

Brand awareness: a proposal for the Intermunicipal Community of Beiras and Serra da Estrela

Notoriedad de marca: una propuesta para la Comunidad Intermunicipal de Beiras y Serra da Estrela

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Abstract

Notoriety is one of the first criteria that strategies for an organization's institutional reputation need to meet in order to achieve a positive image with the public and, consequently, revert this capital to the fulfillment of its organizational objectives. The aim of this article is to present a proposal for a specific communication strategy to reverse the low level of notoriety of the Comunidade Intermunicipal das Beiras e Serra da Estrela (CIMBSE), based on the results of a content analysis carried out based on online news from *media* based in the 15 municipalities that make up the territory in question. The results indicate that the activities of the “Cultural Heritage” axis of action are, among the others, the most likely to make the messages reach the largest number of *stakeholders* with the possibility of producing brand memory in these audiences in line with favorable associations – fundamental factor for notoriety to be associated with a positive institutional image.

Keywords: CIMBSE, notoriety, Brand Image, Strategic Communication, Public Relations.

Resumen

La notoriedad es uno de los principales criterios necesarios en una estrategia, que pretende promover la reputación institucional de una organización, con el fin de alcanzar una imagen positiva entre las audiencias y, en consecuencia, reinvertir ese capital en el logro de sus objetivos organizacionales. El objetivo de este artículo es presentar una propuesta de estrategia de comunicación específica para revertir el bajo índice de notoriedad de la Comunidad Intermunicipal de Beiras y Serra da Estrela (CIMBSE), fundamentada en los

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resultados del análisis de contenido de las noticias en línea de los medios de comunicación de los 15 municipios que conforman el territorio en cuestión. Los resultados indican que las actividades en el eje "Patrimonio cultural" son las que tienen más probabilidades de hacer llegar mensajes a la mayor cantidad de personas interesadas; y con la mayor posibilidad de generar recuerdos de marca asociados positivos en los públicos, factor fundamental para que la notoriedad se asocie a una imagen institucional positiva.

Palabras clave: CIMBSE, notoriedad, imagen de marca, comunicación estratégica, relaciones públicas.

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Sumario

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1. INTRODUCTION: INTERMUNICIPAL COMMUNITY OF BEIRAS AND SERRA DA ESTRELA

This article presents the first research results on the communication policies of the Intermunicipal Community of Beiras and Serra da Estrela (CIMBSE), focusing on the analysis of strategies for increasing awareness of the institution's brand. The CIMBSE, object of this investigation, "is a collective person governed by public law, of an associative nature and territorial scope with multiple purposes and aims at the realization of common interests to the municipalities that comprise it"³. The entity was created by Law nº 75, of September 12, 2013, based on the laws of 2003 and 2008 that defined the new territorial order in Portugal, dividing it into 25 Territorial Units, including the 21 Intermunicipal Communities (CIMs)⁴. The CIMs are established as a new instance of local power, with inter-municipal scope, which aim to strengthen cooperation between adjacent municipalities in the same territory and jointly promote economic and social development, as well as streamline the space in which they are located, inserted.

The CIMs also act as partners for the execution of central government policies for the set of municipalities that make up each intermunicipal unit, receiving prerogatives to act, for example, in the areas of culture, education, health, natural resources, entrepreneurship and transport. To this end, they are financed by resources from the State Budget, contributions from the participating municipalities, collection of fees for services, among other sources.

But, despite the diversity of areas of action and impacts on citizens' daily lives, CIMBSE is little known among citizens. A survey⁵ directed at the population of the region covered by the

³ Taken from <https://cimbse.pt/apresentacao/quem-somos/> on 02/11/22.

⁴ The CIMs, including the Comunidade Intermunicipal das Beiras and Serra da Estrela, correspond to Level III Statistical Territorial Units. The CIMBSE is made up of the municipalities of Almeida, Belmonte, Celorico da Beira, Covilhã, Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, Fornos de Algodres, Fundão, Guarda, Gouveia, Manteigas, Mêda, Pinhel, Sabugal, Seia and Trancoso. Taken from <https://cimbse.pt/apresentacao/quem-somos/>, on 02/11/22.

