention in the Constitutional

Autonomous Agencies in Mexico. Based on a survey of employees of five agencies, the article shows that having a positive reputation is crucial for public employees when deciding whether to remain or leave their jobs. The results imply that building and maintaining a positive reputation must be relevant for public managers due to its implications for human resource management.

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Introduction

How can public organizations appear competent in an environment where they are perceived as heavy, slow, corrupt, or inefficient bureaucratic structures? Against this setting, building, and maintaining a positive reputation have become transcendental factors for the management of public sector organizations. Organizational reputation refers to the set of perceptions held by different audiences regarding the capabilities, responsibilities, roles and present and past actions of an organization (Carpenter, 2010). The concern of public organizations in managing this intangible asset is to be perceived positively by their audiences. This is in order to generate public support for autonomy, to protect themselves from political attacks, or to recruit and retain valuable employees (Carpenter, 2002). Thus, organizational reputation will depend on how organizations appear on a day-to-day basis, not only in front of citizens, but also in front a diverse set of audiences—the media, politicians, international organizations, regulatory agencies, and other public organizations, among others.

The poor reputation of public organizations has generated a tense and complicated relationship between governmental institutions and their audiences. However, the interest in reputation management and the current forms of communication—closer and more direct—have given public organizations the opportunity to relate to their audiences in a more precise way, communicating specific messages to specific audiences. Reputation management allows that, despite interacting in a context where *public* is synonymous with *negative*, organizations can show themselves as efficient, effective, capable, responsible, honest, or empathetic in different situations, which gives them the opportunity to positively influence the perceptions of their audiences.

The study of reputation in the private sector emerged in the 1990s with Charles Fombrun's research, which focused on corporate reputation management as a mechanism to increase firms' profits (Fombrun, 1996). However, something that differentiates the private sector from public organizations is that public sector organizations aim to achieve multiple objectives other than increasing their profits. By their nature, the goods and services produced by public organizations seek to meet the different needs of the multiple audiences they represent. Thus, public organizations could not incorporate corporate reputation practices as a "recipe" and, therefore, required their own theoretical framework for their implementation. It was not until the publication of Daniel Carpenter's *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy: Reputations, Networks and Policy Innovation in Executive Agencies, 1862-1928* in 2001, that research on organizational reputation moved to the academic level, developing a theoretical framework with its own concepts and categories for its study.

Over the past two decades, public administration scholars have recognized the importance of organizational reputation, as many of its benefits are vital to public sector organizations (Luoma-aho, 2007). Research on this topic in public administration has demonstrated the explanatory power of reputation with respect to autonomy, legitimacy, communication, or organizational coordination, among other things. This theoretical framework has been tested mainly in developed countries with consolidated democracies such as the United States, England, Norway, or Israel. However, the topic has been little explored in developing country contexts with weak democracies and institutions, as is the case of Mexico.

Therefore, the objective of this research is to test the theory of organizational reputation in Mexico and to analyze whether this could be implemented in Mexican public management—as in the contexts in which it has been regularly studied—with the aim of improving public service. The Mexican case is a relevant case study, since its public administration has a poor reputation derived from the permanent lack of results and the constant ethical scandals in which its public officers have been involved over time. Likewise, this thesis aims to contribute to the literature by analyzing the use of organizational reputation as a human resources management tool in the public sector, since there is a gap regarding the implications of reputation as a tool in this area of research. Thus, the Mexican case study is embedded in the debate on the use of organizational reputation in contexts where it has not generally been studied to demonstrate its usefulness as a management tool in public administration.

To achieve this objective, this work analyzes the case of the Constitutional Autonomous Agencies in Mexico. These agencies are entities whose main characteristics are the following: 1) their autonomous status is based on the Mexican Constitution; 2) they are not part of any of the three branches of the federation (executive, legislative, or judicial); 3) they make decisions and design their policies according to their own criteria; and 4) the executive boards are elected by negotiation of the executive and legislative branches, and therefore, the board members are not subject to the political cycles of the political parties (Pardo & Dussauge-Laguna, 2017). The autonomy of these agencies makes them a favorable case for the analysis of organizational reputation, since these agencies can decide how (how they wish to appear to their audiences), with whom (which audiences are most relevant), and what to communicate (what messages to send to which audiences). Therefore, the lenses of organizational reputation are a relevant theoretical approach that allows to formulate questions from the perspective of the multiple audiences with which these agencies interact, and thus to propose solutions so that they can improve their performance in terms of efficiency and communication.

This thesis is composed of three articles that seek to dialogue in the global arena of organizational reputation studies, with particular emphasis on the Mexican case. Each article responds to a different research question and has its own research design to contribute to the main objective of the thesis. The first article analyzes how the study of organizational reputation has evolved over the last two decades. For this purpose, a systematic literature review is conducted on a sample of 119 academic articles and seven books. The article brings together empirical and theoretical research to analyze five critical aspects to understanding this area of study: its conceptualization, the types of reputation used in the literature, the antecedents identified as relevant in the process of organizational reputation, the results (or consequences) of using reputational lenses, and the multidimensionality of the concept. The results suggest that, although the theoretical framework proposed by Daniel Carpenter is the predominant one in the literature, the study of organizational reputation in the public sector has evolved in a fragmented manner. However, research on this topic has shown that this approach is useful for public organizations, since, depending on their management, it can serve as a shield against different external threats or as a management mechanism to improve organizational performance. On the other hand, it is worth noting that, of the studies analyzed, 83.19% focus solely on the analysis of public organizations in eight countries and the European Union. This implies the need to study the approach to organizational reputation in countries and administrative contexts other than those commonly studied.

The concept of *audiences* is at the core of reputation debates because organizations adapt their behavior depending on how they are perceived by the different groups that evaluate them. The literature on the subject assumes that organizational reputation is multifaceted across audiences. However, this idea has not been empirically tested to date. Considering the above, the second article analyzes whether reputation is perceived as multidimensional in two relevant publics for the Constitutional Autonomous Agencies: their employees and students. To analyze this, a survey is conducted with these audiences regarding their perceptions of the nine autonomous agencies.[1] The results provide empirical evidence to explain that audiences have different characteristics and concerns, and therefore do not perceive reputation in the same way. By applying an exploratory factor analysis, this article shows how audiences reflect the dimensionality of reputation differently because of their position vis-à-vis organizations and the way they make sense of themselves through professions. The findings of this article suggest that reputation should be managed to convey its different dimensions depending on each audience, as audiences judge bureaucratic reputation in different ways.

Finally, having the best employees is a critical factor for public organizations to present themselves as competent and efficient to their multiple audiences. However, studies of organizational reputation have not analyzed in depth the implications of this theory for human resource management in the public sector. Considering this gap in the literature, the third article analyzes the role of organizational reputation in employee retention. The article is based on social exchange theory to examine the relationship between reputation and retention of public employees. Based on a survey of employees of five Constitutional Autonomous Agencies, the article shows through a logistic regression that having a positive reputation is a crucial factor for public employees in deciding whether or not to remain in their jobs. The results imply that building and maintaining a positive reputation should be relevant for public managers because of its implications for human resource management.

At the end of this work, the general conclusions of this thesis are presented. Likewise, the limits, scope, and implications of reputation management in Mexican agencies are brought up for discussion.

[1] During this research the National Institute for the Evaluation of Education (INEE) was finished through the constitutional reform published in the Diario Oficial de la Federación on May 15, 2019.

1. Organizational Reputation in the Public Administration: A Systematic Literature Review

Abstract

Despite the increasing number of publications on organizational reputation in the public administration throughout the last two decades, no systematic review has been conducted to synthesize the current state of the literature. This article contributes to this issue by bringing together empirical and theoretical academic research—119 articles and seven books—to analyze five critical aspects of this scholarship: conceptualization, types implemented, antecedents, outcomes, and multidimensionality. This work provides an overview of the field while identifying five critical areas for further research, including reputational audiences, public leaders' impact on reputation, development of typologies based on the characteristics of reputation, the use of standardized methods to conduct more cross-country studies, and research on a wider variety of cultural and organizational contexts.

1.1 Introduction

Over the past two decades, scholars from different disciplines have shown the impact of organizational reputation (OR) in public administration, making it an area of research that has received growing scholarly attention (D. Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019; Overman, Busuioc, & Wood, 2020). OR is an intangible asset that plays a critical role in public organizations by strengthening bureaucratic power and autonomy, as well as reducing threats to their legitimacy (Carpenter, 2001, 2010; Carpenter & Krause, 2012). Furthermore, reputation helps explain the behavior of public organizations as a response to threats and opportunities conditioned by a set of different audiences (Maor, 2015a; Rimkutė, 2018). Despite the increasing relevance posit on the subject in the last years, no systematic review has been conducted to examine the state of literature and its development as a valuable area of research with high applicability for public administration. Thus, this article presents an overview of OR in the public administration literature by analyzing 126 empirical and theoretical studies published between 2001 and 2020.

A crucial question for practitioners interested in this topic is: how do public organizations improve their relationships with their different audiences to achieve a positive reputation? To answer this question, public managers have focused on reputation management as a matter of strategic importance (Wæraas & Byrkjeflot, 2012; Wæraas & Maor, 2015a). Reputation management helps build and maintain a favorable OR; it works to protect organizations against damages, attain superior outcomes, or increase trust in administrative institutions and actors (Capelos et al., 2016; Carmeli & Tishler, 2004; Christensen & Lægreid, 2020). On the contrary, poor reputation management has significant negative consequences that could lead a public entity to a crisis of legitimacy or even its termination (Etienne, 2015; Luoma-aho, 2007). Therefore, public managers need to pay close attention to their various audiences by attending meetings, cultivating experts' advice, or improving strategic communication (Carpenter, 2004b; Maor, Gilad, & Ben-Nun Bloom, 2013).

Since OR literature is in a developing stage and reputation is considered a strategic asset for public organizations, this paper aims to review and synthesize research findings on the topic in the last two decades. The article primarily focuses on the following research questions:

1. How is OR in the public administration conceptualized?
2. What types of OR have been implemented?
3. What are the antecedents of OR in the public administration?
4. What are the outcomes of OR in the public administration?
5. Which dimensions influence the reputation process in the public administration?

The answers to these research questions are expected to contribute to understanding this literature by providing an in-depth analysis of this body of knowledge. This article is relevant in several ways. First, this scholarship has not been developed coherently (Wæraas & Maor, 2015a). Thus, this review helps tie some loose ends in the literature and shows several payoffs for practitioners. Second, given the increasing importance placed on the relationship between audiences and public organizations, this article is relevant for public managers considering it presents an overview of the reputation process, antecedents, and outcomes. Finally, to improve the quality of future studies in the field and to benefit administrative practice, it analyzes five broad areas that need further attention in the literature: reputational audiences, public leaders' impact on reputation, development of typologies based on the characteristics of reputation, use of standardized methods to conduct more cross-country studies, and research on a wider variety of cultural and organizational contexts.

In addition to this introduction, the structure of the article is as follows. The first section describes how research on OR has developed in the public sector. Then, it reports the methodology used to conduct the review. After that, the article presents the characteristics of the records analyzed, and answers to the research questions are provided. Finally, the paper poses some ideas for a future research agenda on OR in public administration.

1.2 Reputation and Public Administration

Studies regarding corporate reputation appeared in the early 90s, several years before the term arose in the public administration literature. Research on corporate reputation has mainly focused on the financial performance of firms (Ryan, 2007). For instance, corporate reputation management can lead to different benefits, such as increasing profitability or lowering costs (Fombrun, 1996; P. Roberts & Dowling, 2002).

Whereas corporations are expected to manage their reputation to pursue as much profitability as possible, public organizations need to engage a set of economic, political, and social audiences to fulfill the public interest (Wæraas, 2018). It is necessary to emphasize that OR is a concept with characteristics different from corporate reputation since public administration functions, scope, audiences, and objectives differ from firms (Luoma-aho, 2007). Therefore, public organizations cannot automatically implement corporate management practices and need a specific framework for this.

Although the works of Simon, Smithburg, and Thompson (1950), Derthick (1979), Kaufman (1981), and Wilson (1989) had briefly elaborated on this topic (Carpenter, 2015; Carpenter & Krause, 2012), it is not possible to establish the foundations of reputation theory in the public sector until 2001 with Daniel Carpenter's book *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy*. In his seminal research, Carpenter found that the autonomy of certain American agencies was generated from their differentiation capabilities, which allowed them to be perceived in a positive light in front of different audiences. Consequently, the developed reputation granted them the opportunity to remain independent despite the pressures of the political sphere.

From that moment on, a theoretical framework has been shaped by the systematic production of theoretical and empirical studies in public sector research. Furthermore, the emergence of OR is visible not only in the production of scholarly knowledge but also in the practice of public administration. For instance, the Norwegian Ministry of Municipal and Regional Development initiated the "Norwegian Reputation School" in 2008 with the intention that mayors and chief administrative officers learn how to manage the reputation of their municipalities (Wæraas, 2015; Wæraas, Bjørnå, & Moldenæs, 2015). In addition, public organizations are funding specialized research on reputation. An example of this is the "EURICA project" (European Union Reputation, Independence, Credibility, Accountability), funded by the European Research Council, which aims to apply the reputation theory lenses to study the regulatory state in the European Union.[2]

1.3 Methodology

This article conducted a systematic review of the literature following the PRISMA statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyzes) to identify the body of knowledge on OR in the last two decades. The choice to conduct a systematic review is fundamentally based on the fact that this type of research helps present the current body of knowledge in a more transparent and reproducible way (Moher et al., 2009) (PRISMA checklist in appendix 1).

The period reviewed includes studies published from 2001 to 2020. The year 2001 is chosen as a starting point due to the publication of Carpenter's book mentioned above (complete eligibility criteria section in appendix 2).

1.3.1 Search strategy

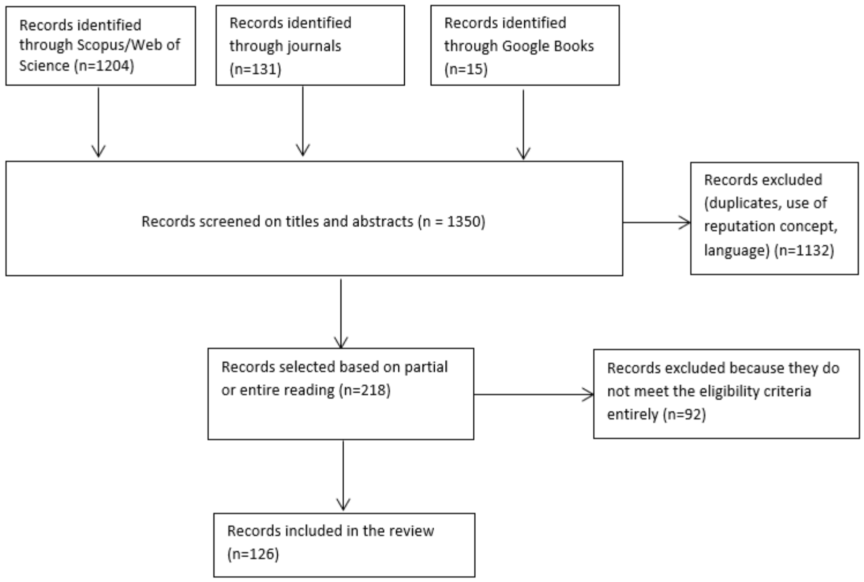
This review considered three search strategies (complete search strategy in appendix 2). First, the bibliographic databases Web of Science and Scopus were consulted to access the number of publications related to the research object in all the disciplines of study. Second, a search of records was conducted within some journals considered among the most prominent in the study of public administration.[3] Finally, an inquiry in Google Books was performed.

1.3.2 Record selection

The selection process is reported under the PRISMA statement diagram (full description of the records selection and full list of records in appendices 2 and 3).

[2] http://euricaerc.eu
[3] According to the SCImago journal rank. www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php

Figure 1.1 PRISMA flow diagram for records selection



Source: Own elaboration

1.4 Characteristics of the sample

1.4.1 Journals and Books

Nine journals contain 47.90% of the total number of articles. The remaining 52.10% is distributed among 51 journals with one or two papers each (full list of journals in appendix 4). Table 1.1 shows the distribution of records and the journals' academic discipline according to Web of Science classification. Regarding the books, it is noteworthy that the review only found seven records that talk about OR in the public sector (description of books in appendix 2).

Table 1.1 Distribution and classification of the journals

Journal	Records
Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory	14 (11.76%)
Governance	10 (8.40%)
Public Administration	9 (7.56%)
Public Administration Review	6 (5.04%)
Public Management Review	5 (4.20%)
American Journal of Political Science	4 (3.36%)
International Journal of Public Sector Management	3 (2.52 %)

Academic Discipline	Records
Public Administration	61 (51.26%)
Political Science	17 (14.29%)
Management	13 (10.92%)
Business	8 (6.72%)
Economics	6 (5.04%)
International Relations	3 (2.52%)
Health Care Sciences	2 (1.68%)

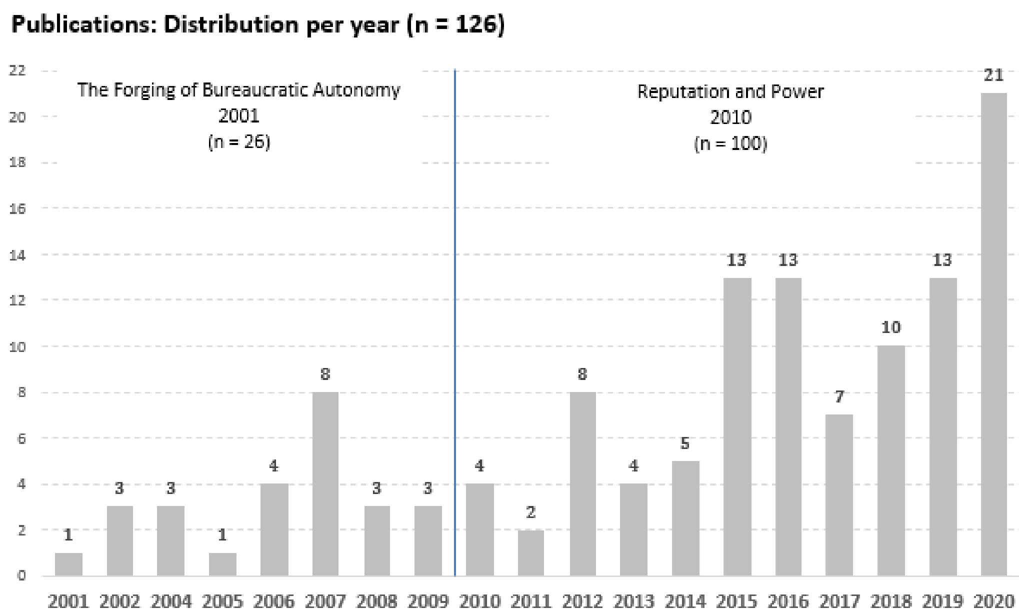
International Public Management Journal	3 (2.52 %)
Journal of European Public Policy	3 (2.52 %)
Other 51 journals	62 (52.10%)
Total	**119**

Law	2 (1.68%)
Urban Planning	2 (1.68%)
Environmental Sciences	1 (0.84%)
History	1 (0.84%)
Psychology	1 (0.84%)
Sociology	1 (0.84%)
Multidisciplinary	1 (0.84%)
Total	**119**

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 2 shows the total of records published per year. The analysis sets the publication year of Carpenter's two books (2001 and 2010) as a reference point, as they are considered the most prominent bibliographical references in this body of literature.

