

A THEORETICAL REVIEW OF A TERMINOLOGICAL CONFUSION: CHARACTER, IDENTITY, IMAGE OR REPUTATION?

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ABSTRACT

The concept of corporate reputation draws academic attention from numerous areas of social sciences. Depending on the perspective, reputation can mean rather different things. It can be considered from the point of view of each stakeholder. Mainly, scholars conceptualize the term corporate reputation from either an economics/managerial paradigm that considers corporate reputation as internal and external stakeholders' expectations and estimations of certain organizational attributes or as an impression that reflects the perception of a collective stakeholder group. In particular, strategic management perspective entitles reputation as a valuable asset that helps to sustain the organization and its competitive advantage over the course of its lifetime and a substantial tool that organizations use in order to protect themselves in turbulent times. However, given that corporate reputation is a complex construct, understanding corporate reputation is complicated owing to the interdependence and interrelatedness of its component parts; identity, image and character. Hence, marking out these analogous terms explicitly with in theoretical perspective has become a "sine qua non". Thus, instead of bringing forward new definitions into the definitional landscape, the main purpose of this paper is, to depict the theoretical backgrounds and approaches towards the terms corporate identity, corporate image, corporate character and corporate reputation in a framework that reflects the terminological confusion within an inductive methodology.

Keywords: Corporate Reputation, Identity, Image, Reputation Management