⁵ Survey carried out by the Intermunicipal Public Communication Observatory (ObCOM). At: https://labcomca.ubi.pt/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Parte-3-Inque%CC%81rito_final.pdf

CIMBSE, which obtained 202 responses, revealed that 64.9% of the respondents declared not knowing or vaguely knowing the CIMBSE. 73.4% did not recognize the organization's logo and 14.6% stated they recognized it vaguely.

Now, the degree of recognition of an institution and its brand is a fundamental condition for a person to be able to remember it and decide whether to access (or not) its value propositions according to the qualitative impressions that these memories bring - positive or not. Therefore, two levels are perceived in this context: the recognition of a brand and/or organization and the associated qualitative perceptions. The CIMBSE, therefore, already has a deficit in the first level, which implies greater difficulty in triggering the second, as it is unlikely to issue a value judgment on something that is not known. To reverse this situation, the entity needs, firstly, to become better known and make knowledge associated with positive perceptions, fundamental factors for the fulfillment of institutional objectives (Aaker, 1991). And with the dynamism of the Web as an international environment between brands and users, these values need to be constantly reassessed and adapted (Da Silveira et al., 2013; Matikiti-Manyeverere et al., 2021) and with public participation, reinforcing the promotion of the symmetric bidirectional model, by Grunig and Hunt (1984), for government public relations.

In the practical dimension, Capriotti (2009) argues that the media are responsible for providing part of the notoriety that publics have about an organization (measured by the amount of published information) and for associating this information with qualification attributes that influence negative or positive perceptions of the organization along to the same audience. Therefore, it is important to permanently investigate both the quantity of news published by the *media* about an organization and the qualitative framework in each one, so that strengths and weaknesses can be detected in the projected image and subsidize reaction strategies.

This investigation brings results of content analysis about the reports published in the *media online* in the region and, with which, we seek to answer the following question: What is the image of CIMBSE projected by the *media* and how does this image contribute to promoting its notoriety and media reputation? To answer this question, this article associates concepts from the field of study of Public Relations to develop strategies to promote visibility, media reputation and awareness of the CIMBSE brand. The final analysis observes that the activities carried out by CIMBSE in certain areas of action, with emphasis on the cultural area, are capable of promoting greater presence in the regional media and fostering positive perceptions among the audiences - two important factors for managing a reputation excellent institution.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Brand notoriety

Promoting the reputation of an institution among its audiences is undoubtedly one of the initial and most important steps for this organization's communication. In many cases, the public's knowledge of a company or institution can be its most valuable asset. This value depends on how much it is recognized and how it is perceived by its audiences. In this sense, the creation and promotion of the institutional brand is a fundamental tool for the organization to become known. According to Ruão (2014), it is up to the organization's communication sector to strategically create and boost brand awareness in order to

intentionally generate positive perceptions among target audiences. This is a complex task, considering that - in addition to positioning techniques - the work has marketing and subjective dimensions, as they compete with other institutions for the attention, memorization and valuation of their brands in spaces of contact with the public. For example, in the journalistic agenda of the *media mainstream*, in digital social networks and/or in face-to-face communication between customers.

In order to order studies in this field of research, we need to relate terms such as identity, notoriety and brand image with institutional notoriety and institutional reputation. The first three concepts refer to elements of brand theory that are fundamental for a brand of product, company or institution to be able to: develop an idea about itself; communicate this idea to your *stakeholders*; and create in these audiences references that are closer to the intended image. Ramos (2007) refers brand identity as “a global synthesis of what the organization is and externalizes” (p. 21). In other words, they are the attributes associated with the values, mission and vision of the company or organization and which guide its activities and the way it is presented to the public. In the particular case of CIMBSE, it is the way in which the Intermunicipal Community is constituted as an institution and intends to be seen.

A brand can be understood as a sign, a symbol, a designation or a set of them that “is intended to identify the goods and services of a seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from competitors” (Kotler, 1991, p. 442). In contrast to this marketing definition, we have the concept of corporate brand. Understood as a process that “involves the conscious decision of top management to make known the attributes of the organization's identity in the form of a clearly defined brand proposal... to communicate, differentiate and enhance the brand in relation to the main groups and networks of *stakeholders*” (Balmer, 2001, p. 281). Therefore, the brand is an instrument for communicating institutional attributes to the public, which should facilitate the identification and qualitative perception of an organization among the public. In this way, it is the first step to promote the notoriety and reputation of an organization or company, as the brand helps in the task of making the organization and its products known and associated with values and other perceptions in order to fulfill its organizational objectives. Balmer (2001) then highlights the three virtues of the corporate brand: communicating, distinguishing and improving.