Figure 1.2 Number of publications 2001-2020



Source: Own elaboration

1.4.2 Characteristics of sample articles

Regarding the areas of study in the papers, table 1.2 shows that the knowledge on reputation has mainly focused on regulation research and national/federal agencies. The analysis of regulatory agencies is relevant given the proximity to their audiences, which makes them more sensitive to reputational threats (Rimkutė, 2018, 2020).

Table 1.2 Description of the sample articles

Research Approach	Records
Empirical	102 (85.71%)
Theoretical	17 (14.29%)
Total	**119**
Methodology	**Records**
Qualitative	55 (46.22%)
Quantitative	58 (48.74%)
Mixed	6 (5.04%)
Total	**119**

Area of study	Records
Regulation	30 (25.21%)
Health	15 (12.61%)
Public sector in general	9 (7.56%)
Crisis management	7 (5.88%)
Accountability	6 (5.04%)
Risk management	6 (5.04%)
Public employment	5 (4.20%)
Communication management	5 (4.20%)
Security and justice	4 (3.36%)
Strategic resources	4 (3.36%)
Branding	3 (2.52%)
Economic forecasts	3 (2.52%)
Other	22 (18.49%)
Total	**119**

Source: Own elaboration

Table 1.3 shows that reputation studies have reached all the regions of the world. However, 83.19% of the articles focus only on organizations from eight countries and the European Union, with four or more studies each.

Table 1.3 Levels of government and countries

Level	Records
National/Federal	70 (58.82%)
Local/Municipal	18 (15.13%)
All levels	16 (13.45%)
Supranational	13 (10.92%)
State/Regional	2 (1.68%)
Total	**119**
Studies per countries	**Records**
Single country studies	110 (92.43%)
Cross-country studies	9 (7.57%)

Countries	
United States	38 (29.69%)
Norway	14 (10.94%)
European Union	12 (9.38%)
UK	9 (7.03%)
Denmark	6 (4.69%)
Israel	6 (4.69%)
Germany	5 (3.91%)
Australia	5 (3.91%)
Finland	4 (3.13%)

Total	**119**	Other	27 (21.09%)
		Total	**127**

Note: In cross-country studies, each country is counted separately.
Full list of countries in appendix 4.

Source: Own elaboration

1.4.3 Most cited references

In this section, the review conducted a bibliometric analysis using the *bibliometrix* R tool (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017) to analyze the sample's bibliographic references. Table 1.4 presents the ten "most local cited references" (documents included in the review referenced in other papers of the sample) within the 119 articles.

Table 1.4 Most cited articles and books

#	Type	Author (Year)	Title	Times cited
1	Book	Carpenter, D. (2010)	*Reputation and power: organizational image and pharmaceutical regulation at the FDA*	50
2	Book	Carpenter, D. (2001)	*The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy: Reputations, Networks and Policy Innovation in Executive Agencies, 1862-1928*	48
3	Book	Wæraas & Maor (eds) (2015)	*Organizational reputation in the public sector*	43
4	Article	Carpenter & Krause (2012)	*Reputation and Public Administration*	40
5	Article	Carpenter, D. (2002)	*Groups, the Media, Agency Waiting Costs and FDA Drug Approval*	32
6	Article	Maor, Gilad & Ben-Nun Bloom (2013)	*Organizational reputation, regulatory talk, and strategic silence*	27
7	Article	Wæraas & Byrkjeflot (2012)	*Public Sector Organizations and Reputation Management: Five Problems*	26
8	Book	Wilson, J.Q. (1989)	*Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*	25
9	Article	Krause & Douglas (2015)	*Institutional design versus reputational effects on bureaucratic performance: Evidence from U.S. government macroeconomic and fiscal projections*	19
10	Article	Maor, M. (2007)	*A scientific standard and an agency's legal independence: Which of these reputation protection mechanisms is less susceptible to political moves?*	19

Source: Own elaboration

1.4.4 Measurements

Measurements of reputation are relevant for organizations because they know how to "close the gap" between actual and desired reputation (Wæraas & Sataøen, 2014). This analysis showed that the studies reviewed use two approaches to measure reputation: from the organization's perspective and the audiences' perspective.

In the first group, the techniques that stand out are related to content analysis of official sources of the organization (e.g., Christensen & Lodge, 2018), interviews with the staff (e.g., Sataøen & Wæraas, 2015), or historical analyses (e.g., Maor, 2010).

In the second group, content analysis of the media coverage (Maor & Sulitzeanu-Kenan, 2013, e.g., 2016), interviews with different audiences (e.g., Groenleer, 2014), surveys (e.g., Capelos et al., 2016), or standardized instruments designed to measure reputation in public administration specifically (e.g., D. Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019; Overman et al., 2020), have been used to this purpose.

1.5 Results and Discussion

1.5.1 Conceptualization

This section aims to answer the research question: *How is OR in the public administration conceptualized?* OR refers to the collective perceptions of internal and external audiences regarding the public organization's past actions and current performance (Carpenter, 2010; Maor, 2010). However, this review found that some related concepts to OR are used interchangeably in the literature, creating confusion in regards to their meanings. Thus, the first part of the discussion focuses on the differentiation of OR from other concepts. Then, the most cited definitions of reputation in the sample are analyzed.

Similar concepts. The purpose of showing related concepts is to clarify what OR is not. For this, the analysis considers some intangible assets mentioned in the literature as related to OR. According to Bankins and Waterhouse (2019), *identity* and *image* are two main blocks of reputation. Luoma-aho (2008) states that *image* is a sister concept to reputation. Baekkeskov (2017) notes that reputation is essential to build and maintain *trust*, and Carpenter (2010) points out that *prestige* and *status* are benefits associated with reputation. Finally, Sataøen and Wæraas (2015) argue that *branding* helps build a reputation. These intangible assets have become strategic for public organizations' viability since they improve public services (Carmeli & Tishler, 2004; Luoma-aho, 2007).

This article follows some definitions of related concepts to show their main differences (see table 1.5).[4] First, identity is defined as "the central and enduring attributes of an organization that distinguishes it from other organizations" (Whetten, 2006, p. 220). Identity is related to the perceptions that members have concerning their organizations' internal characteristics (Chun, 2005). Unlike reputation that considers a network of internal and external audiences, identity only considers the perceptions of the organization's members.

Second, image "is distinguished as the outsider's perception" (Chun, 2005, p. 94). According to Bankins and Waterhouse (2019), image reflects behavior, communications, and symbols. As with identity, image only considers one type of audience—the external—and leaves the internal one aside.

Third, trust is a "voluntary act based on psychological state of positive expectation in the face of vulnerability and risk" (Choudhury, 2008, p. 590). A positive expectation leads to trust, and a negative expectation leads to distrust (Lewicki, McAllister, & Bies, 1998). Trust is about an expectation that an individual has regarding another individual or organization. Trust happens only at the individual level, while reputation is the collective sum of perceptions.

Fourth, prestige refers to "employees' perception of how the outside world views their organization" (Bartels, Pruyn, De Jong, & Joustra, 2007, p. 176). It is the way members of organizations interpret and assess their reputation (Šulentić, Žnidar, & Pavičić, 2017). Prestige, like identity, only focuses on the perceptions of internal audiences, such as employees. The prestige perceived by the internal audiences of the organization is the result of the valence of OR.

Fifth, status refers to the "socially constructed, intersubjectively agreed-upon and accepted ordering or ranking of individuals, groups, organizations, or activities in a social system" (Washington & Zajac, 2005, p. 284). Status implies an act of social acceptance and a specific critical performance value (Bitektine, 2011). Like prestige, the status given to an organization by external audiences results from its OR—a better reputation can provide a higher status in front of other organizations.

[4] It should be noted that definitions of related concepts were taken from articles outside the analyzed sample.

Finally, branding is defined as “channeling those unique elements of a place or product and strategically communicating those to build identity, reputation and equity” (Zavattaro, 2014, pp. 28–29). Branding helps manage image and reputation (Bankins & Waterhouse, 2019). Branding is the channel where images and symbols are conveyed to shape the perceptions of target audiences. The difference between branding and the rest of the concepts is that branding does not reflect any of the audiences’ perceptions; it is the channel where images run, trying to build a reputation.

Table 1.5 Differences between related concepts

Concept	Audiences	Perception flow	Valence
Identity	Internal	Within	Positive or Negative
Image	External	From outside to inside	Positive or Negative
Trust	Individual	Bilateral	Trust (Positive) or Distrust (Negative)
Prestige	Internal	From inside to outside	Positive or Negative
Status	External	From outside to inside	Acceptable or Not Acceptable
Branding	Internal and External	It does not reflect perceptions	Positive brand
Reputation	Internal and External	Within and from outside to inside	Positive, Negative, or Neutral

Source: Own elaboration

This section showed that OR is an umbrella term, which encompasses all six concepts. In the following section, the definition of reputation is examined to distinguish it analytically from these related concepts.

Definitions. This section’s rationale is not to propose a new definition but to understand the different features that could form a comprehensive one. According to Sartori (1970), a concept has two properties: intension and extension. The first refers to the concept’s features and the latter to the cases to which the concept denotes. Thus, this analysis of the definitions cited expects that the reputation concept has enough properties to be generalizable, avoiding what Sartori called “conceptual stretching”. Table 1.6 summarizes the most cited definitions in the sample.

Table 1.6 Most cited definitions of reputation

Definitions	Times cited	References
"a set of symbolic beliefs about the unique or separable capacities, roles, and obligations of an organization, where these beliefs are embedded in audience networks."	29 (24.36%)	Carpenter (2010: 33,45)
"a perceptual representation of a company's past actions and future prospects that describes the firm's overall appeal to all its key constituents when compared with other leading rivals."	6 (5.04%)	Fombrun (1996: 37,72)
"a set of symbolic beliefs held by audience networks as to the actual performance of an organization, as well as its capacities, roles, and obligations to accomplish its primary organizational mission." (based on Ruef and Scott (1998) and Carpenter (2001, 2010))	3 (2.52%)	Maor (2010: 134)
"valuable political assets- they can be used to generate public support, to achieve delegated authority and discretion from politicians, to protect the agency from political attack, and to recruit and retain valued employees."	2 (1.68%)	Carpenter (2002: 491)

Source: Own elaboration

Thirty different definitions were found in 63 papers (52.94%). Definitions from eleven authors are cited, with Carpenter's being the most frequently mentioned (27 citations from 6 different definitions). Furthermore, eleven works propose their definition of OR.

It is noteworthy that 56 articles (47.05%) do not provide any definition of reputation. From that sub-sample, 49 studies draw on different authors' frameworks (30 papers refer to Carpenter's work). Also, in seven articles, the meaning of reputation is taken for granted without reference to other theoretical frameworks.

Although Maor (2015a) argues that there are no disagreements over Carpenter's definition, this review found no consensus on any of them. The definition proposed in *Reputation and power* (Carpenter, 2010) is the most referenced in the sample reviewed (29 direct citations and two references in other proposals). Still, these 31 studies only represent 26.05% of the sample. It should be noted that before this definition appeared, fifteen papers (out of 26) did not use any, and this is the period in which six studies developed their own. It is also striking that the second most cited author is Charles Fombrun (1996), who developed the reputational framework for corporations (6 direct citations and two references in other definitions). This paper analyzes four key features from the definitions showed in Table 1.6.

First, OR is related to cognitive and affective perceptions (beliefs or estimations). As Etienne (2015) observes, reputation consists of beliefs about an agency's ability to carry out its mandate, and those beliefs can be negatively affected by public evidence. Reputation is about the details that audiences remember or remove regarding an organization and how that information shapes its judgments (Maor, 2016). In that sense, reputation management must improve strategic communication with internal and external audiences to shape their perceptions into positive reputations (Gilad, Maor, & Ben-Nun Bloom, 2015).

Second, reputation is generated by the uniqueness (or overall appeal) of organizations. As Carpenter (2001) points out, organizations must show that they can create solutions and provide services that no other organization can. Although there is generally no competition in the public sector, it is crucial to OR that organizations achieve the quality of being unique among their peers and accomplish their missions. However, Luoma-aho (2007) argues that it is preferable to maintain a neutral rather than a positive reputation as it is more acceptable and accessible to public organizations. This argument is aligned with findings of neutral competence and structural homogeneity among the same policy sector (Krause & Douglas, 2005; Wæraas & Sataøen, 2014).

Third, different internal and external audiences (or constituents) hold perceptions of organizations. An audience is any individual or group that observes an organization and can evaluate it (Carpenter, 2010). These audiences are the groups that interact with organizations such as the media, elected politicians, public policy experts, citizens, and public servants (Carpenter & Krause, 2012), and they are the primary reference for reputation management. Hence, public organizations must be concerned with caring for their relationships with relevant audiences (Maor, 2016). Audiences' perceptions mean both threats and opportunities for the organizations, and in turn, these beliefs influence their behavior (Busuioc, 2016).

Finally, reputation is a dynamic concept. Perceptions of organizations are diverse and may change over time (Maor, 2016). Audiences' judgments may change according to the cognitive and emotional interpretations of the information received at specific moments. Thus, organizations must know that reputation is constructed from present actions and the record of their past deeds (Luoma-aho & Makikangas, 2014). Consequently, the reputation built over many years could be lost in the blink of an eye.

Returning to Sartori, Carpenter (2010) proposed a definition to specifically study this construct in public administration, which contains features that allow it to be generalizable. However, although this definition is the most widely cited, the time attribute is not reflected in his proposal. The inclusion of this attribute is essential. It leads to the understanding that reputation occurs in a dynamic process between audiences and public organizations—the reputation's valence may change over time.

1.5.2 Types of Organizational Reputation

The second research question is: *What types of OR have been implemented?* As several definitions were identified, it is possible to classify the studies into different types. However, this review only found one typology for OR research. Based on Rindova and Martin's (2012) typology developed to analyze corporate reputation definitions, Wæraas and Maor (2015a) proposed two approaches to understanding OR's different characteristics. This classification is necessary because the features identified in the two theoretical perspectives do not affect OR outcomes in the same way.

Before reviewing the OR typology, it is necessary to understand Rindova and Martin's classification. According to the authors, there are three theoretical perspectives: the game-theoretic (or economics), the social-constructionist, and the institutional. The first one considers reputation as a signal. Organizations have different reputations derived from various signals sent to their stakeholders, providing specific information otherwise unobservable. In this way, organizations are the ones in control of their reputations.

In the second perspective, the authors consider reputation as an amalgamation of collective perceptions. It differs from the game-theoretic perspective because stakeholder evaluations are derived, not only from the organizations' signals but from various sources resulting from different interactions and information exchanges. Therefore, the control of reputation is outside the organization's boundaries.

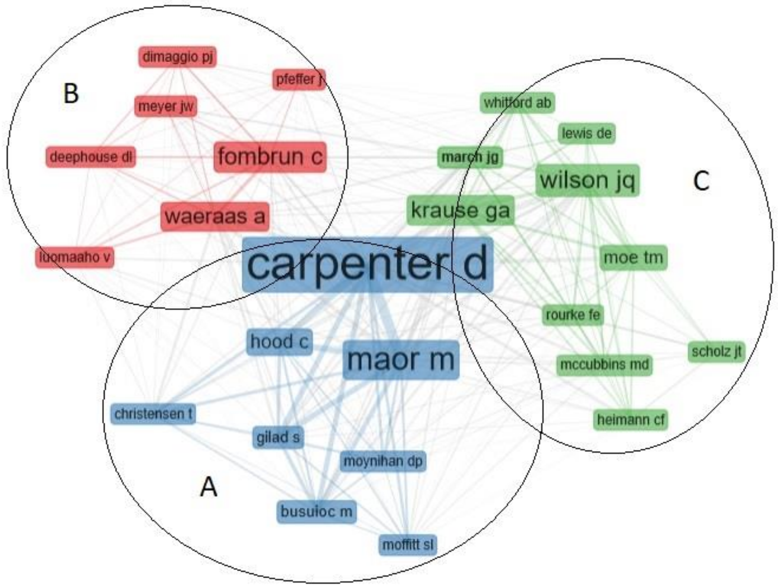
Finally, from the institutional perspective, reputation results from having a position in reputational rankings created by intermediaries such as media or experts. In this sense, reputation obtains an objective status that allows stakeholders to compare organizations' information, reducing uncertainty. In this perspective, reputation relies on institutional intermediaries who evaluate the organizations using specific criteria.

A typology for OR studies. Wæraas and Maor (2015) identified two strands in OR scholarship. First, the *political science approach*, which is related to studying reputation as a political asset. This approach focuses on executive agencies and their position within a political-administrative system. The authors argue that this perspective tries to show how reputational concerns (threats or risks) become strategic actions by agencies, focusing on managing their multiple audiences. According to Wæraas and Maor, this approach is similar to the game-theoretic perspective.