Aaker (1991) understands brand awareness as one of the main elements that make up brand capital (relative to value). This understanding is close to the analytical scheme elaborated by Keller (1993). For the author, brand knowledge or notoriety (*brand knowledge*) consists of two dimensions: *brand recognition (brand awareness)* and *brand image (brand image)*. On the one hand, brand awareness or recognition designates the possibility of a person identifying a particular brand among others exposed to it. “In particular, brand name recognition is related to the likelihood of a brand name coming to mind and the ease with which this occurs” (Keller, 1993, p. 3). The second dimension, brand image, makes special reference to qualitative associations. “It is the perception in the customers mind about the brand and its associations”, Ghodeswar (2008). Keller (1993) explains it as being “... perceptions about a brand reflected by brand associations held in the consumer's memory” (Keller, 1993, p. 3). Well then, brand associations describe the process in which a brand identified and memorized by a person can trigger qualitative elements associated with it. “The associations contain the meaning of the brand for consumers” (*Ibidem*). The association promotes the intersection between brand recognition and the image that the individual has about it. Brand awareness is, therefore, the

combination of these two dimensions; the “personal meaning about a brand stored in the consumer's memory, that is, all descriptive and evaluative information related to the brand” (Ghodeswar, 2008, p. 4). In other words, it is the memory that a person has about the brand and the qualitative associations related to it.

However, the current communication environment is marked by a strong expansion of possibilities for interaction between brands and *stakeholders*, making it necessary to revise the concepts of image and brand identity, more precisely, to review the need to maintain the values of distinction associated with a mark for long periods. Da Silveira et al (2013) identified the need for these values to become more dynamic. “(Brand) managers need to reshape brand identity over time according to environmental changes and contributions from other social constituents (eg. consumers)” (Da Silveira et al., 2013, p. 29) . Matikiti-Manyeverve et al (2021) investigated the interactivity between brands and users on the *Web* under three aspects: power of control of users in the interaction; the degree of social interactivity and the speed with which brands respond to users. They identified that these dimensions influence the recognition process and the image of a brand and, therefore, need to be constantly evaluated. In other words, the importance of clarity and durability of brand identity remains, however, it is necessary to monitor changes in the international environment in order to mark out necessary adaptations.

2.2. Media reputation

For an organization to become recognized, it is necessary to expand the entity's moments of exposure to different audiences - so that it provides positive memories and evaluations in people's minds. Visibility and evaluation are, therefore, elements that help build a corporation's reputation. By Corporate Reputation, Capriotti (2013) understands it as the global assessment that publics make of an organization in isolation or in comparison with other entities. The author recalls that the media, whether online or offline, are instruments that inform the population and help in the construction of social reality, in a way that they exert a strong influence on the visibility and evaluation of social actors, including public and private corporations, with public opinion. That is, they are important instruments for an organization to become known and well (or poorly) evaluated by the public. Therefore, he calls media reputation, also known as media image or published image, “the way in which subjects (company, institution, brand, person or topic) are presented by the media in front of public opinion” (Capriotti, 2013, p. 3).

For the author, the three principles of media reputation are: (a) media visibility and public notoriety, (b) media attributes and public attributes and (c) media valuation and subject evaluation. Each one refers to the action of the *media* on the subjects (organizations) and the reflection of this action on the public. The first principle, for example, is related to the amount of information published in the *media* about a subject (media visibility) and what is its visibility before the public (public notoriety). The second refers to the relationship between the attributes that the *media* link to subjects (media attributes) with the attributes that audiences associate with this subject (subject's public attributes). The latter relates the assessment that the *media* make of subjects (media valuation) with the assessment of the public (subject assessment).

This investigation will focus on the online news published about CIMBSE and therefore aspects related to *media* activity in building the organization's media reputation will be analysed, that is: media visibility, media attributes and media valuation.