Second, the *organizational approach* is related to reputation's influence on the performance and behavior of public organizations. This approach treats any public sector entity as an "organization" in search of a positive reputation. Rather than focusing on reputation's specific attributes, it emphasizes public organizations' general position and the globally constructed and aggregated nature of reputation. The authors state that this strand shares characteristics with the social-constructionist and institutional views. Studies on this strand have been conducted in public organizations in different administrative contexts.

This study conducted a co-citation network analysis using the bibliometrix R tool to examine the intellectual structure of the literature reviewed. The network analysis yielded three clusters showing that this field of study is fragmented into two groups. First, Clusters A and C refer to the political science approach. Cluster A shows the studies grounded on Carpenter's work, and Cluster C refers to the frequently cited political science literature that inspired this strand of studies. Second, Cluster B brings together studies regarding the organizational approach (Wæraas and Luoma-aho's works) and the root of corporate reputation studies, which in turn is closely related to that strand (Fombrun, Deephouse, Dimaggio, Meyer, and Pfeffer's works).

Figure 1.3 Co-citation network



Source: Own elaboration

This section demonstrated that the political science approach is the predominant view in this body of literature (64.29%, n=81). Studies in this approach are strongly influenced by Carpenter's work and have shown that reputation affects the political aspects of public organizations, such as autonomy, legitimacy, and power (e.g., Carpenter, 2001, 2010; Moffitt, 2010; P. S. Roberts, 2006). The organizational strand (35.71%, n=45), meanwhile, is grounded on corporate reputation frameworks and has demonstrated that a positive reputation allows for improving communication (e.g., Sanders & Canel, 2015), motivating public servants (e.g., Valasek, 2018), and helps recruit and retain valuable employees (e.g., Bankins & Waterhouse, 2019).

The main difference found between these approaches (see tables 1.7 and 1.8) is that the political science strand analyzes reputation as a shield to protect agencies from external threats. In this approach, reputation is *reactive*; organizations use reputation management to signal their positive reputations for competence, efficiency, and effectiveness in front of their multiple audiences. On the other hand, the organizational approach is *proactive*. Studies in this approach show the strategic use of reputation management to build a positive reputation to avoid threats and damages caused by environmental factors—media coverage or several types of crises and risks—before their impact.

1.5.3 Antecedents

What are the antecedents of OR in the public administration? Table 1.7 shows the most relevant antecedents found in 49 empirical articles. The review classified antecedents according to which type of audience is studied. Audiences are different in size, interests, and composition and can be classified into two groups: internal and external (Carpenter, 2010). The first group refers to institutional actors with formal responsibilities in delivering public services, formulating policies, and scrutinizing agencies (Boon, Verhoest, & Wynen, 2019)—bureaucrats, legislators, political and judicial authorities, and other state-level agencies as regulators or audit agencies. The second group of audiences are directly or indirectly involved with organizations and evaluates their results, noting its risks and opportunities (Capelos et al., 2016). We could find citizens, civic associations, academic and professional experts, or media in this group.

Notably, external audiences are the most widely studied regarding OR antecedents (61%, n=30). Scholars have focused on them because these are potential threats to organizations, as Carpenter warns, “look at the audience, and look at the threats” (2010, p. 832). Within this group, media influence (e.g., Thorbjørnsrud, 2015), perceived efficacy (e.g., Luoma-aho, 2007), and strategic communication with audiences (e.g., Gilad, Alon-Barkat, & Braverman, 2016) are the most analyzed antecedents.

It is also notable that a few articles focused on analyzing internal audiences (24%, n=12). This situation can be explained by the fact that organizations prioritize the attention they give to audiences based on estimated potential threats (Van Der Veer, 2020), and external threats are usually more relevant to OR (Wæraas & Dahle, 2020). Most of the studies in this group analyze the employees’ characteristics. For instance, Wæraas and Dahle (2020) analyze how the employees’ voice affects the desired reputation in 25 Norwegian organizations, while Bjørnå (2016) examines the impact of leadership influence in reputational policies in Norwegian municipalities.

There are even fewer studies that analyze a wide range of audiences (14%, n=7). By definition, reputation means the set of beliefs embedded in multiple audiences (Carpenter, 2010). However, most of the studies analyzed in the sample consider only one type of audience per study. This finding is significant as audiences are the core of reputation, and for public organizations, it is crucial to select and gauge the perceptions of their most relevant ones over time (Christensen & Gornitzka, 2019; Maor, 2020). In this regard, the Overman, Busuioc, and Wood (2020) study is outstanding—they measured thirteen internal and external audiences of the European Chemicals Agency.

Table 1.7 Summary of antecedents of organizational reputation

	Org App					PS App					
Antecedents	**-**	**/**	**+**	**+-**	**Total Org**	**-**	**/**	**+**	**+-**	**Total PS**	**Total**
Focused on external audiences	**0**	**1**	**4**	**10**	**15**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**11**	**15**	**30**
Media influence	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	3	4
Perceived efficacy	0	1	0	2	3	0	0	0	1	1	4
Strategic communication	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	2	4
Performance assessments	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	3
Branding	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Level of trust or trustworthiness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2
Organizational capabilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2
Resources allocation	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Risk management	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	2
Other	0	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	2	2	5
Focused on internal audiences	**0**	**3**	**2**	**2**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**4**	**1**	**5**	**12**
Individual characteristics	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	1	3
Differentiation/Similarity strategies	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other	0	1	2	0	3	0	0	3	1	4	7
Focused on both audiences	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3**	**3**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**3**	**4**	**7**
Strategic communication	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	3
Other	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	3	4
Total	**0**	**4**	**6**	**15**	**25**	**3**	**1**	**5**	**15**	**24**	**49**

Valence: - (negative), / (neutral), + (positive), +- (positive and negative)

Org App = organizational approach, PS App = Political Science approach

Source: Own elaboration

1.5.4 Outcomes

In response to the fourth research question, *what are the outcomes of OR in the public administration?* There are 53 empirical articles focused on analyzing OR outcomes. Table 1.8 groups outcomes according to a classification proposed in this article based on three administrative challenges identified by Carpenter and Krause (2012, p. 26): reputation for competence (how to maintain broad-based support for an agency and its activities), strategic reputation management (how to steer a vessel amid hazardous shoals), and reputation for efficiency and effectiveness (how to project a judicious combination of consistency and flexibility). Reputation for competence is the most widely studied type, and cooperation among organizations (e.g., Busuioc, 2016), legitimacy (e.g., Rimkutė, 2020), and autonomy (e.g., Groenleer, 2014) are the most relevant outcomes.

Regarding the strategic reputation management type, the results of strategic communication and risk management stand out. For example, Maor, Gilad, and Ben-Nun Bloom (2013) and Moschella and Pinto (2019) analyze the communication strategies in the Central Banks of Israel and the United States, respectively. These studies showed that the type of responses these agencies have to public opinion depends directly on their reputation.

Moreover, reputation for efficiency and effectiveness gathers regulatory outcomes related to the political science approach. OR theory appeared as an alternative for classic theories—like public interest and capture theories—to understand regulation and regulators' behavior (Rimkutė, 2020). The study of reputation has identified several behaviors regarding the evolution of the regulatory state (Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2020b), such as regulatory enforcement (e.g., Maor & Sulitzeanu-Kenan, 2013), regulatory compliance (e.g., Etienne, 2015), and regulatory approval (e.g., Carpenter, 2004a).

Finally, this scholarship has mainly studied reputation due to its usefulness as an extrinsically performance-related outcome. Therefore, variables chosen to study reputation outcomes examine the positive or positive/negative valence of reputation in most studies (83%, n=44). Furthermore, only nine articles (17%) reported on the negative and neutral valence of reputation. For example, Larsen and Vesan (2012) examine the consequences of the Public Employment Services' negative reputation on the allocation of human resources in Europe, while Malay and Fairholm (2020) explain the impact of the Bureau of Land Management's bad reputation on its legitimacy. Regarding reputation neutrality, Krause and Douglas (2005) demonstrated that different agencies executing the same mandate maintain a neutral reputation among themselves to overcome political pressures.

Table 1.8 Summary of outcomes in organizational reputation

	Org App					PS App					
Outcomes	**-**	**/**	**+**	**+-**	**Total Org**	**-**	**/**	**+**	**+-**	**Total PS**	**Total**
Reputation for competence	**0**	**0**	**1**	**3**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**4**	**10**	**17**	**21**
Cooperation	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	4
Legitimacy	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	3	3
Autonomy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	3
Corruption (increase or decrease)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2
Network relationships	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Bureaucratic power	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2
Other	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	5	5
Strategic reputation management	**1**	**0**	**3**	**4**	**8**	**2**	**0**	**2**	**6**	**10**	**18**
Strategic communication	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	5	5
Risk management	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	3	4
Recruitment	1	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Other	0	0	3	1	4	0	0	1	1	2	6
Reputation for efficiency and effectiveness	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**8**	**12**	**14**
Regulatory enforcement	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	4	4
Regulatory approval	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	3
Performance (or effectiveness)	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	3
Decision-making	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2
Regulatory compliance	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	2
Total	**1**	**0**	**4**	**9**	**14**	**5**	**2**	**7**	**24**	**39**	**53**

Valence: - (negative), / (neutral), + (positive), +- (positive and negative)

Org App = organizational approach, PS App = Political Science approach

Source: Own elaboration

1.5.5 Multidimensionality

Finally, *which dimensions influence the process of reputation in the public administration?* Reputation is a multifaceted concept (Maor, 2016). Multidimensionality means that an organization can have more than one reputation with specific attributes to reach specific audiences (Carpenter 2010). As in the definitions section, this review found several models in the sample analyzed (Capelos et al., 2016; see Carpenter, 2010; D. Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019; Luoma-aho, 2008; Ryan, 2007).

The following analysis draws on Carpenter's model (2010) to further explore this issue as it is the most widely used in the literature. Depending on the organization's interests, it can manage four facets: 1) a *performative reputation* where perceptions are generated from decision making and effectiveness in achieving established objectives; 2) a *moral reputation* characterized by the emotive judgments generated from values and ethical behaviors; 3) a *technical reputation* concerning the scientific, methodological, and analytical capacities of the organization; and finally, 4) a *procedural reputation* which is about following the accepted rules and norms in any given situation. Table 1.9 summarizes the presence of the four dimensions in the studies reviewed.

Table 1.9 Reputational Dimensions

Dimensions				Records
P	T	Pr	M	31 (26.05%)
P	T			18 (15.13%)
P				17 (14.29%)
P		Pr		9 (7.56%)
		Pr		8 (6.72%)
	T	Pr		8 (6.72%)
P	T	Pr		7 (5.88%)
	T			5 (4.20%)
			M	5 (4.20%)
P	T		M	4 (3.36%)
P		Pr	M	3 (2.52%)
P			M	3 (2.52%)
		Pr	M	1 (0.84%)
	T	Pr	M	0 (0.00%)
	T		M	0 (0.00%)
92	**67**	**73**	**47**	**119**
77.31%	**56.30%**	**61.34%**	**39.50%**	

P=Performative, T=Technical, Pr=Procedural, M=Moral

Source: Own elaboration

According to the author, organizations do not hold just one overall positive or negative reputation, but rather the management of these four facets shape the reactions of the external audiences and the behavior of the internal ones (Carpenter, 2010). Thus, organizations cannot enhance all these dimensions in practical terms, and therefore need to choose which one will receive the most attention (Carpenter & Krause, 2012). For instance, Rimkutė (2020) states that regulatory agencies emphasize the technical aspects of reputation because evidence-based decisions are their *raison d'être*. However, Eriksen (2020) proposed a multidimensional model for studying accountability, in which the four reputational facets are not under conflict. His model emphasizes the nested structure of goals that underlie legitimate decision-making processes in organizations.

Table 1.10 Reputational dimensions with antecedents and outcomes

	Performative	Technical	Procedural	Moral
Antecedents (n=49)				
External	51	41	37	23
Internal	18	10	10	6
Internal & External	9	9	9	7
Total Antecedents	**78**	**60**	**56**	**36**
Outcomes (n=53)				
Reputation for competence	16	15	12	9
Strategic reputation management	14	10	7	6
Reputation for efficiency and effectiveness	8	8	8	1
Total Outcomes	**38**	**33**	**27**	**16**

Note: Total higher than 49 and 53 as some studies described multiple dimensions.

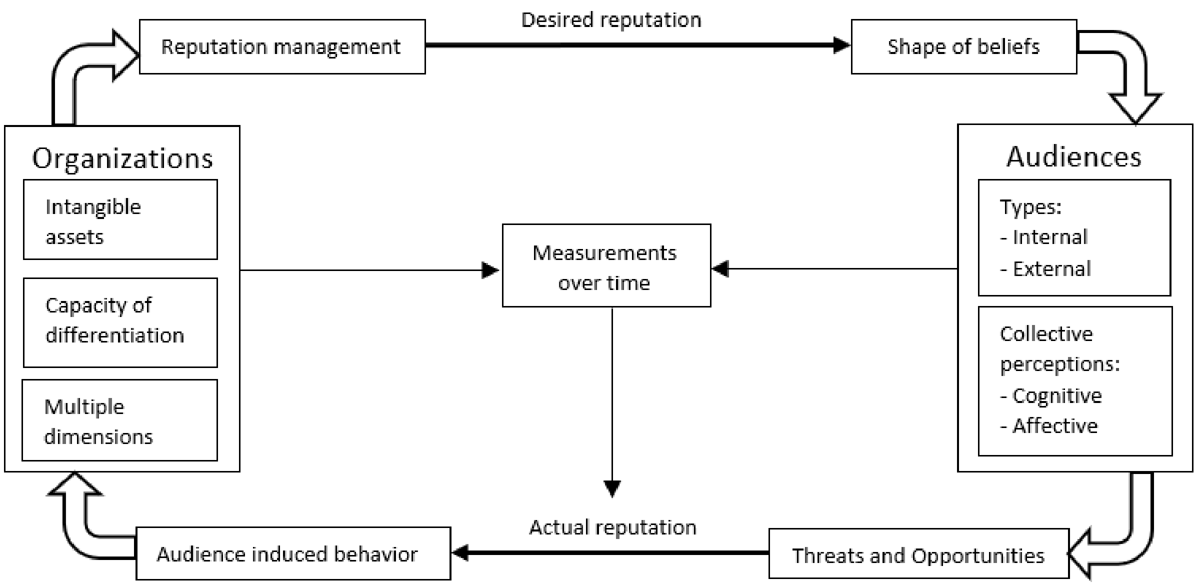
Source: Own elaboration

OR is related to cognitive and affective components, which are intertwined (Capelos et al., 2016). Performative and technical dimensions are associated with the cognitive parts of reputation, while procedural and moral are related to the affective side. Table 1.10 shows the relationship between reputational dimensions and the antecedents and outcomes identified in the last sections.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that the facets associated with the efficacy of organizations are the dominant focus in this body of research, while the affective aspects are the least studied. The performative dimension is salient in all antecedent and outcome types. Several antecedents of OR analyze the perceived performance to build or maintain a positive reputation (e.g., Doering, Downe, Elraz, & Martin, 2019), while outcomes studied are related to reputation as a means to enhance organizational performance (e.g., Krause & Douglas, 2005). Moreover, moral reputation is the least studied dimension regarding both outcomes and antecedents. For instance, Lee and Zhang (2020) analyze if having a reputation for diversity attracts females and minorities to work in public organizations.

Summarizing, figure 1.4 presents an overview of the process of reputation in public administration.

Figure 1.4 The dynamic process of reputation in public administration



Source: Own elaboration

1.6 Future Research

Future research can build on these findings in several ways. First, this work suggests studying reputation at the individual level to understand the effects of leaders' behavior on OR. Most of the research reviewed focuses on the organizational level, while only fourteen works focus on the individual. Public administration and society suffer when their leaders cannot lead organizations to accomplish their missions or fail to conduct themselves under ethical values. The role of public leaders is crucial for OR because they must enhance organizational outcomes while maintaining professional integrity (Selznick, 1957). For example, Baekkeskov (2017) argues that reputation-seeking leaders empower themselves by dominating political audiences, neglecting the public good.

Maor proposed a definition for the head's reputation as "a set of beliefs about an agency head's individual capacities, values and intentions that are embedded in audience networks" (2016, p. 85). However, research to date does not clarify if this concept could be used to study the effect of leaders' reputations on organizational outcomes. The review found that the historical approach has been used to study leaders' role *ex post* (e.g., Carpenter, 2001; P. S. Roberts, 2006), but research would benefit from using other approaches that show different insights into the influence of leaders on OR.

Second, this review suggests conducting more research on the audiences' side. Audiences are the central concept of this approach (Carpenter, 2010). However, the idea of having internal and external audiences shaping organizations' behaviors (Carpenter & Krause, 2012) has not yet been thoroughly analyzed in the literature. This work only found two studies that look deeply into these groups (see Boon, Verhoest, et al., 2019; Van Der Veer, 2020). Moreover, as the review showed, reputation's affective aspects are the least studied in the literature. OR is about how audiences first perceive and then evaluate organizations through cognitive and affective processes and how organizations convey their professional features and behaviors via reputation management to shape those audiences' responses. Therefore, future research should also focus more on the emotional and cognitive aspects of audiences.

By studying audiences in detail, public organizations can convey specific information focusing on specific audiences. Therefore, reputational studies should ideally include the perceptions of different audiences. However, knowing how difficult it could be to obtain information from various audiences, scholars would take advantage of this avenue to focus their studies on specific dimensions and audiences. It would be useful for the research of OR to understand each audience's characteristics, as each one has different ways of interpreting information related to the reputational facets; as Carpenter states, "what one audience sees is not necessarily what another audience sees" (2010, p. 34).

Third, most of the studies reviewed focus on a one-single case study. This work only found nine cross-national articles, which is understandable given that reputation, like other intangible assets, is challenging to measure. Therefore, this work suggests future studies using quantitative survey-based measurements that compare results in different countries or administrative contexts (see D. Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019; Luoma-aho, 2008; Overman et al., 2020).