2.3. Public Relations in Government Organizations

In addition to the greater number of spaces for contact and interaction with publics promoted by the expansion of the internet and social networks, organizations must take advantage of other opportunities to establish relationship ambiances in order to promote communication in which publics are also heard and which aims to meet the expectations of everyone involved in the process (Gonçalves & Elias, 2013) . At the same time, in an organization, the activity of identifying these opportunities, planning, executing and evaluating communication action strategies with publics is contained in the field of public relations (Ruão et al., 2014). Thus, the bidirectional symmetric public relations model proposed by Grunig and Hunt (1984) for organizations is defended as the most appropriate, as it promotes dialogical communication, which seeks mutual understanding between organization and public. The other three models defined by the authors are: advertiser agent, public information and asymmetric bidirectional. The first two are called unidirectional, as they do not allow for direct feedback from audiences. The advertiser is centered on advertising and public information on conveying relevant information to recipients. The asymmetric bidirectional establishes the dialogue with the public, but with the purpose of persuasion by the organization.

Grunig and Jaatinen (1999) and Valentini (2013) observed a greater presence of the public information model in the communication of governments. The concept of communication applied to government organizations should be observed in comparison to the concept of public communication. Duarte (2011) describes that government communication has the executive power as an agent and whose objective is to inform the population. Finally, public communication has entities from the public and private sectors and civil society as agents, which aim to establish flows of information of public interest, from a perspective of promoting citizenship. In contrast, Kunsch (2012) argues that government communication (in the three spheres of executive power) can apply the fundamentals of public communication mentioned above. The author justifies it by listing that : “the separation between rulers and ruled is mainly a consequence of lack of information; it is up to the government to keep information sources and communication channels open” (Kunsch, 2012, p. 23) .

3. METHODOLOGY

The empirical component of this research starts from the content analysis of the news published in the *media* of the region covered by CIMBSE, with the aim of verifying its image in the local media (media visibility) and the predominant qualitative framework (media reputation). That is, the total number of published news was evaluated in order to identify the entity's mediated image. In this way, content analysis is an investigation technique suitable for research, as it uses various ways to analyze textual materials, even numerical ones, through “systematic procedures and objectives for describing the content of messages, indicators (quantitative or not)) that allow the inference of knowledge related to the conditions of production/ reception (inferred variables) of these messages”, (Bardin, 2000, p. 42) . With this technique it is possible to systematize, quantify and qualify important variables in order to, in a controlled manner, infer meanings about the presence of CIMBSE in the set of *media* under analysis.

The research sources were the *media* based in the area covered by CIMBSE that provided access to articles/news online. The research found 31 *media* registered with the Regulatory Entity for Social Communication (ERC), and one identified but unregistered. Among these, 22 titles had characteristics of journalistic *media* and were active. The rest are niche publications (about weddings and wine, for example) or have not been published for more than six months. Of the 22 generalist titles in activity, in 11 it was possible to collect articles for analysis. The *media* in which it was not possible to carry out the collection: (a) did not have online publications; (b) access was paid or (c) there was no online search tool to access older publications. In the end, the sample included articles published in cyberjournals: Beira Alta TV, Magazine Serrano, Mais Beiras Informação, Jornal do Fundão, Bombeiros.pt, A Guarda, Vivaserra.pt, O Interior, Terras da Beira, Beira.pt, Guarda News. The survey collected 773 articles and news published between January 2013 (the year before the creation of CIMBSE) and December 2021 (the month in which the collection was carried out). The articles were categorized into identifying variables (Article Title, Link, *Media*, Date, Advice, Format and Axis of Action) and an analytical one (Qualification).

The variable *Axis of Action* refers to the CIMBSE Intervention Area⁶ to which the news refers. The entity has ten areas of intervention, which are: Entrepreneurship (projects and activities for the development of economic activities), Heritage Cultural (projects and activities for the development of culture in the region), Heritage Natural (promotion of environmental protection and civil protection), Education (investments and projects in Education), Training (activity and programs for professional training and employability), Tourism (investments and activities to promote tourism), Modernization of Administration (investments for the modernization of administrative services), Health (investments and actions in Health), Infrastructure Social (investments and social protection actions) and Transport (management of transport supply and promotion of mobility between municipalities). The option CIMBSE was added to the list, which, despite not being an area of intervention, should be the option marked when the main topic of the news refers to political and administrative issues about the entity, for example, about changes in command and choice of occupants of positions and functions. Therefore, the variable has 11 values (options) to choose from according to the main theme of the news.

The Qualification variable aims to record the qualitative framework of the news, classified as: *positive*, *negative* or *neutral*. Considering that despite the framing of the news by the production being an instrument to organize and give significance to the facts, this can also influence the perception of reality in the instance of reading (Capriotti, 2013; Hallahan, 1999; Lecheler & Vreese, 2019). For this reason, the analysis of news *framing* is essential to understand the image published by the media about the organization and to help identify the valuation of media attributes associated with CIMBSE, according to Capriotti 's (2013) analytical proposal. Therefore, the news whose content presents criticism of CIMBSE, the execution of its attributions or information that identify problems to the organization, even without derogatory content, was considered *negative*. The *neutral* framework refers to news without an explicit expression of value judgment, without negative or positive adjectives and/or that prove to be reproductions of news forwarded by the institution (release). Finally, the news considered positive were those referring to attributes associated with the CIMBSE

⁶ The axes of action refer to the CIMBSE Intervention Areas, as set out in the Statute and on the entity's website: <https://cimbse.pt/>.

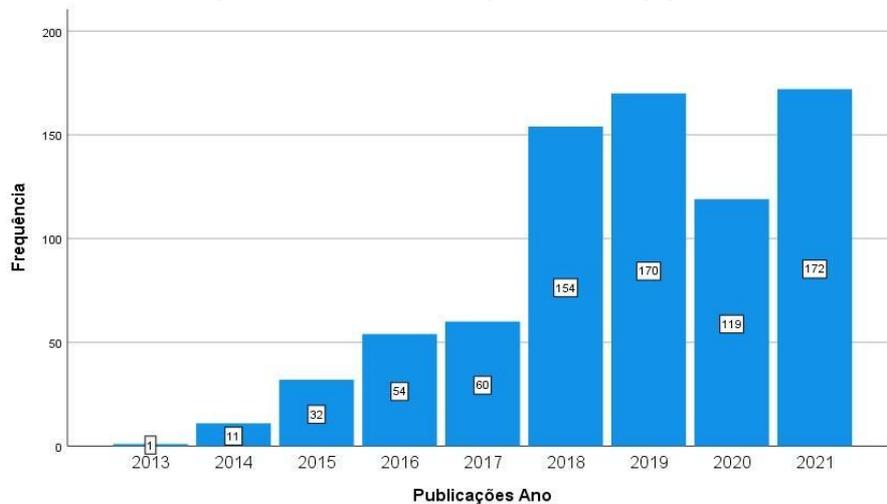
in a positive way, which positively evaluate the CIMBSE, its actions and activities. Data were coded in Excel spreadsheets *and* analyzed using SPSS.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Total news with reference to CIMBSE

The first chart (Graph 1) shows the total coded news (N=773) per year. There is a strong growth in the number of news published from 2018 onwards, but with a significant drop in 2020, the year in which the Covid-19 pandemic began. In 2021, the number resumes growth, despite the specific restrictions on various activities to control the pandemic, which even affected the holding of cultural events - the type of activity promoted by CIMBSE that generates significant positivity for the institution.

Graph 1. News/Articles published by year.



Source: own elaboration.

Following the graph, “Table 1” presents the number of publications by searched *media*.

Table 1. Publications by searched *media*.

		Frequência	Percent
Valid	Beira Alta TV	17	2.2
	Magazine Serrano	86	11.1
	Mais Beiras	14	1.8
	Jornal do Fundão	48	6.2
	Bombeiros PT	1	.1
	A Guarda	45	5.8
	Viva Serra	2	.3
	O Interior	194	25.1
	Terras da Beira	75	9.7
	Beiras.PT	266	34.4
	Guarda Noticias	25	3.2
	Total	773	100.0

Source: own elaboration.