For public organizations, it is essential to have tools explicitly designed to measure their reputations over time. This review found a great diversity of qualitative and quantitative methods and multidimensional models to study OR. On the one hand, this is positive because the different methodological approaches give more insight into this concept. On the other hand, testing reputation with standardized measures designed strictly for it in an array of contexts would help understand how important the cultural context and organizational settings are for reputation and the extent to which the concept is generalizable.

Fourth, a future research agenda should address more specific types of OR. As the review demonstrated, there is only one typology to analyze the phenomena. Future typologies should address the role of multiple internal and external audiences. As shown in this review, most of the studies focused on external audiences, while only a few looked at the involvement of internal audiences in the reputation process. In addition, examining cross-fertilization between political science and organizational approaches is needed, that is to say: what can one approach learn from the other?

Finally, as the review showed, reputation has been mainly studied in the United States, the UK, Israel, and the Nordic region—nations with developed democracies and economies. However, countries with different characteristics and contexts must be studied to show the extent to which a reputational approach is generalizable. Thus, this review encourages scholars from different regions such as Africa, Asia, or Latin America, to contribute to this growing issue in public administration studies.

1.7 Conclusions

The analysis of 126 records regarding the study of reputation in the public administration showed that this field of research had become a growing trend on the agenda of public managers and scholars from different academic communities when analyzing the importance of the relationship between organizations and their multiple audiences.

Private-sector research on reputation became a trend in corporate management research in the 1990s. Nevertheless, OR studies in public administration gain relevance with Carpenter's work until the beginning of the 2000s. From that moment on, theoretical-conceptual research has made significant contributions to the study of public administration, and empirical research has shown multiple benefits of reputation in the practice of the discipline.

However, while scholars have paid more attention to the “facts of performance” (Carpenter, 2015, p. x), other important issues have been neglected in audience management, internal audiences research, and the emotional aspects of reputation. Furthermore, other research gaps needed to be covered; particularly, in examining this theory in contexts other than where it has usually been studied and measuring reputation using standardized tools.

Appendix

Appendix 1 PRISMA Checklist

Section/topic	#	Checklist item	Reported on page #
TITLE			
Title	1	Identify the report as a systematic review, meta-analysis, or both	1
ABSTRACT			
Structured summary	2	Provide a structured summary including, as applicable: background; objectives; data sources; study eligibility criteria, participants, and interventions; study appraisal and synthesis methods; results; limitations; conclusions and implications of key findings; systematic review registration number	1
INTRODUCTION			
Rationale	3	Describe the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known	2-3
Objectives	4	Provide an explicit statement of questions being addressed with reference to participants, interventions, comparisons, outcomes, and study design (PICOS)	2-3
METHODS			
Protocol and registration	5	Indicate if a review protocol exists, if and where it can be accessed (e.g., Web address), and, if available, provide registration information including registration number	NA
Eligibility criteria	6	Specify study characteristics (e.g., PICOS, length of follow-up) and report characteristics (e.g., years considered, language, publication status) used as criteria for eligibility, giving rationale	Appendix 2

Information sources	7	Describe all information sources (e.g., databases with dates of coverage, contact with study authors to identify additional studies) in the search and date last searched	Appendix 2
Search	8	Present full electronic search strategy for at least one database, including any limits used, such that it could be repeated.	Appendix 2
Study selection	9	State the process for selecting studies (i.e., screening, eligibility, included in systematic review, and, if applicable, included in the meta-analysis).	Appendix 2
Data collection process	10	Describe method of data extraction from reports (e.g., piloted forms, independently, in duplicate) and any processes for obtaining and confirming data from investigators.	Appendix 2
Data items	11	List and define all variables for which data were sought (e.g., PICOS, funding sources) and any assumptions and simplifications made.	Appendix 2
Risk of bias in individual studies	12	Describe methods used for assessing risk of bias of individual studies (including specification of whether this was done at the study or outcome level), and how this information is to be used in any data synthesis.	NA
Summary measures	13	State the principal summary measures (e.g., risk ratio, difference in means).	NA
Synthesis of results	14	Describe the methods of handling data and combining results of studies, if done, including measures of consistency (e.g., 12) for each meta-analysis.	NA
Risk of bias across studies	15	Specify any assessment of risk of bias that may affect the cumulative evidence (e.g., publication bias, selective reporting within studies).	NA
Additional analyses	16	Describe methods of additional analyses (e.g., sensitivity or subgroup analyses, meta-regression), if done, indicating which were pre-specified	NA
RESULTS			
Study selection	17	Give numbers of studies screened, assessed for eligibility, and included in the review, with reasons for exclusions at each stage, ideally with a flow diagram.	5

Study characteristics	18	For each study, present characteristics for which data were extracted (e.g., study size, PICOS, follow-up period) and provide the citations.	NA
Risk of bias within studies	19	Present data on risk of bias of each study and, if available, any outcome level assessment (see item 12).	NA
Results of individual studies	20	For all outcomes considered (benefits or harms), present, for each study: (a) simple summary data for each intervention group (b) effect estimates and confidence intervals, ideally with a forest plot.	NA
Synthesis of results	21	Present results of each meta-analysis done, including confidence intervals and measures of consistency.	NA
Risk of bias across studies	22	Present results of any assessment of risk of bias across studies (see Item 15).	NA
Additional analysis	23	Give results of additional analyses, if done (e.g., sensitivity or subgroup analyses, meta-regression [see Item 16])	NA
DISCUSSION			
Summary of evidence	24	Summarize the main findings including the strength of evidence for each main outcome; consider their relevance to key groups (e.g., healthcare providers, users, and policy makers).	7-17
Limitations	25	Discuss limitations at study and outcome level (e.g., risk of bias), and at review-level (e.g., incomplete retrieval of identified research, reporting bias).	7-17
Conclusions	26	Provide a general interpretation of the results in the context of other evidence, and implications for future research	17-19
FUNDING			
Funding	27	Describe sources of funding for the systematic review and other support (e.g., supply of data); role of funders for the systematic review.	NA

Source: Own elaboration

Appendix 2

Literature eligibility criteria

The review selected the studies if they met the following criteria:

- Type of studies and participants: Records are related to the study of organizational reputation in the public administration/sector. Participants must be part of the reputational interaction: public organizations and audiences (e.g., citizens, politicians, media, employees)
- Topic: Records must contain the terms shown in table 1 in the titles and/or abstracts and within the document. All records were read in their title, abstract, or entirely so as not to confuse organizational reputation with other similar concepts such as corporate reputation or online reputation.
- Study design: Empirical and theoretical studies are selected. Since one of the objectives of this review is to know the current state of the topic, it is necessary to analyze the evidence obtained in all types of studies.
- Field of study: Records should refer to the study of reputation in the public sector or public administration. The definition of public administration used in this work is: "the practice and study of the professional formulation and influence of public policy and the implementation of such policy on a regular and organized basis on behalf of the public interest of a society, its civic subparts, and its citizenry" (Marini 2000, 5). The review excluded records related to the study of universities and education organizations because the papers reviewed considered them as private entities. In the case of nonprofits, articles associated with this type of organization were excluded because "these organizations can realize profits from their activities and programs, and they can engage in commercial-type enterprises" (Shafritz et al. 2017, 122).
- Year of publication: The selected period includes the studies published from 2001 to 2020. The year 2001 is chosen as a starting point due to Carpenter's seminal research publication: *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy*.
- Language: The study considers records written in English exclusively (items found in Norwegian, Portuguese, and Spanish were excluded).

- Publication status: The review considered only articles and books published in journals with peer review and by publishers or university stamps consolidated in the field of public administration.

Search strategy

This review considered three search strategies. First, the bibliographic databases Web of Science and Scopus were consulted to access the number of publications related to the research object in all the disciplines of study. The first search considered the term *reputation**, which yielded 79,407 records (34,132 in Web of Science y 45,275 in Scopus). The second inquiry considered five combinations of terms to approximate the search to the object of study (see table 1 in this appendix).

Second, a search of records was conducted within some journals considered among the most prominent in public administration—this search located 63 possible papers to be included in the review. The review also included a search in Corporate Reputation Review—a journal specialized in the publication of studies related to reputation in the private sector. In this search, there were 68 items with the possibility of being included in the final review. Finally, a search in Google Books was performed. In this inquiry, fifteen books appeared with the possibility of being included in the final review (full list of records in appendix 3).

Table A.1 Delimitation of the object of study

Search terms	Records		
	Web of Science	**Scopus**	**Total**
reputation* AND "public sector"	159	242	**401**
reputation* AND "public administration"	56	108	**164**
"reputation management" AND public*	154	268	**422**
"organizational reputation" AND public*	98	103	**201**
"bureaucratic reputation" AND public*	7	9	**16**
Total	**474**	**730**	**1204**

The last search was conducted on November 1st, 2020.

Source: Own elaboration

Record selection

Following the eligibility criteria, the 1350 records were checked versus the PRISMA checklist. This process leads to the final selection of 126 records (119 articles and seven books). Figure 1.1 reports this process under the diagram proposed in the PRISMA statement.

First, the review screened papers and books through titles and abstracts. Of the 1350 records found, 1132 were excluded because the references were duplicated in the bibliographic databases. Another reason for discarding was that some records contained the search terms but referred to corporate, universities, nonprofits, or online reputation. Also, at this point, the review excluded studies written in a language other than English. Of the 218 records included in a second stage, the review discarded 92 since they did not entirely meet the eligibility criteria.

The review resulted in a database that includes data such as author, year of publication, journal, country, research design, definition of reputation used, type of reputation, sector, antecedents, outcomes, among other variables. The data extraction allows the analysis of the information to describe the state of the literature and answer the research questions.

Books. Of the 15 records found in Google Books, only the following seven meet the eligibility criteria: two books that are the theoretical foundation of the subject 1) *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy* (Carpenter 2001), and 2) *Reputation and Power* (Carpenter 2010); 3) *The Oxford Handbook of Corporate Reputation* (Barnett and Pollock 2012), which reviews the theory and practice of corporate reputation but includes two chapters (see Gilad & Yogev and McKenna & Olegario chapters) that study the phenomenon in the public sector; 4) *Short Guide to Reputation Risk* (Honey 2009), a book that focuses on the management of reputational risks in both public and private organizations. This study analyses cases from public organizations in the UK; 5) *Reputation-Based Governance* (Picci 2011), which analyzes the role of technology to strengthen reputation in public governance; 6) *The Blind Spots of Public Bureaucracy and the Politics of Non-Coordination* (Bach and Wegrich 2019), a study that examines different types of biases in decision making in public organizations. The third part of the book is called “Bureaucratic Politics: Reputation, Blame, and Turf,” and it contains two chapters dedicated to analyzing the role of reputation on decision making; and 7) *Organizational Reputation in the Public Sector* (Wæraas and Maor 2015), which deserves particular attention because it is the only book dedicated exclusively to analyze the foundation and state of organizational reputation in the public administration.

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Appendix 4 Complete list of journals and countries

#	Journal	# of records	Cumulative	Percent
1	Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory	14	14	11.76%
2	Governance	10	24	20.17%
3	Public Administration	9	33	27.73%
4	Public Administration Review	6	39	32.77%
5	Public Management Review	5	44	36.97%
6	American Journal of Political Science	4	48	40.34%
7	International Journal of Public Sector Management	3	51	42.86%
8	International Public Management Journal	3	54	45.38%
9	Journal of European Public Policy	3	57	47.90%
10	Administration & Society	2	59	49.58%
11	American Political Science Review	2	61	51.26%
12	Corporate Reputation Review	2	63	52.94%
13	International Journal of Public Administration	2	65	54.62%
14	International Review of Administrative Sciences	2	67	56.30%
15	Journal of Behavioral Public Administration	2	69	57.98%
16	Local Government Studies	2	71	59.66%
17	Perspectives on Politics	2	73	61.34%
18	Scandinavian Journal of Public Administration	2	75	63.03%
19	The American Review of Public Administration	2	77	64.71%
20	The Journal of Politics	2	79	66.39%
21	Administration and Society	1	80	67.23%
22	Administrative Science Quarterly	1	81	68.07%
23	Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal	1	82	68.91%
24	Australian Journal of Public Administration	1	83	69.75%
25	British Journal of Management	1	84	70.59%
26	Corporate Communications	1	85	71.43%
27	Economics and Politics	1	86	72.27%
28	Erasmus Law Review	1	87	73.11%
29	European Management Journal	1	88	73.95%
30	European Management Review	1	89	74.79%
31	Financial Accountability and Management	1	90	75.63%
32	Health Affairs	1	91	76.47%
33	Health Policy	1	92	77.31%
34	IEEE Access	1	93	78.15%
35	International Journal of Electronic Government Research	1	94	78.99%
36	Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management	1	95	79.83%
37	Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy	1	96	80.67%
38	Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization	1	97	81.51%

39	Journal of Policy Analysis and Management	1	98	82.35%
40	Journal of Policy History	1	99	83.19%
41	Journal of Public Economic Theory	1	100	84.03%
42	Journal of Public Economics	1	101	84.87%
43	Policy & Politics	1	102	85.71%
44	Policy and politics	1	103	86.55%
45	Policy and Society	1	104	87.39%
46	Political Research Quarterly	1	105	88.24%
47	Politics and Governance	1	106	89.08%
48	Public Choice	1	107	89.92%
49	Public Performance and Management Review	1	108	90.76%
50	Public Relations Journal	1	109	91.60%
51	Public Relations Review	1	110	92.44%
52	Regulation and Governance	1	111	93.28%
53	Review of Public Personnel Administration	1	112	94.12%
54	Scandinavian Journal of Management	1	113	94.96%
55	Scandinavian Political Studies	1	114	95.80%
56	Sociological Forum	1	115	96.64%
57	Strategic Management Journal	1	116	97.48%
58	Studies in American Political Development	1	117	98.32%
59	Sustainability (Switzerland)	1	118	99.16%
60	The Journal of Conflict Resolution	1	119	100.00%

Source: Own elaboration

Countries grouped by continent					
Europe (51.97%)	**66**	**America (32.29%)**	**41**	**Oceania (6.30%)**	**8**
Norway	14	United States	38	Australia	5
European Union	12	Canada	2	New Zealand	3
UK	9	Mexico	1		
Denmark	6	**Asia (8.66%)**	**11**		
Germany	5	Israel	6		
Finland	4	China	2		
France	3	Pakistan	2		
Switzerland	3	Russia	1		
Sweden	2	**Africa (0.79%)**	**1**		
Other	8	South Africa	1		

Note: The nine countries shadowed are those cited in the text.

Source: Own elaboration

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2. Points of view: How audiences evaluate the dimensionality of reputation

Abstract

The concept of audiences is at the core of reputational debates because they contribute significantly to organizations' behavior. The central assumption among scholars is that bureaucratic reputation is multifaceted across audiences, leaving aside the question of the extent to which multiple dimensions of reputation are perceived within audiences. This article seeks to provide empirical evidence to explain that audiences have different characteristics and concerns, and therefore do not perceive reputation in the same way. It analyzes the perceptions of two audiences regarding nine Constitutional Autonomous Agencies in Mexico. By applying an exploratory factor analysis, this paper shows how audiences reflect reputation's dimensionality differently because of two of their characteristics: their position vis-à-vis the organizations and how they make sense of themselves through occupations. This article's findings suggest that reputation must be managed to convey different facets within each audience since they judge bureaucratic reputation in different ways.

2.1 Introduction

Although bureaucratic reputation theory is still at a formative stage (Wæraas & Maor, 2015a), the last years have seen an upsurging interest in the study of reputation among public administration scholars and academic communities. Following Carpenter's seminal work (2001, 2010), authors often assert that reputation is a multidimensional concept *across* audiences (e.g., Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2020b; Capelos et al., 2016; Christensen & Lodge, 2018). Yet little attention has been given to empirically analyzing whether different audiences, in fact, perceive reputation in sophisticated multidimensional (versus simplified, unidimensional) terms. Thus, *to what extent do audiences' perceptions reflect a multidimensional perspective of agencies' reputations?*

This paper aims to show that not all audiences perceive reputation in a multidimensional way, as current bureaucratic reputation literature tends to presume. For this, it analyzes two different audiences—one internal and one external—based on two of its characteristics: their position vis-à-vis the organizations and how do they make sense of themselves in front of the organizations through occupations.

The work explains that audiences perceive reputation in different ways because of their different characteristics. For this, the article draws on two bodies of literature. Foremost, the article draws on Goffman's *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). In his book, Goffman underscores audiences' relevance for this theory, pointing out that reputation is about managing appearances in front of a set of different audiences. Particularly, this paper draws on Goffman's back-front region model to explain that audiences' positioning is a relevant characteristic to making sense of the perceptions and judgment of reputations. Secondly, the study draws on professionalism literature to explain how occupations' asymmetric relationship between internal and external audiences affects their perceptions regarding organizations.

Insights from bureaucratic reputation research have shown how critical it is to have a positive reputation in different areas of public organizations (e.g., Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2020b; Etienne, 2015; Gilad et al., 2015; Krause & Douglas, 2005; Maor & Sulitzeanu-Kenan, 2016). Public organizations strive to adapt to a fast-changing environment characterized by demanding audiences and an increased need for competence and effectiveness. In this complex environment, public managers then find themselves having to grapple with difficult issues about bureaucratic reputation management, such as prioritizing responses to a set of different audiences with varying demands and concerns (Gilad et al., 2015; Maor et al., 2013). Therefore, the importance of addressing reputation (and its multidimensionality) as an essential managerial tool has perhaps never been higher.

In that sense, the rise of bureaucratic reputation as a managerial priority has led to a need to inform public managers of concepts and guidelines from audiences' research to facilitate their reputation management. Thus, a deeper understanding of how audiences perceive reputation could provide valuable guidance addressing this challenge.

This paper contributes to the bureaucratic reputation literature in several ways. First, it explores whether different audiences perceive reputation in a multifaceted way as literature tends to presume. By doing this, the study adds value to reputational studies analyzing the role of different audiences in reputation management. The paper analyzes the role of audiences' characteristics that are crucial for understanding the relationship between organizations and their audiences. Also, this article tries to fill the gap in reputational studies given no studies have tested whether audiences perceive reputation in a multifaceted or more simplified way.