It is important to verify whether the accelerated growth in the number of articles in 2018 and the upward trend each year is related to the increase in the number of native internet *media* and the transition process from print to online *media* in the Central region of Portugal (Jerónimo et al., 2020; Noronha, 2020) or if the reason is due to the greater performance of the CIMBSE communication advisory. However, the best mechanism for verifying this problem is carrying out interviews, already scheduled, with journalists and media editors in the area covered.

4.2. Axes and Qualification of informative pieces about the CIMBSE

By observing the occurrences by axis of action (Table 2) we identified that the axis “Cultural Heritage” was highlighted in number of publications compared to the others. It registered more than twice as much news in relation to the second axis with more publications (CIMBSE). During coding, it was noticed that the high occurrence owes, to a large extent, to the itinerant projects “Cultura em Rede”, “Visitas Encenadas”, “CIMfonia” and literary events such as “A fox fabulous”. A total of 134 news items had these activities as their main theme. These events occupied the cultural agenda of various *media* in the region as they toured the councils and villages of the geographic area of CIMBSE. In each city visited, the projects renewed the cultural agendas of the local *media*.

Table 2. Publications by axis of action.

		Frequência	Percent
Valid	Empreendedorismo	85	11.0
	Patri Cultural	210	27.2
	Patri Natural	79	10.2
	Educação	56	7.2
	Formação	7	.9
	Turismo	57	7.4
	Modern Adm	76	9.8
	Saúde	34	4.4
	Infra Social	16	2.1
	CIMBSE	99	12.8
	Transportes	54	7.0
	Total	773	100.0

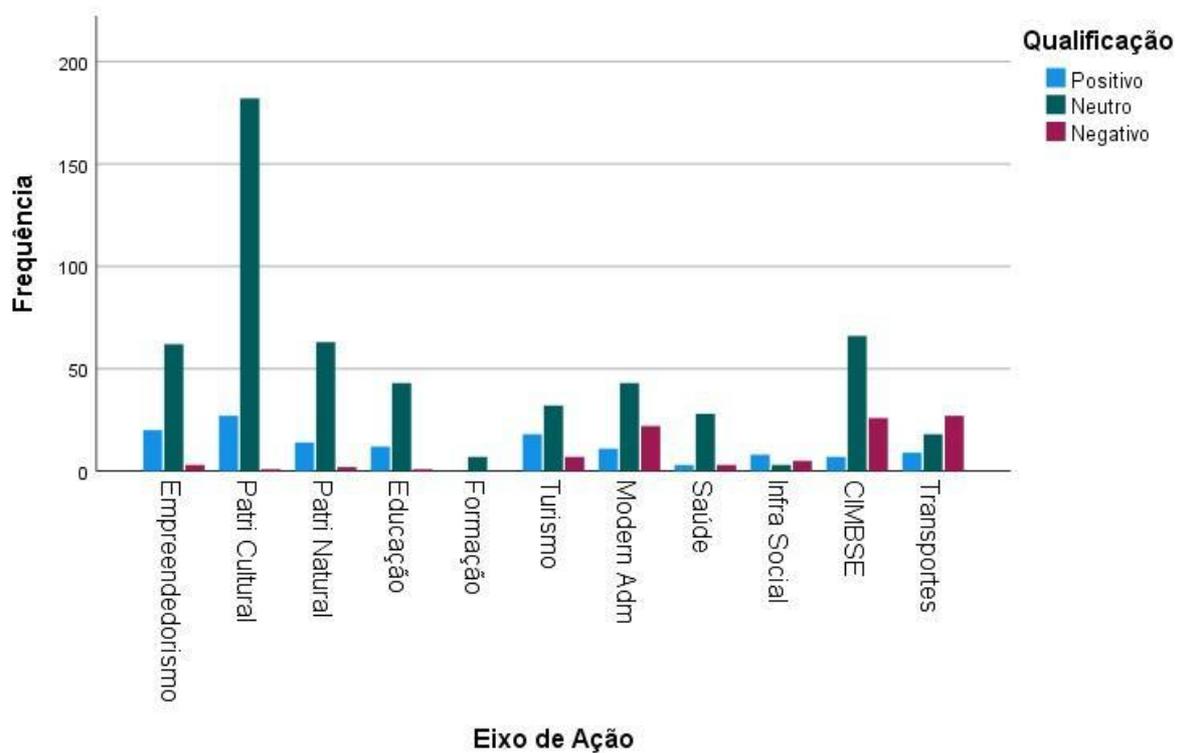
Source: own elaboration.