Second, over and above its focus on the multidimensionality of reputation, this study adds value by studying a different case from those commonly studied. The Mexican case aims to explore whether bureaucratic reputation theory travels well in a context that does not have a stable democracy and consolidated institutions, such as in Europe, the United States, or Israel, where the theory has been mostly applied (Rimkutė, 2020). Empirical research in a setting like Mexico is helpful because it allows analyzing the relevance of bureaucratic reputation in a context characterized by a low-reputation public administration, which can foster analysis in similar contexts.

The present study tests reputation's dimensionality by measuring the perceptions of two different audiences, one internal (public servants) and one external (students), regarding nine Constitutional Autonomous Agencies in Mexico (CAA). In line with the *political science stream* of reputational studies (Wæraas & Maor, 2015b), the article focuses on the CAA because they are the Mexican version of non-majoritarian institutions (Pardo & Dussauge-Laguna, 2017). These agencies are autonomous from the executive and given the proximity and importance of non-majoritarian agencies on citizens and the merit-based (non-political) process for appointing boards, reputation is their primary source of legitimacy (Overman et al., 2020; Rimkutė, 2018).

In addition to this introduction, the structure of the article is as follows. The next section describes how audiences are relevant for reputational studies. Then, the paper describes the methodology used to conduct the article. After that, the analysis presents the results of the empirical examination. Finally, the paper concludes with a discussion of the findings and general conclusions.

2.2 Analytical Framework

2.2.1 Audiences and multidimensionality

Audiences are the core of reputation debates. An audience is any individual or collective that observes an organization and can judge it (Carpenter, 2010, p. 33). Audiences vary in size and composition, and they can be categorized according to their relation to the agency in two types: internal and external audiences. The former refers to institutional actors with formal responsibilities for delivering public services, formulating policies, and scrutinizing agencies (Boon, Verhoest, et al., 2019). This group of audiences include bureaucrats, legislators, political and judicial authorities, and other state-level agencies as regulators or audit agencies. The latter are those audiences who have any external interaction with the organizations and evaluate outcomes that represent risk and opportunities for them (Capelos et al., 2016). In this group, we find citizens, civic associations, academic and professional experts, or media.

Despite the assumption of reputation's multidimensionality *across* audiences, there is limited knowledge regarding what multidimensionality *within* audiences actually means. According to Carpenter, reputation "is a set of symbolic beliefs about the unique or separable capacities, roles, and obligations of an organization, where these beliefs are embedded in audience networks" (2010, p. 45). Following this conceptualization, it is understood that bureaucratic reputation depends on different audiences' perceptions. However, those audiences only observe a partial image of the organization's effectiveness (Carpenter & Krause, 2012). Thus, audiences' perceptions can be very diverse and may change over time (Maor, 2016), making reputation's multidimensionality vary not only *across* but *within* audiences.

Carpenter (2010) identifies four dimensions for understanding the structure of beliefs about an agency. First, the *performative* dimension refers to the perceptions generated from decision-making and effectiveness in achieving established organizational objectives. Second, the *moral* facet alludes to those perceptions that are generated from values and ethical and transparent behavior in an organization. Third, the *legal-procedural* dimension assesses the extent to which organizations follow the legally established procedures. Finally, the *technical* facet refers to the scientific, methodological, and analytical capacities of the organizations. These four dimensions help organizations in shaping audiences' beliefs trying to ensure that they reflect positive perceptions regarding their performances (Carpenter & Krause, 2012).

According to Carpenter (2010), the information from all four dimensions flows towards all audiences. However, it is challenging to keep up appearances in front of all of them, and organizations are forced to prioritize managing some dimensions over others. Therefore, this need to choose the most relevant dimensions facilitates the communication of organizational uniqueness because agencies can convey the dimension that is considered most relevant for each audience according to their interests.

Carpenter's four-dimensions model has been accepted and used by many scholars (Boon, Salomonsen, & Verhoest, 2019). However, there are different models in the literature of bureaucratic reputation that also assume multidimensionality. For instance, Capelos et al. (2016) proposed a two-dimensional model comprised of efficacy (based on competence, knowledge, and effective public service delivery) and moral reliability (based on integrity, empathy, and honest communication). Luoma-aho (2008) suggests a five dimensions model including authority, esteem, trust, service, and efficiency facets. Finally, Ryan (2007) proposed a six dimensions version for local governments (organizational culture, corporate governance, products and services, vision and leadership, social and environmental responsibility, and trust). According to these models, scholars have assumed that agencies, to a significant extent, work on the multidimensionality assumption, and they try to communicate different types of reputation towards all the audiences. Still, we do not know if audiences perceive and judge agencies in this multidimensional approach.

2.2.2 Dimensionality *within* audiences

Do public organizations need to convey different aspects of themselves to different audiences or signal their multifaceted self to all audiences? Although reputation theory has increasingly been developed over the last years, the emphasis on studying reputation as a multifaceted concept conveyed *across* audiences obscures aspects of the mechanisms that shape how reputational dimensions are perceived *within* audiences. It is assumed that all audiences can infer and differentiate among different dimensions. So, the question of how different audiences assess multidimensionality remains unanswered. Addressing this issue would help public managers efficiently communicate diversified messages about an agency's actions to build, improve, or maintain a positive reputation.

So far, two studies have examined this issue by testing Carpenter's four dimensions model, obtaining contrasting results. Lee and Van Ryzin (2019) found that reputation is a unidimensional construct when analyzing citizens' perceptions of three United States agencies. For their part, Overman, Busuioc, and Wood (2020) found multidimensionality across thirteen different audiences (classified according to their employer type) when evaluating one European agency. These contrasting results show the relevance of delving into the study of how different audiences perceive reputation.

This article argues that not all audiences perceive the same thing when evaluating reputation. There are two related aspects of audiences that allow them to understand reputation differently: their position (or point of view) regarding the organization and the occupations asymmetry in the relationship between internal and external audiences.

First, drawing on Erving Goffman's back-front region model (1959), this paper explains that the complex or simplified understanding of the reputational phenomena depends on the region in which each audience is positioned with respect to the organization—their point of view. For Goffman, a region is "any place that is bounded to some degree by barriers to perception" (1959, p. 106). There are two types of regions. First, the *front region* is the one where the *performance* happens. This region is linked to the audience through two standards: manner—regulates the performance when the actor communicates or exchanges gestures with the audience—and appearance—the decorum or behavior that should be maintained when organizations do not have a dialogue with the audience. Second, the *back region* (or *backstage*) is where organizations prepare their performances without being exposed to the external audiences, thinking about how to show an idealized image of themselves to different audiences, and examining their expressions and behaviors when no one is present to be offended by them.

The position in which audiences are in this scenario allows them to see or not see what is happening in each region. The audiences' point of view affects the way they collect information to evaluate the organizational performance. Thus, an organization's ability to have a positive reputation depends not only on how to show competence and effectiveness *in front* of different external audiences. It also depends on the *back region,* where formal and informal behaviors happen without public scrutiny.

Translating this into Goffman's language, it is possible to say that organizational performances take place on a stage in front of external audiences seated to watch the show. From their point of view, external audiences demand the professional skills (manner) from members of organizations to fulfill their demands, but they are also aware of the moral aspects (appearance) such as the values under which public organizations meet their objectives. These audiences encode the professional and moral information conveyed by the agencies through cognitive and affective mechanisms that are interconnected and allow them to evaluate the reputations of an agency (Capelos et al., 2016; Maor, 2016).

On the other hand, the work of internal audiences is only visible *backstage*. Here all the members of the organization and other institutional actors prepare the performance before going on stage. Because members of these audiences behave out of character while they are there, the back region's physical borders will be closed to hide any information to external audiences (Johansson, 2009). For example, a public organization in the *front region* must show specific public values such as transparency, ethics, or accountability. However, there can be hidden information in the back region so that the audiences cannot compare the treatment given to the treatment that might be provided.

Secondly, this study draws on professionalism literature to explain how audiences make sense of themselves in front of organizations taking as reference their occupations. Occupations are critical to evaluate ourselves and one another (Gilad, Ben-Nun Bloom, & Assouline, 2018). According to the literature on professionalism, an asymmetry inherent to the citizen-professional relationship affects the perceptions between external and internal audiences (Freidson, 2010; Harrits, 2016)—external audiences depend on the formal knowledge, skills, and expertise of the internal ones to solve public problems. For this reason, and because the latter lacks the education or experimental prerequisites to solve specific issues, public organizations (internal audiences) must provide solutions to problems demanded by society (external audiences) (Freidson, 2010). Also, external audiences are expecting for these solutions to be provided with highly moral behavior.

This asymmetry leads audiences to perceive the dimensionality of reputation in different ways. On the one hand, when external audiences receive public services they evaluate organizational performance through the manner (or professional aspects of the performance) and the appearance (ethical behavior of the organization), capturing all the reputational dimensions (Maor, 2016).

On the other hand, the occupational (cognitive) factor is the most relevant facet for internal audiences' point of view. According to Harrits (2016), professionals' sensemaking is "how professionals themselves see and describe who they are as professionals, what they are supposed to do, and how they do it" (p. 5). In other words, sensemaking helps professionals understand their identities and roles, knowing that they have the training, knowledge, and experience to solve specific tasks that citizens demand.

2.2.3 Audiences' point of view

Analyzing the perception of two different audiences—one external (students) and one internal (public officers)—, this paper argues that perceptions of external audiences take the position of the *front region* evaluating and judging the performance of an organization through cognitive and affective processes that are reflected in a multidimensional perspective of reputation. While the perception of an internal audience judging another public organization takes their position on the *back region* where, because of their own work, they know that professional aspects are the most important thing to produce the idealized images that organizations want to show to the external audiences in the performance.

Thus, this study hypothesizes that *the farther the audiences are to the agency, the more they perceive and judge it in a complex-multidimensional way*. Reputations are shortcuts for audiences to perceive and judge an organization (Carpenter & Krause, 2012), and the number of dimensions that audiences perceive is related to the complexity or simplicity in their ability to distinguish and care about various facets of an organization (Boon, Salomonsen, et al., 2019).

Given the potential implications of audiences' perception explanations for reputational multidimensionality, this paper uses the empirical case of perceptions of two audiences (one internal and one external) evaluating reputations of nine CAA to explore how audiences' positions and professional points of view are critical when assessing bureaucratic reputations. Thus, this paper aims to examine the complexity or simplicity of audiences' views when evaluating public organizations' reputations.

2.3 Methodology

The research unit of analysis is the Constitutional Autonomous Agencies in Mexico (CAA). There are nine CAA (see table 1) with characteristics that distinguish them from the rest of public organizations in Mexico: they get their legal status from the Mexican Constitution and not from administrative law or rule; they are not part of the executive power; they are formally autonomous and thus make decisions and design policies according to their own criteria and priorities; and, lastly, their heads are not tied to political cycles (Pardo & Dussauge-Laguna, 2017).

This research draws on data collected using the survey proposed by Lee and Van Ryzin (2019). We sent the survey by email to public servants working for five[5] of the nine CAA listed in Table 1, and it was applied on-site to B.A. and master's degree students of Economics, Law, Political Science, and Public Administration programs in three public universities in Mexico City. The questionnaire includes thirty items to measure audiences' perception concerning the

[5] Numbers 2, 5, 6, 7, 9 of the list in Table 1.

four dimensions proposed by Carpenter (2010) plus a general dimension included by Lee and Van Ryzin (2019).

Table 2.1 Constitutional Autonomous Agencies in Mexico

No.	Name	Policy Field	Date in which became a CAA
1	Bank of Mexico	Monetary policy	1994
2	National Electoral Institute	Elections management	1996
3	National Human Rights Commission	Human Rights	1999
4	National Institute of Statistics and Geography	Statistics	2008
5	Federal Commission for Economic Competition	Competition policy	2013
6	Federal Institute of Telecommunications	Telecommunications policy	2013
7	National Institute for the Evaluation of Education	Education policy	2013
8	National Institute of Access to Public Information and Personal Data Protection	Accountability policy	2014
9	National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy	Social policy	2014

Source: Pardo & Dussauge, 2017

Examining an internal and external audience brings us closer to Carpenter's definition as it considers the perceptions of multiple audiences. We surveyed public servants who have the closest interaction with the agencies and students who know the existence of these agencies and their primary functions because of their educational background.

First, we conducted an online survey with authorization and support from high-level CAA executives to obtain a reliable set of respondents working for these agencies. This survey was carried out between March and June 2019. A total of 2,132 emails were sent out. Three of the five agencies surveyed sent an invitation using their institutional email, which stipulated: "the request is to participate in a scientific study where the answers are anonymous." In the case of the two other agencies, we downloaded an email list from the Mexican government transparency website, where Mexican public organizations are required to publish relevant information of their public servants (portaltransparencia.gob.mx). After obtaining permission from the CAA executives, we sent an invitation, including the same legend used in the other three cases. Of the total emails sent, 518 completed the survey for a response rate of 24.29% (see table 2).

The public servants surveyed have different functions and belong to different hierarchical levels. Within the sample, 41.5% have more than three years of experience working in their last job position, which means that they have enough experience with their agency's work and a general perspective of what other CAA do.

Second, in the case of the students, we carried out a paper survey on-site between May and June 2019. We followed a two-steps strategy to obtain a reliable set of students. First, between March and April 2019, we conducted five semi-structured interviews with the executives responsible for the human resources units of the five agencies surveyed. In these interviews, we ask the executives about public servants' academic profiles working for these agencies. Based on their answers, we selected academic programs in Economics, Law, Political Science, and Public Administration as the degrees that these agencies most demand. Second, considering what was indicated by the executives, we contacted professors from the bachelor's and master's degree programs of these academic careers in three public universities in Mexico City (see table 2) to request authorization to apply the survey to their students at some time assigned by them. We surveyed 212 individuals in this set. The survey was the same regarding those items related to reputation. In both samples, we assigned the surveys randomly to each respondent. Each survey refers to one of the nine CAA.

Table 2.2 Data description

Public Servants	**518**	**70.96%**	**Students**	**212**	**29.04%**
Agency			**University**		
National Electoral Institute	131	25.29%	Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas	124	58.49%
Federal Commission for Economic Competition	46	8.88%	El Colegio de México	49	23.11%
Federal Institute of Telecommunications	146	28.19%	Universidad Autónoma Metropolítana (Campus Cuajimalpa)	39	18.40%
National Institute for the Evaluation of Education	109	21.04%			
National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy	86	16.60%			
Gender			**Gender**		
Female	235	45.37%	Female	100	47.17%
Male	283	54.63%	Male	112	52.83%

Age			**Age**		
(17,30]	130	25.10%	(17,30]	204	96.23%
(30,42]	230	44.40%	(30,42]	7	3.30%
(42,54]	116	22.39%	(42,54]	1	0.47%
(54,67]	42	8.11%			
Education (completed)			**Education (in progress at the moment of the survey)**		
Less than High School	7	1.35%	Bachelor's degree	166	78.30%
High School	13	2.51%	Master's degree	46	21.70%
Bachelor's degree	299	57.72%			
Master's degree	180	34.75%			
Doctorate	19	3.67%			

Source: Own elaboration

2.4 Analysis

We ran two exploratory factor analyses using principal components factoring (PCF) to determine the reputation's dimensionality in each audience. Table 3 shows the results and validity tests. Exploratory factor analyses are used to know how many dimensions are in a set of variables (Comrey & Lee, 1992). For this, we measured thirty items on Likert scales according to the proposal of Lee and Van Ryzin (2019) (see Appendix).

First, to measure the sampling adequacy of the data sets, we conducted a Standard Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test, obtaining values of 0.95 and 0.98, which are "marvelous" values (Mulaik, 2010). Second, to verify that a data reduction technique can compress the data sets in a meaningful way (factorability), we conducted the *Bartlett test of sphericity*, obtaining a p-value 0.000 ($p > 0.05$) for both data sets. The criterion of determining the number of factors in both samples is the *eigenvalue* (≥ 1) criterion, and we analyzed them with a varimax orthogonal rotation, which simplifies interpretability because it minimizes the number of variables within each factor as much as possible (Comrey & Lee, 1992). Factor loadings >0.5 are the only values taken into account for the analysis, which is regarded as rigorous. We used Cronbach's alpha as a reliability test to analyze internal consistency, obtaining values of 0.9812 and 0.9676—values >0.7 are considered accepted (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014).

These analyses did not confirm the theoretical grouping of elements in four factors defined by Carpenter (2010). The results showed that the dimensions of reputation proposed by Carpenter—performance, moral, legal-procedural, and technical—are reflected differently in each audience—one and two factors depending on the type of audience.

The analysis show support for the hypothesis set on the theoretical framework: the audience closer to the agency reveals a unidimensional perspective, while the audience farther away from the agencies shows a multidimensional view. The factors display the attributes around which audiences reflect the dimensionality of reputation. First, for the internal audience sample (public servants), perceptions are related to two factors. The items with higher loads in the first factor are those associated with the professional issues, represented by the procedural and technical dimensions of reputation. Then, the second factor is related to all the negatively worded items, which means that these items are loaded in a separate factor reflecting unidimensionality but in two different affective levels (Boon, Salomonsen, et al., 2019; D. Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019).

Second, the external audience's perceptions (students) are related to four factors. The first factor is represented by the cognitive elements of reputation related to the technical and performative dimensions. The second factor is represented by the emotional perspective of reputation associated with the moral and legal-procedural dimensions. Finally, the third and fourth factors are related to all the negatively worded items as in the second factor of the internal audience sample.

Table 2.3 PCF Results

		Public Servants				**Students**				
Dimension	Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Uniqueness		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
General	Item1	0.8533		0.1302			0.5129	0.6345		0.1921
	Item2	0.8520		0.1305		0.5107	0.5086			0.2447
	Item3		-0.7017	0.3858				-0.5756		0.3544
	Item4	0.8078		0.2278						0.4074
	Item5		-0.7167	0.3473				-0.7417		0.3734
	Item6		-0.7717	0.2224				-0.5982		0.3007
Performative	Item7	0.8400		0.2044		0.5336				0.3314
	Item8	0.8224		0.2186		0.6430				0.3518
	Item9		-0.8033	0.1818				-0.5323		0.2692
	Item10	0.7867		0.3223		0.7238				0.2531

	Item11		-0.5718	0.6186					-0.7624	0.3215
	Item12	0.8063		0.2271		0.7822				0.3266
Moral	Item13	0.8670		0.1066			0.5383			0.2936
	Item14	0.8263		0.2190			0.5998			0.3423
	Item15		-0.7838	0.2076					-0.5270	0.3373
	Item16	0.8474		0.1761			0.6452			0.3942
	Item17		-0.7728	0.2825					-0.5363	0.2989
	Item18	0.8302		0.1813			0.5745	0.5085		0.2749
Procedural	Item19	0.8568		0.1700			0.6674			0.3437
	Item20	0.8172		0.2179			0.6968			0.2918
	Item21	0.8095		0.2682			0.6633			0.4341
	Item22	0.7673		0.3630			0.6216			0.4188
	Item23	0.7718		0.3332			0.5831			0.4765
	Item24	0.7510		0.3416						0.5225
Technical	Item25	0.7569		0.3023		0.7335				0.3004
	Item26	0.7785		0.2896		0.6428				0.2622
	Item27	0.7900		0.2732		0.6253				0.4062
	Item28	0.7792		0.3303						0.4530
	Item29	0.8125		0.2390		0.7851				0.2892
	Item30		-0.6848	0.4895				-0.5132		0.4658
Variance %		51.62%	21.69%			21.39%	20.41%	15.24%	8.52%	
KMO		0.9819				0.9593				
Bartlett test of sphericity (chi-squared)		18589.8				4808.68				
Cronbach's alpha		0.9812				0.9676				
Extraction with principal components factoring with varimax rotation. The analysis only shows factor loadings <0.5										

Source: Own elaboration

2.5 Discussion and Conclusions

By applying an exploratory factor analysis, this paper provided evidence about how different audiences reflect reputation's dimensionality in different ways due to their characteristics: their position vis-à-vis the organizations and how they make sense of themselves in front of the organizations through their occupations.

The theoretical terrain that the concept of bureaucratic reputation occupies is under construction (Boon, Salomonsen, et al., 2019; Carpenter & Krause, 2012; Maor, 2016; Wæraas & Maor, 2015a). This paper argues that audiences' point of view and professional sensemaking are two decisive factors when audiences evaluate reputation's dimensionality. In order for organizations to better communicate with their audiences, it is essential to understand that reputation must also be analyzed *within* each audience since audiences may perceive the phenomenon differently.

Reputation scholars have theorized about the importance of recognizing reputation as a multidimensional concept (Boon, Salomonsen, et al., 2019; Capelos et al., 2016; Carpenter & Krause, 2012; Maor, 2015b). Nonetheless, due to the context, dynamics, processes, and decisions of any organization, it is challenging to understand how different audiences understand this multidimensionality. Carpenter (2010) states that audiences do not necessarily observe the same when perceiving and judging an agency. For organizations, this means a difficulty in reputation management because audiences' behaviors are functions of their beliefs regarding the efficiency of the agencies (Carpenter & Krause, 2012), and each audience may perceive differently the same outcomes. Therefore, meeting one audience's demands would imply not meeting another's expectations (Busuioc & Lodge, 2017). Since multidimensionality is not only conveyed *across* audiences, agencies need to choose which audiences are most relevant for which specific goals (Gilad, 2009; Gilad et al., 2015). In this sense, organizations must efficiently select which dimensions of reputation are relevant for which type of audience.

An important contribution of this paper is that it shows that reputation is not, in all cases, a multidimensional concept as the literature of the subject has assumed. The simplicity of internal audiences' perception of reputation is determined by how they make sense as public administration professionals—their work is specialized and inaccessible to those who lack the required training and experience that they rely on it to cover the cognitive and emotional aspects of reputation. In other words, what public officers do *backstage* maintains secrecy in its affairs and orders its practice through formal institutions (Freidson, 2010). Thus, public officers interpret their environment in and through interactions with others like themselves, building explanations that allow them to comprehend the world and act collectively (Maitlis, 2005).

In the case of non-majoritarian institutions (like the CAA), internal audiences care about professional considerations such as the technical expertise and capacity to deliver effective solutions because these are the *raison d'être* of their agencies, putting less weight to the political factors as necessary constraints (Christensen & Gornitzka, 2019; Rimkutė, 2020). These audiences reflect reputation by seeing a world on which they impose what they believe through their language and symbols (Weick, 1995). They are likely to have a unidimensional perception of reputation because they make sense of themselves and other public officers just as professional public experts, assuming that the technical nature of the agencies is what sets them apart and equips them to deliver their outcomes (Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2020b). This shared understanding of their identities, roles, and expertise entails that they form a simple (unidimensional) perception of reputation rooted in technical capacities and skills, taking the affective aspects of reputation for granted.

From the other point of view, external audiences may not use a unidimensional approach to assessing reputation. They do not only rely on professional expertise as internal audiences do but for a certain degree of professional morality as well (Abbott, 1983; Harrits, 2016). They expect that public agencies and the bureaucrats working in the name of public administration can provide a solution to many complex problems guided by ethical and professional values. Both aspects of reputation, the cognitive (manner) and the emotional (appearance), are essential for them, and because of this, they reflect a multidimensional perspective of agencies' reputation.

The findings of this study showed that, on the one hand, internal audiences (professionals of public affairs) perceive dimensionality more simply (unidimensional) because they make sense of themselves as experts working in the *back region* solving those problems that society (external audiences) need them to solve. They understand that they have the expertise and professional abilities to fulfill their organizations' mission, which is the most relevant aspect. Internal audiences assess other organizations as professional peers, and they make sense of them according to the technical aspects of their performance, leaving aside the emotional facets of reputation.

On the other hand, external audiences, such as students, reflect reputation on two dimensions because their position in the front region allows them to assess the organization's performance, paying particular attention to the professional and moral facets of reputation. From this point of view, they need the technical solutions and the results required to fulfill their demands (manner), and, at the same time, they expected that public servants working for these organizations behave in strict adherence to the moral values required by law (appearance). The findings of this study showed that, for these audiences, reputation relies on the cognitive process, which is represented by the performative and technical reputations, and affective (normative) process, which is embodied by the moral and legal-procedural dimensions, in which external audiences evaluate the symbols and signals that organizations communicate.

This paper also contributes to a better understanding of organizational audiences, which are at the center of scholarly debates about reputation. The findings of this study invite researchers to take into account perceptions *within* (and not only *across*) audiences to explain how specific dimensions of reputation may be more relevant for each audience. While a few studies have been conducted (D. Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019; Overman et al., 2020), this paper complements previous research focused on reputation as a multidimensional concept in the eyes of every audience.

There are limitations to this study. First, this paper focuses on public offices and universities situated in Mexico City. It would be valuable to widen the research toward a nationwide data collection of the audiences under study. Second, the paper captured answers only from two audiences. While this is a better approximation to Carpenter's definition, capturing various internal and external audiences' perceptions could give more robust validation to the analysis. Third, the two audiences analyzed for this study have varying degrees of specific knowledge about CAA. However, these organizations are not the most well-known public organizations in Mexico and results may drastically vary if we evaluate audiences that have less knowledge about the organizations assessed. Then, one could argue that less experienced audiences cannot correctly judge a complex issue such as reputation (Overman et al., 2020).

This paper proposes two avenues for future research on reputation. First, despite the complexity in measuring intangibles assets (Canel & Luoma-aho, 2019), researchers have tried to construct standardized instruments to measure bureaucratic reputation (see Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019; Overman et al., 2020). The need for this type of tool has been pointed out in the literature since it began to emerge in the sphere of the study of public administration and cognate disciplines. We suggest replicating these measures to understand the extent to which the bureaucratic reputation framework can be generalized across different contexts and administrative settings.

Second, we suggest further research on audiences. As the study noted, audiences are at the core of reputational debates, and the literature recognizes the differentiation between internal and external audiences (Carpenter and Krause 2012; Capelos et al. 2016). However, there is a research avenue to deepen the analysis on characteristics and behaviors of audiences because each one has different ways of interpreting information and react to each reputational facet. These studies could help organizations to convey information focusing on the audience they deem most relevant making more efficient the relationship organization-audience.

This article responded to the call for more research from different countries and cultures (Luoma-aho, 2007). By doing this, it explores the perceptions of multiple audiences in the context of a country like Mexico, in which the public sector experiences hardship from a low reputation. Despite the poor performance of public administration in Mexico, the findings confirm that non-majoritarian agencies such as the CAA rely entirely on the professional and technical aspects as suggested in regulatory agencies' reputational studies (Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2020a; Rimkutė, 2018, 2020).

Because the CAA have the autonomy granted by the Constitution, these regulatory agencies seek to legitimize themselves in front of the citizens by signaling the different reputational facets. In this case, CAA are highly technical agencies that make decisions based on scientific evidence. In this way, the agencies try to shape the audiences' beliefs by showing themselves as agencies that can conduct their mandates by having the professional knowledge to do so. This setting also enables them to attract and retain highly technical personnel to perform the specialized functions required to fulfill their missions.

In conclusion, this paper has put forward a test to assess reputation's dimensionality. With this, public managers can prioritize and communicate specific messages to the audiences to link to outcomes of interest of their organizations, such as moral values, technical competence, procedural efficacy, and performance efficiency. Since reputation has gained importance as a managerial tool to public organizations, the understanding of how audiences reflect reputation's dimensionality can help them to improve how they manage their performances in front of different types of audiences.

Appendix

Description of the survey items

Dimension	Items	
General	Item1	I have a favorable opinion about this agency
	Item2	I believe this agency is doing a good job
	Item3	I do not have much respect for this agency
	Item4	Overall, this agency has a good reputation
	Item5	This agency is a waste of taxpayer's money
	Item6	I have a negative impression about this agency
Performative	Item7	This agency is a well-run organization This
	Item8	This agency is effective at its job This
	Item9	This agency does a poor job
	Item10	This agency is a high performing agency
	Item11	This agency often fails to get things done
	Item12	This agency has the capacity to get things done
Moral	Item13	This agency can be trusted to do what is right
	Item14	This agency maintains high ethical standards
	Item15	This agency seems to be corrupt
	Item16	This agency protects democratic values
	Item17	This agency is sometimes dishonest
	Item18	I believe what this agency says
Procedural	Item19	This agency respects due process
	Item20	This agency is highly transparent
	Item21	Although I sometimes disagree with its decisions, this agency always follows the rules
	Item22	This agency treats people fairly
	Item23	This agency protects the rights of citizens
	Item24	This agency is politically neutral
Technical	Item25	This agency has the technical expertise to do its job well
	Item26	This agency is technically competent
	Item27	This agency has highly skilled employees
	Item28	This agency bases its decisions on evidence
	Item29	This agency has the skill to deal with complex situations
	Item30	This agency lacks technical knowledge

Source: Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019

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3. The effect of organizational reputation on public employees' retention. How to win the "war for talent" in Constitutional Autonomous Agencies in Mexico

Abstract

Having the best employees is a critical factor for public organizations to present themselves as competent and efficient to their multiple audiences. However, despite the importance of staff mobility dynamics for public organizations, retention is an issue that has not been thoroughly studied in human resource management research. In the case of Mexico, retaining the most valuable staff is becoming more difficult because its public administration is characterized by corruption and patronage. The article draws on social exchange theory to examine the relationship between reputation and public employee retention. Using a survey of employees of five Constitutional Autonomous Agencies in Mexico, the article shows that having a positive reputation is a crucial factor for public employees when deciding whether to stay at or leave their jobs. The findings imply that building and maintaining a positive reputation must be relevant for public managers because its implications for human resource management.

3.1 Introduction

A crucial task for human resource management (HRM) in public organizations is to retain qualified staff. In a setting where public jobs are scarce resources and the demand for high expertise employees increases (Chordiya, Sabharwal, & Goodman, 2017; Llorens, Klingner, & Nalbandian, 2018), recruiting, training, and developing staff is costly, and turnover becomes expensive and disruptive (Cardy & Lengnick-Hall, 2011; Grotto, Hyland, Caputo, & Semedo, 2017). Furthermore, turnover is significant because it lowers public services' quality and stability (Mor Barak, Nissly, & Levin, 2001). In such a setup, the growing competition for the best employees—not only between public and private organizations but also among public organizations—is becoming more intense every day, which causes organizations to maintain a "war for talent" (Meaney & Keller, 2017).

According to the OECD (Äijälä, 2001), the public sector is not well-paid compared to the private sector; the public sector's image is not positive and therefore is not attractive to future candidates; merit systems are unreliable, and human resource management practices are insufficient for staff development. These factors lead public administrations to have problems retaining their best employees. So, how do public organizations retain their best employees in the middle of this “war”?

Organizational reputation is a vital asset that influences retention in public organizations. However, the implications of organizational reputation have not been thoroughly discussed in HRM research in the public sector. Particularly, there is a gap in the literature concerning the empirical relationship between reputation and the retention of public employees; studies that have addressed retention issues in the public sector drawing on reputation theory are conceptual proposals that have not tested this relationship empirically (e.g., Bankins & Waterhouse, 2019). Thus, this article aims to fill this gap in the literature by examining the effect of organizational reputation on the retention of public employees. It argues that organizational reputation influence on public employees’ decisions is critical when they evaluate whether to stay at or leave their jobs.

This article contributes to the literature and practice of HRM and organizational reputation in several ways. First, this study emphasizes the influence of organizational reputation as an intangible asset that has several impacts on HRM practices. Drawing on organizational reputation scholarship, this paper considers organizational reputation a set of perceptions of internal and external audiences regarding the public organization’s past actions and current performance (Carpenter, 2010). Particularly, the study shows that the employees’ perception regarding their organizations affects their intention to stay or not in them. Employees who perceive a better reputation from their organizations are more prone to stay at their jobs.

Second, despite their importance for building and maintaining reputation, internal audiences—such as employees—have not been further examined in this body of literature (Wæraas & Dahle, 2020). This situation has hindered the understanding of the influence of the actors’ perceptions that feed reputations internally to project the image of a reliable, efficient, and competent organization externally. This paper analyzes employees’ perceptions based on their experiences within their agencies and other agencies of the same administrative context, showing how important this type of audience is for reputation management.

Third, retention is an issue that has not been further studied in HRM studies (Cardy & Lengnick-Hall, 2011). When analyzing employees’ mobility decisions, studies are focused more on turnover than on retention (Huang, Lin, & Chuang, 2006). In this regard, the focus of this article on organizational reputation can shed light on how to retain qualified personnel, which represents an innovative approach with implications for HRM.

Finally, organizational reputation scholarship lacks studies in contexts different from those commonly studied, such as the United States, the UK, the Nordic region, or Israel, where democracy and public administration are more robust than other countries and regions (Rimkutė, 2020). This article discusses the organizational reputation framework considering the Mexican case, from which the analysis can be fostered in contexts other than those commonly studied.

This article contributes to the literature by analyzing Mexico's Constitutional Autonomous Agencies (CAA). Mexico is considered a country in a transition to democracy, and its public administration is characterized by corruption and patronage (see Dussauge-Laguna & Casas, 2021; Meza & Pérez-Chiqués, 2020). In such a low reputation setting, Mexican public organizations allegedly suffer from attracting and retaining valued employees. The study shows that organizational reputation is a powerful and innovative tool for improving HRM practices in different contexts.

These crucial issues are examined by analyzing the effect of organizational reputation on public employees' retention in Mexico's CAA. To that end, the research question of this article is the following: *to what extent does organizational reputation affect public employees' retention?* To answer this question, the empirical analysis of the study rests on the quantitative survey analysis of employees from five CAA. A logistic regression with a dichotomous dependent variable is used for testing the influence of reputation on employees' decision to stay at their organizations. The results show that Mexican CAA employees are influenced by a positive reputation when evaluating whether to stay or move to another job position in the future.

3.2 Analytical Framework

3.2.1 Organizational reputation and retention

Organizational reputation is an audience-based theory. It is characterized by the perceptions held by multiple external and internal audiences that interact directly or indirectly with organizations (Carpenter & Krause, 2012). An audience is any individual or collective that observes an organization and can judge it (Carpenter, 2010). Audiences have different characteristics, and their perceptions have different impacts on organizations: "what one audience sees is not necessarily what another audience sees" (Carpenter, 2010, p. 34). Thereby, organizational reputation estimates the sum of perceptions of a different set of audiences regarding organizations' unique characteristics over time (Maor, 2016).

There are two types of audiences according to the literature. Internal audiences evaluate the organization's internal character through their professional responsibilities and mandates (Boon, Verhoest, et al., 2019)—employees, legislators, political and judicial authorities, and other state-level agencies as regulators or audit agencies. On the other hand, external audiences assess how organizations present themselves in everyday life (Goffman, 1959)—citizens, civic associations, academic and professional experts, or media. While organizational reputation literature has focused on studying external audiences such as citizens or media because of their importance as "fire alarms" for organizations (McCubbins & Schwartz, 1984), few studies have examined organizational reputation from internal audiences' point of view (Blom-hansen & Finke, 2019).

By focusing on audiences, public organizations can convey targeted information addressing specific outcomes (Maor, 2015a). But, how can organizations convey different messages, ensuring that different audiences perceive their performance, capacities, and behaviors? Organizational reputation is a multifaceted approach. Thus, organizations do not just have one overall reputation but a set of different reputations. In that sense, organizations signal their different facets (or dimensions) to approach different audiences according to their strategic goals. According to Carpenter (2010), organizations can signal four dimensions. First, a *performative reputation* that consists of showing themselves capable of fulfilling their missions competently and efficiently (Carpenter & Krause, 2012). Second, a *technical reputation* related to the technical resources and high-caliber staff that allows them to achieve results with a scientific standard (Maor, 2007). Third, a *moral reputation* that shows organizations concerned about their ethical behavior (Rimkutė, 2020). Finally, organizations can signal a *legal-procedural reputation*, which consists of doing things following the right procedural rules and norms (Busuioc & Lodge, 2016).

Organizations have multiple ways to approach their multiple audiences according to their interests, and they use reputation management to ensure that they are targeting the right audiences with the right signals. Reputation management has become strategic for public organizations because of the relevance of reputational threats and opportunities (Wæraas & Byrkjeflot, 2012; Wæraas & Maor, 2015b). Reputation management helps build and maintain a favorable reputation that works as a shield against organizational damages (Capelos et al., 2016). On the contrary, the lack of reputation management could lead agencies to lose legitimacy or even result in their termination (Etienne, 2015; Luoma-aho, 2007). Hence, public managers must pay attention to their multiple audiences by attending meetings, cultivating experts' advice, improving strategic communication (Carpenter, 2004b; Maor et al., 2013), or producing adequate environmental factors to attract and retain valuable employees.

Organizational reputation is an innovative approach to understanding mobility dynamics in public organizations. There are two approaches to analyze employees' mobility: turnover and retention. However, these concepts are not the same (Holtom, Mitchell, Lee, & Eberly, 2008). While turnover studies try to answer *why employees leave their jobs*, research on retention answers *why employees stay at their jobs*. Although there is a growing interest in the study of turnover, research on retention in public administration has received limited attention (Corin, Berntson, & Härenstam, 2016). Reputation, on its part, depends not only on the perceptions of external audiences but also on how employees perceive themselves (Kolltveit, Karlsen, & Askim, 2019). Therefore, studying employee mobility dynamics under the lens of reputation provides insights into the importance of employee perceptions on HRM practices.

Retention refers to HRM practices aimed at maintaining the most talented employees (Coldwell, Meurs, & Marsh, 2008). Moreover, retention is both the antecedent for and outcome of a positive reputation. On the one hand, public organizations that retain their best employees can efficiently and effectively fulfill their mandates, showing themselves as competent to their multiple audiences. On the other hand, presenting the organization in everyday life as competent helps build and maintain a positive reputation that allows agencies to retain their best employees because of its several benefits, particularly the status resulting from being part of a well-reputed agency.

This article's introduction points out the dearth of empirical studies about the relationship between retention and organizational reputation in the public sector. However, because of its importance for firms, research on corporate reputation has analyzed this link, showing how organizational reputation could help in retaining staff in public organizations. Moghaddam *et al.* (2020) argue that, through internal reputation management, building a positive reputation helps in retaining CEOs and improves firm market performance. Chun (2005) states that stakeholders' perception of corporate reputation influences employee retention because having the best employees creates customer satisfaction and loyalty. Lastly, Harvey and Groutsis (2015) show that a positive country reputation plays a central role in the global talent competition.

In the public sector literature, reputation studies have gained growing academic attention from scholars of different disciplines since the early 2000s. Organizational reputation theory explains how the management of audiences' perceptions has several benefits for public organizations, including their very survival (Luoma-aho, 2007). Externally, building and maintaining a positive reputation allows organizations to gain autonomy and legitimacy (Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2020a; Rimkutė, 2020; P. S. Roberts, 2006); strategically manage communication (Maor et al., 2013; Moschella & Pinto, 2019), or facilitate cooperation between organizations (Busuioc, 2016; Capelos et al., 2016).

Internally, research on organizational reputation points out that a positive reputation motivates public servants (Valasek, 2018), helps in attracting a racially and gender diverse pool of applicants (D. Lee & Zhang, 2020), and develops employees' organizational attachment (Gilad et al., 2018). These studies underline the relevance of addressing reputation as an essential internal managerial tool. However, despite the increased attention that organizational reputation studies have caught in the last decades, the extant literature still lacks studies that empirically examine reputation's effect on employees' retention in the public sector.

3.2.2 Social exchange theory and HRM

This paper draws on the social exchange theory to gain insight into the relationship between organizational reputation and retention. This theory is considered one of the most influential theories for understanding workplace behavior and employee-employer interactions (Caillier, 2013; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) because it considers reciprocity exchanges in any social interaction—whether individuals or institutions (Homans, 1961). Unlike economic transactions, a social exchange implies benefits that build mutual support between the parties; its benefits do not have a quantitative price; there is a willingness to develop and maintain long-term relationships, and tends to engender feelings of personal obligations, gratitude, and trust (Blau, 1964). Therefore, reputation is a mechanism that sustains generalized reciprocity exchange in any organization. If the organization has a positive reputation, employees obtain benefits and are more likely to repeat that interaction in the long-term, staying at their job. This type of exchange is also considered by the Public Service Bargains framework (Hood & Lodge, 2006), in which intrinsic rewards, competency, and loyalty and responsibility, embody trustee-agent relations.

Reputation is a solution to collective action problems (Baker, Bulkley, & Bulkley, 2014). The reciprocal transactions within collectives lead to the development of shared goals and organizations to achieve them (Blau, 1964). In that sense, employees exchange their skills, knowledge, experiences, and abilities with their organizations and expect, reciprocally, to receive not only extrinsic but intrinsic benefits. Organizations provide those incentives—like a positive reputation—through HRM practices such as performance reviews, policies, and sanctions (Wæraas & Dahle, 2020), shaping employee perceptions of exchange relationships (Gong, Chang, & Cheung, 2010). From the organizations' point of view, if employees perceive a commitment to meeting their needs, they feel compelled to reciprocate (Wæraas & Dahle, 2020). For instance, Molm (1994) highlights that interdependence relations in social exchange reduce risks and facilitate cooperation, while Gould-Williams and Davies (2005) point out the relevance of social exchange as a predictor of employee commitment, employee motivation, and retention.

Norms of exchange, resources exchanged, and exchange relationships are the fundamental characteristics of the social exchange framework (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). First, reciprocity is the fundamental norm of exchange (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961). Thus, bargaining and negotiation are excluded (Molm, 2003). Organizational reputation implies a reciprocal exchange as a norm for employees and organizations; it is an outcome based on a combination of efforts between both parties. For instance, strategic planning and employees' commitment are important factors explaining organizational performance (Chordiya et al., 2017; Kim, 2005). In turn, organizational performance is a good predictor for a positive reputation (Carpenter & Krause, 2012). These shared efforts are part of the self-reinforcing social exchange cycle (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The cycle begins with organizations attracting the best candidates. Then, the cycle starts all over again when they try to retain the best employees.

Second, resources are the cognitive mechanism of exchange, and they could be any concrete or symbolic object (E. B. Foa & Foa, 1980; U. G. Foa & Foa, 1974). According to Homans (1961), social interaction represents an intangible exchange, in which there must be a mutual benefit for the parties. This benefit determines the future of the relationship; to avoid the termination of a relationship, this must have an outcome that could be intrinsic (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). In that sense, reputation is the outcome of mutual investment in which an open-ended and long-term relationship unfolds between employees and organizations (Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Tripoli, 1997).

In the literature on social exchange, *status* is considered an exchange resource (E. B. Foa & Foa, 1980; U. G. Foa & Foa, 1974). Furthermore, status is a resource derived from a positive organizational reputation (Carpenter, 2010). It refers to the "socially constructed, intersubjectively agreed-upon and accepted ordering or ranking of individuals, groups, organizations, or activities in a social system" (Washington & Zajac, 2005, p. 284). Thus, status is a resource to avoid the ending of the work relationship because it benefits both parties. Organizations can reach a better position in rankings, such as "the best place to work," which, in turn, could help in attracting future employees. Meanwhile, employees may use that status to obtain a better job in the future.

Finally, a social exchange relationship refers to the interpersonal connection that happens in the workplace when organizations pay attention to employees' needs (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). These relationships include socioemotional benefits and consider the needs of the other party (Clark & Mills, 1993). A positive reputation supposes that employees' contributions may increase the likelihood of their continuing employment (Tsui et al., 1997). Thus, if employees perceive their organizations are committed to meeting their needs, they will feel compelled to reciprocate. On the other hand, they may change jobs if they perceive a negative reputation.

3.3 Research design

Following the *political science approach* of reputational studies (Wæraas & Maor, 2015b), this article focuses on studying agencies with some degree of autonomy from the executive (e.g., formally independent or non-majoritarian agencies). CAA are the Mexican version of non-majoritarian institutions (Pardo & Dussauge-Laguna, 2017). Given the proximity and importance of non-majoritarian agencies on citizens and the merit-based (non-political) process for appointing boards, reputation is their primary source of legitimacy (Overman et al., 2020; Rimkutė, 2018). Reputation scholarship has mainly focused on this type of agency because a positive reputation legitimizes the regulatory power beyond and above agencies' legal fiat (Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2020a). Although Mexico's CAA vary in their domains, age, and design, there are part of an administrative context in which they are not tied to the executive power's decisions and government cycles (Pardo & Dussauge-Laguna, 2017). Therefore, CAA can decide their HRM practices autonomously—all of them count with well-established civil services, for instance. Table 3.1 lists the nine CAA considered in this study.

Table 3.1 Constitutional Autonomous Agencies in Mexico

No.	Name	Policy Field
1	Bank of Mexico	Monetary policy
2	National Electoral Institute*	Elections management
3	National Human Rights Commission	Human Rights
4	National Institute of Statistics and Geography	Statistics
5	Federal Commission for Economic Competition*	Competition policy
6	Federal Institute of Telecommunications*	Telecommunications policy
7	National Institute for the Evaluation of Education*	Education policy
8	National Institute of Access to Public Information and Personal Data Protection	Accountability policy
9	National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy*	Social policy

Note: After conducting this research, the current administration terminated the National Institute for the Evaluation of Education.

Source: Pardo & Dussauge, 2017

3.3.1 Hypothesis

This analysis seeks to prove that employees may choose to stay in organizations with positive reputations to take advantage of the intrinsic benefits it generates. Moreover, organizations with a positive reputation may increase the possibilities to retain the most valued employees. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational reputation and retention in the Mexican CAA.

3.3.2 Data

Primary data for this study comes from an original database, which contains information about employees' perceptions regarding the reputation of the CAA and variables related to their working conditions. We collected data from five CAA employees (marked with * in table 3.1) between March and June 2019 through an online survey. The survey was randomly assigned to each participant in order to ask their perceptions regarding one of the CAA. In three agencies, an invitation to participate in the survey was sent through their institutional email. This request stipulated that "the request was to participate in a scientific study where the answers are anonymous." For the other two agencies, an institutional email list was downloaded through the Mexican government transparency website (portaltransparencia.gob.mx). After obtaining permission from CAA executives, we sent an invitation, including the same phrase used in the other three cases. From a total of 2,132 emails sent, this study obtained 518 responses—a rate of 24.29%. After excluding missing values, the final sample was 497 (see appendix 1 for sample description).

3.3.3 Measures

Measurements of reputation are critical for organizations because they contribute to "close the gap" between actual and projected reputation (Wæraas & Sataøen, 2014). This study uses the tool developed by Lee and Van Ryzin (2019) to measure organizational reputation. Because Mexico has a low-reputed public administration, testing reputation with a standardized measure would help understand how important the cultural context is for reputation. This approach is relevant for this article because the authors designed it precisely to evaluate individual-level variation perceptions on organizational reputation in any administrative context (D. Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019). As shown in appendix 2, the survey contains 30 questions regarding five domains of reputation: performance, morality, procedural fairness, technical competence, and general reputation. This tool has only been used to evaluate the perceptions of American citizens (see D. Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019, 2020). Thus, this article tests it in a different audience, such as Mexican employees, to know if the tool could work as a suitable measurement to other contexts.

Dependent Variable. To capture employees' intention to leave or stay at their job, the questionnaire asked *Which of these agencies would you prefer to work for in the future?* The alternatives were the nine CAA. Depending on the answer, it was codified with a dummy variable to differentiate employees who intend to stay at their organization from employees who intend to move to another CAA in the future. The variable is coded 1 for employees who would stay and 0 for those who would rather leave their current organizations (see table 3.4 for frequencies). Table 3.2 shows the percentage of the total of employees surveyed who would decide to stay in their organizations.

Table 3.2 Percentage of employees who would stay in their organizations.

Name	% Retention
National Electoral Institute	28.8%
Federal Institute of Telecommunications	24.6%
National Institute for the Evaluation of Education	20.4%
National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy	15.8%
Federal Commission for Economic Competition	10.4%
Total	**100%**

Source: Own elaboration

Independent Variable. Organizational reputation was captured using Lee and Van Ryzin's (2019) measurement tool. This tool considers thirty items on Likert scales to assess the audiences' perceptions in the individual level regarding Carpenter's (2010) multidimensional framework (performative, technical, procedural, and moral). It also includes a new dimension added by the authors corresponding to a general facet. We conducted an exploratory factor analysis using principal components factoring (PCF) to calculate individual measures of reputation. To measure the sampling adequacy of the sample, we performed a Standard Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test, obtaining a value of 0.982, which is considered a "marvelous" value (Mulaik, 2010). Second, to verify test factorability, we conducted a Bartlett test of sphericity, obtaining a p-value of 0.000 ($p > 0.05$). The criterion of determining the number of factors is the eigenvalue (≥ 1) criterion, and we used a varimax orthogonal rotation, which simplifies interpretability because it minimizes the number of variables within each factor as much as possible (Comrey & Lee, 1992). Finally, we used Cronbach's alpha (0.9814) as a reliability test to analyze internal consistency—values over 0.7 are considered accepted (Hair et al., 2014). Appendix 2 reports the results of the PCF analysis.

Control Variables. This study considered control variables that might affect employees' decisions to stay at their jobs, including extrinsic rewards such as salary and benefits. We chose these variables to be consistent with prior retention studies (e.g., Alhmoud & Rjoub, 2020; Hausknecht, Rodda, & Howard, 2009). Regarding salary and benefits, each variable was captured as a single survey item and measured on a Likert scale. The survey asked employees about their perception of their extrinsic rewards compared to the labor market. These variables take values 1 (for employees who strongly agree that their salaries and benefits are over the job market's average) and 5 (for those who strongly disagree with that statement). The analysis expected that these variables will not be positively related to retention because organizational success and employee satisfaction are related to intrinsic rewards (Rigby & Ryan, 2018).

Furthermore, the study account for job location with a scale variable in which the nearest home-office relation is coded with 1 and the farthest with 4. The expected result with this variable is that employees who live closer to home are more likely to stay at their current job than those who live further away because job location is essential in deciding to change jobs or residence to reduce travel costs (van Ommeren, 1998). Finally, the study incorporates age as a demographic variable measured in years. Previous research on human resources has noted the impact of age on work-related variables (Vui-Yee & Paggy, 2020).

Table 3.3 reports the descriptive statistics of the research variables, and table 3.4 shows the frequency for each categorical variable.

Table 3.3 Descriptive statistics

Type	Variable	Type	Average	Standard Deviation	Min. value	Max. value
DV	Retention	Categorical	0.523	0.50	0	1
IV	Reputation	Continuous	-0.000[a]	1.00	-4.65	3.56
CV	Salary	Categorical	3.09	1.16	1	5
CV	Benefits	Categorical	3.18	1.19	1	5
CV	Job Location	Categorical	2.27	1.04	1	4
CV	Age	Continuous	38.4	9.73	20	66

[a]The average for reputation is -0.0000000007730083

Source: Own elaboration

Table 3.4 Frequency for categorical variables

Variable	Categories	Codes	Frequency	Percent
Retention	No retention	0	230	47.7
	Retention	1	267	52.3
		Total	**497**	**100**
Salary	Strongly agree	1	57	11.5
	Agree	2	79	15.9
	Undecided	3	185	37.2
	Disagree	4	113	22.7
	Strongly disagree	5	63	12.7
		Total	**497**	**100**
Benefits	Strongly agree	1	50	10.1
	Agree	2	89	17.9
	Undecided	3	152	30.6
	Disagree	4	132	26.6
	Strongly disagree	5	74	14.8
		Total	**497**	**100**
Job Location	10 to 30 minutes distance	1	138	27.8
	30 minutes to 1 hour distance	2	167	33.6
	1 hour to 1 hour and a half distance	3	113	22.7
	more than an hour and a half distance	4	79	15.9
		Total	**497**	**100**

Source: Own elaboration

3.4 Results

The hypothesis of the study suggests that an agency with a higher organizational reputation is expected to have a higher probability of employee retention among Mexican CAA. Because the outcome variable is a categorical one, we used a binary logistic regression to test whether organizational reputation impacts the odds of employee retention. The model analyzes how the independent variable impacts the odds of being retained instead of not retained; therefore, it takes ‘‘no retention’’ as the reference category.

The model for calculating employee retention probabilities is reported in table 3.5. The table presents the β coefficients, standardized errors (SE), and the odds ratios. The coefficients indicate a corresponding variable’s effect on the odds of retention relative to the base category ‘‘no retention.’’ A coefficient above zero implies that the corresponding variable increases the probability of success to the category in question relative to the base category. In contrast, a coefficient below zero implies that the variable decreases the probability of success to the category in question concerning “no retention.” The model is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 41.10$, $p = 0.000092$, $p < .01$; Nagelkerke’s $R^2 = 0.1059$). We tested for multicollinearity using variance inflation factors (VIF). None of the VIF is above 10—the highest is 1.453—indicating multicollinearity is not a concern (Field, Miles, & Field, 2012).

Regarding the independent variable, the model shows a significant relationship between organizational reputation and retention. Having a better reputation is a significant predictor of whether the employee stays at the job. We could say that employees who perceive a better reputation of their organizations are significantly more likely to stay at their job than those who have a worse perception of it. As it is possible to observe in table 3.5, for each one-unit change in reputation, the odds of retention (compared to no retention) increase by a factor of 1.326. Therefore, we find support for *H1*. These findings provide empirical support to the literature’s alleged relevance of the influence of organizational reputation on retention (Bankins & Waterhouse, 2019; Carpenter, 2001; S. Y. Lee & Whitford, 2013; Luoma-aho, 2007).

Among the control variables, the results show that job location and age are significantly related to retention. In the case of job location, the indicator variables have a slightly different interpretation. For example, employees who live between 30 minutes and one hour from the office (job_location2 in the model), compared to employees who live between 10 and 30 minutes from the office (job_location1; reference category), decreases the odds of retention by a factor of 0.489. This means that employees who leave farther reduce the probabilities of retention. On the other hand, age is related positively to retention. Older employees are more likely to stay in the organization, while younger employees reduce the likelihood of retention; for each one-unit change in age, the odds of retention (compared to no retention) increase by a factor of 1.037. Furthermore, it is important to underline that control variables related to extrinsic rewards used in this model—salary and benefits—did not affect employees’ retention. We perform a Wald test for each group of categorical variables to assess whether each group’s overall effect is significant in the model. Confirming the results of the model, the outcomes of this test show that only job location group is significant ($\chi^2 = 12.8$, .0051, $p < .01$) while salary and benefits groups are not significant ($\chi^2 = 3.3$, $p = 0.52$, $p > .01$, and $\chi^2 = 4.9$, $p = 0.3$, $p > .01$, respectively). Even when the category related to employees who agreed with their benefits (Benefits2) has a significant coefficient, the Wald test showed no overall significance related to the benefits variable. Finally, figure 3.1 shows the predictor effects for the five variables in the model, including lower and upper-end points of 95% confidence intervals for the fitted values. The vertical axis labels are on probability scale.

Table 3.5 Binomial logistic regression with odd ratios

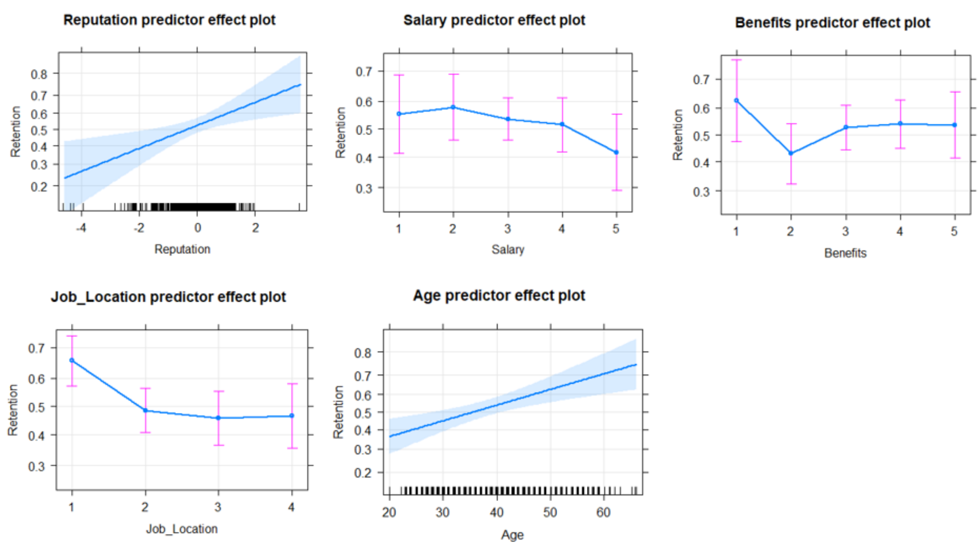
	β	SE	Odds ratios
(Intercept)	-0.193	0.528	0.821
Reputation**	0.282	0.098	1.326
Salary2	0.101	0.376	1.106
Salary3	-0.075	0.329	0.928
Salary4	-0.157	0.358	0.855
Salary5	-0.557	0.414	0.573
Benefits2*	-0.807	0.385	0.446
Benefits3	-0.406	0.357	0.666
Benefits4	-0.356	0.372	0.700
Benefits5	-0.371	0.415	0.690
Job Location2**	-0.715	0.245	0.489
Job Location3**	-0.828	0.272	0.437
Job Location4**	-0.793	0.302	0.452
Age***	0.036	0.010	1.037

Signif. codes: 0 ‘***’ 0.001 ‘**’ 0.01‘*’

Null deviance: 687.92 on 496 degrees of freedom
Residual deviance: 646.82 on 483 degrees of freedom
Log-likelihood: -323.41 (df=14)

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 3.1 Predictor effects of the variables of interest



Source: Own elaboration

3.5 Discussion

Extant reputation literature has correctly suggested that a positive reputation can be helpful for retaining the most valuable employees (Bankins & Waterhouse, 2019; Carpenter, 2001; S. Y. Lee & Whitford, 2013; Luoma-aho, 2007). This article shows that organizational reputation is a critical factor influencing employees' decisions whether or not to stay working with their organizations. The findings also provide insights into the relevance of intrinsic rewards in HRM by confirming that people who work in the public sector consider this decision based on stimulus different from monetary rewards (e.g., Moynihan & Pandey, 2007; Perry & Wise, 1990). The study focused on the perceptions that an internal audience has regarding its organization, showing that organizational reputation could be an innovative framework to incentivize employees and thereby improve organizational performance.

Developing a positive reputation is difficult in a setting where public institutions suffer from bashing by external audiences (Gilad et al., 2018). Thus, winning the "war for talent" in a low-reputed context implies the use of innovative HRM practices such as reputation management. Public managers must understand the importance of the employees and correspondingly match, as far as possible, their expectations derived from a reciprocal exchange that includes not only extrinsic rewards—such as salaries and benefits—but also intrinsic rewards. For doing this, agencies could focus on employee value proposition (EVP) initiatives. EVP refers to the balance between extrinsic and intrinsic rewards that employees perceive or experience through being part of an organization (Heger, 2007). If employees do not perceive this balance between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards positively, they can be encouraged to leave the organization. In turn, if employees perceive that their organizations are committed to offering them intrinsic and extrinsic motivations according to the context and the job market, they probably might stay in their organizations.

This study examines the employee-based implications of reputation-oriented HRM practices (e.g., Wæraas & Dahle, 2020). It shows that building, improving, and maintaining a positive reputation must be a shared goal between employees and employers because it provides them benefits at the organizational and individual levels. Therefore, HRM should make organizational reputation a visible common objective to motivate all employees to achieve organizational goals. As public administration depends on bureaucracy as a critical element in delivering goods and services, it will be necessary for organizations to retain their best employees to improve their outcomes and thereby improve perceptions *vis-à-vis* their multiple audiences.

3.6 Conclusions

This study contributes to the retention and organizational reputation literature by testing the relationship between reputation and retention in public sector organizations among a sample of 497 employees in the Mexican CAA. The case shows how organizational reputation can be an intangible asset to improve employee retention. In contexts in which organizations are subject to a constant downsizing of their organizational structures and patronage prevails over merit-based criteria, employees suffer from "layoff syndrome" every time political changes come to the scene, making them develop feelings of mistrust and anxiety replacing trustworthiness and security (Reichheld, 1996). In this scenario, reputation management appears as an alternative to retaining employees in which reciprocity of social exchange can make them feel part of organizational goal achievements, thus strengthening their attachment to the organization.

Despite the study's findings to better understanding the relationship between reputation and retention in the public sector, it is important to consider its limitations. First, this research focused on public employees of five CAA, which clearly represent a small part of the Mexican public administration. These agencies are sometimes called "islands" because their autonomy allows them to conduct better administrative practices than the rest of public administration. Future research could examine whether employees at other federal institutions or local organizations show similar perceptions regarding organizational reputation. Second, organizational reputation may change over time (Maor, 2016). This study was conducted in a period of relative stability for the CAA. However, Mexico's current political situation is allegedly in the middle of a backsliding democratic process, which is affecting the public sector and especially the CAA—the termination of the National Institute for the Evaluation of Education is just an example (Dussauge-Laguna, 2021). This situation may have changed—positively or negatively—the expectations and perceptions of audiences, and therefore, the reputations of the CAA, which could influence the results of this study. A future research agenda should address organizational reputational changes over time through longitudinal studies.

Although the study's findings are limited to the Mexican context and may apply only to executive agencies or non-majoritarian institutions—and no other federal agencies or governmental levels—, the analysis provides insights on how organizational reputation influences employee decisions in the workplace. Particularly, the study showed that public employees value intrinsic motivations when assessing stay in their current positions. More significantly, this article provides an empirical view of the relationship between organizational reputation and employees who project to stay at their jobs and those who did not. Reputation management can influence employees to feel more committed to organizations (Gilad et al., 2018), and if organizations can offer them a balanced package of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, the likelihood of retaining the best ones will increase. Future research that examines the impact of organizational reputation on different HRM processes should inform public administration practitioners about the relevance of reputation for public organizations. Specifically, it is necessary to understand the extent to whether reputation management can affect employee perceptions regarding their workplace.

Finally, this research was motivated by the fact that no research has been conducted to test the relationship between reputation and retention in the public sector. This article is even one of the first investigations on HRM to study a case in a different country from those commonly studied using the organizational reputation approach, which provides evidence about the importance of organizational reputation as an asset with high relevance for public management in different cultural contexts. Thus, further research on HRM is needed to examine this theory in contexts other than those usually studied.

Appendix

Appendix 1. Sample description.

Employees	**479**	**100.00%**
Agency		
National Electoral Institute	129	25.95%
Federal Commission for Economic Competition	46	9.26%
Federal Institute of Telecommunications	135	27.16%
National Institute for the Evaluation of Education	103	20.72%
National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy	84	16.90%
Gender		
Female	224	45.07%
Male	273	54.92%
Age		
(17,30]	127	25.55%
(30,42]	217	43.66%
(42,54]	112	22.53%
(54,67]	41	8.25%
Education (completed)		
Less than High School	7	1.41%
High School	12	2.41%
Bachelor's degree	290	58.35%
Master's degree	171	34.41%
Doctorate	17	3.42%

Source: Own elaboration

Appendix 2. Description of survey items and PCF Factor analysis results

Dimension	Items		Factor1	Factor 2	Uniqueness
General	Item1	I have a favorable opinion about this agency	0.8518		0.1296
	Item2	I believe this agency is doing a good job	0.8591		0.1207
	Item3	I do not have much respect for this agency		-0.6940	0.3883
	Item4	Overall, this agency has a good reputation	0.8039		0.2316
	Item5	This agency is a waste of taxpayer's money		-0.7048	0.3558
	Item6	I have a negative impression about this agency		-0.7619	0.2272
Performative	Item7	This agency is a well-run organization This	0.8384		0.2052
	Item8	This agency is effective at its job This	0.8243		0.2138
	Item9	This agency does a poor job		-0.7931	0.1873
	Item10	This agency is a high performing agency	0.7815		0.3286
	Item11	This agency often fails to get things done		-0.5542	0.6332
	Item12	This agency has the capacity to get things done	0.8018		0.2236
Moral	Item13	This agency can be trusted to do what is right	0.8740		0.0987
	Item14	This agency maintains high ethical standards	0.8255		0.2150
	Item15	This agency seems to be corrupt		-0.7724	0.2138
	Item16	This agency protects democratic values	0.8477		0.1757
	Item17	This agency is sometimes dishonest		-0.7645	0.2874
	Item18	I believe what this agency says	0.8317		0.1788
Procedural	Item19	This agency respects due process	0.8571		0.1668
	Item20	This agency is highly transparent	0.8166		0.2155
	Item21	Although I sometimes disagree with its decisions, this agency always follows the rules	0.8070		0.2701
	Item22	This agency treats people fairly	0.7619		0.3696

	Item23	This agency protects the rights of citizens	0.7661		0.3357
	Item24	This agency is politically neutral	0.7430		0.3485
Technical	Item25	This agency has the technical expertise to do its job well	0.7525		0.3066
	Item26	This agency is technically competent	0.7784		0.2874
	Item27	This agency has highly skilled employees	0.7851		0.2744
	Item28	This agency bases its decisions on evidence	0.7757		0.3323
	Item29	This agency has the skill to deal with complex situations	0.8069		0.2392
	Item30	This agency lacks technical knowledge		-0.6753	0.5012

Note: Factor loadings >0.5 are the only values considered for the analysis, which is regarded as rigorous.
The proportion of variance explained by these two factors is 73.13% (51.63% by factor1 and 21.50% by factor2).

Source: Own elaboration

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Conclusions

This research emerged from a personal concern to answer the question, “How can human resource management practices be improved in Mexico’s public administration?” The interest in exploring this topic and its implications in terms of public policy provides, under the lens of organizational reputation, an innovative approach that suggests promising alternatives to improve public service. Thus, the first article of this paper studied the evolution and development of organizational reputation, which has been embedded in public administration studies for two decades. This article provided an overview of this field of study, while identifying five critical areas for future research: reputational audiences, the impact of public leaders on reputation, the development of typologies based on reputational characteristics, the use of standardized methods to conduct cross-country studies, and research on a wider variety of cultural and administrative contexts.

The second article of the thesis analyzed the multidimensionality of organizational reputation and its implication in the communication of organizations with their different audiences. One of the contributions of this article to the literature is that this work complements previous research focused on reputation as a multidimensional concept in the eyes of audiences (e.g., D. Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019; Overman et al., 2020). However, these articles assume that the multidimensionality of reputation is perceived in the same way by all audiences, whereas this work challenged this assumption and suggests that the perception of the multidimensionality of reputation varies with respect to each audience. This implies that specific dimensions of reputation may be more (or less) relevant to each audience, which in practice means the possibility of communicating better with relevant audiences according to the interests of each organization.

Finally, the third article discussed how the introduction of organizational reputation management improves the retention of public employees. In particular, the study showed that public employees value the reputation of their organizations when assessing to stay (or not stay) at their current positions. More significantly, this article contributes to the literature by being the first empirical article in the literature to shed light on the relationship that organizational reputation has with employees who project to stay in their jobs and those who do not. Reputation management can influence employees to feel more committed to organizations, and if organizations can offer them a balanced package of extrinsic rewards (such as salaries and benefits) and intrinsic rewards (such as a positive reputation), the likelihood of retaining valuable performers will increase.

Public policy implications

Public management is one of the very few tools available to restore trust and legitimacy to the public administration. (Cabrero, 2010). The generalized negative perception of public organizations forces them to establish alternative management mechanisms to improve perceptions and relationships with their different audiences. In this sense, organizational reputation management can foster processes of change and a new trend in public administration by providing organizations with a vision that promotes communication between public entities and the different audiences that interact directly or indirectly with them.

On the other hand, the relevance of human resources is of vital importance for public organizations, since public servants are the ones who mobilize and apply resources; the ones who design and implement public policies. However, one of the problems faced by public administration in Mexico is the lack of effectiveness of its human resources policies. (e.g., Professional Career Service). This ineffectiveness causes human resources management to be inertial, without a strategic vision to achieve long-term objectives. Thus, human resource management policies represent one of the greatest challenges in terms of public policy, since, unlike others, policies of this type are transversal to all public organizations, regardless of their mandates, and have a direct impact on the fulfillment of governmental objectives and goals.

In this sense, the results of this thesis show that organizational reputation is one of the most important assets for organizations, so they should manage it strategically either by improving or protecting it. The incorporation of organizational reputation into public administration means that public organizations can optimize their performance in terms of communication and administrative management. Likewise, this work confirms what has been suggested in the literature regarding the implications of organizational reputation management as a tool to improve human resources management. (e.g., Bankins & Waterhouse, 2019).

Without continuous evaluation of human resource management policies, the work climate is negatively affected, and the commitment of public employees decreases. Although financial rewards are one variable that can be used to retain valuable employees, it is not the only one. As demonstrated in this thesis, public employees also value intangible motivations such as a good reputation. Reputation is an asset that, through its management, can be an alternative strategy to strengthen the link between public organizations and their audiences, without its construction, maintenance or improvement implying large and substantial transformations or reforms.

Scope and Limitations

One of the objectives of this work is to analyze whether organizational reputation management can be implemented in the Mexican public administration—as in the contexts in which it has been regularly studied. To this end, in the second and third articles, the case of the Constitutional Autonomous Agencies in Mexico was studied to understand whether organizational reputation management is a relevant issue to improve public service in a context where public administration is perceived as having a poor performance. The results found in this research demonstrate that the organizational reputation approach is applicable to different contexts and that institutional or democratic consolidation are not necessary conditions for organizational reputation management to be implemented. However, the findings should be nuanced according to the case studied here.

Studies on organizational reputation are divided into two branches: the political science and the organizational branches. This thesis is framed in the first group—research focused on the study of reputation in executive agencies or agencies with independence from the central government. Although the findings of the study are limited to the Mexican context and can be applied only to Constitutional Autonomous Agencies—and not to other federal agencies or governmental levels—, the thesis provides insights on how organizational reputation influences organizational aspects such as communication with the public and staff retention, contributing to the body of literature that has proven that in addition to influencing these aspects, organizational reputation is also important for the legitimacy and autonomy of organizations, among other things.

One of the limitations of this thesis has to do with the case study to which it refers; the Constitutional Autonomous Agencies represent only a small part of the Mexican public administration. Moreover, due to their nature and autonomy acquired at the constitutional level, unlike centralized agencies, these agencies can decide their own policies. In terms of human resources management, each of these agencies defines the ways in which they recruit, select, train, or stimulate their personnel. This limits the findings of the study to this small group of agencies, since in the case of the Mexican federal government, to mention one example, the agencies are centralized and operate under the same human resources management scheme, which, although not an impediment, limits the possibility of implementing a reputation management scheme. Future research should study the effects of organizational reputation in Mexico in organizations attached to the federal government and other levels of government. This is to know to what extent the homogeneity of organizational policies affects reputation management, or whether centralized administrations at the federal, state or municipal level have a reputation that is managed as a single block.

Another limitation of this study has to do with the fact that the sample of public servants surveyed was collected from only five of the nine agencies studied. Due to the change of government in 2018 and the constant attacks to which these agencies have been subjected by the current federal government (see Dussauge-Laguna, 2021), four of them[6] did not provide the opportunity to conduct the survey that was conducted in the other five agencies. This situation restricted the possibility of extending this research to all the agencies and making a more solid comparison among them.

Finally, the articles in this thesis are among the first research on organizational reputation to study a case in a country different from those commonly studied using this approach, which provides evidence on the importance of organizational reputation as an asset with transcendental relevance for public management in different cultural and administrative contexts. This thesis seeks to emphasize that in a context such as the Mexican public administration, organizational reputation management is a tool that can contribute to increasing the competitiveness and effectiveness of public organizations.

[6] Bank of Mexico, National Human Rights Commission, National Institute of Statistics and Geography, and National Institute of Transparency, Access to Information and Personal Data Protection.

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