The Cultural Heritage axis also has the highest absolute number of positivity (N=27), equivalent to 20% of the total positive news from CIMBSE. However, it is much lower proportionally in positivity per axis (12.9%), as can be seen in Graph 2 and Table 3. For example, the axes Tourism (31.6% positivity in 57 published news) and Entrepreneurship (23.5% of positivity in 85 news) showed a greater capacity to generate positive news, despite these attributes being much less present in the media agenda. The values may mean that both have the ability to convert news/articles with a higher positive qualification than the others. However, it is important to emphasize that the high absolute volume of coded news from the Cultural Heritage axis associated with residual negativity compensates for the lower percentage of positivity.

In the negativity qualification, the Cultural Heritage axis proportionally presents the lowest percentage (0.5%) among the action axes with more than 10 coded news. As it is the axis with the highest absolute number (N=210), the low percentage is quite significant. This axis showed high absolute neutrality (N=182). We understand that the high number is due to the reproduction of news intended by the CIMBSE Communication to the media, but which suffer editions to suppress adjectives and excessively positive content, common in texts sent by press offices. We arrived at this conclusion by observing news with texts that were very similar between different *media* and, sometimes, with identical titles. These factors also indicate high news value for cultural events and reduced critical treatment by the *media* that publish them was observed. The reason for using the news sent by the press office would be, in these cases, to proceed with the elaboration of the cultural agenda of the publications.

At the other extreme, the Transport axis has 50% of negativity among the others. It is the only axis of action in which negative articles (N=27) outweigh neutral ones (N=18) and positivity (N=9). The absolute values and percentages are shown in the table below. “Chart 2” shows this data in a visual way.

Graph 2. Qualification by Action Axis.



Source: own elaboration.

“Table 3” presents the same data in absolute numbers and percentages.

Table 3. Qualification by Action Axis (Cross Reference Table).

Eixo de Ação			Qualificação			Total
			Positivo	Neutro	Negativo	
Empreendedorismo	Contagem		20	62	3	85
	% em Eixo de Ação		23,5%	72,9%	3,5%	100,0%
Patri Cultural	Contagem		27	182	1	210
	% em Eixo de Ação		12,9%	86,7%	0,5%	100,0%
Patri Natural	Contagem		14	63	2	79
	% em Eixo de Ação		17,7%	79,7%	2,5%	100,0%
Educação	Contagem		12	43	1	56
	% em Eixo de Ação		21,4%	76,8%	1,8%	100,0%
Formação	Contagem		0	7	0	7
	% em Eixo de Ação		0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Turismo	Contagem		18	32	7	57
	% em Eixo de Ação		31,6%	56,1%	12,3%	100,0%
Modern Adm	Contagem		11	43	22	76
	% em Eixo de Ação		14,5%	56,6%	28,9%	100,0%
Saúde	Contagem		3	28	3	34
	% em Eixo de Ação		8,8%	82,4%	8,8%	100,0%
Infra Social	Contagem		8	3	5	16
	% em Eixo de Ação		50,0%	18,8%	31,3%	100,0%
CIMBSE	Contagem		7	66	26	99
	% em Eixo de Ação		7,1%	66,7%	26,3%	100,0%
Transportes	Contagem		9	18	27	54
	% em Eixo de Ação		16,7%	33,3%	50,0%	100,0%
Total	Contagem		129	547	97	773
	% em Eixo de Ação		16,7%	70,8%	12,5%	100,0%

Source: own elaboration.

4.3. CIMBSE 's media reputation

The use of surveys to listen to the public is one of the principle instruments of public relations for the elaboration of communication strategies. In our case, the most significant results of the descriptive analysis presented above concern the activities and specific actions of the Cultural Heritage axes, which showed a positive trend, and Transport, with a negative trend. The data provide elements that indicate the need to develop different approaches for each axis mentioned and that should be added to the strategies that aim to increase the level of notoriety and the image of the organization and, consequently, its media reputation.

CIMBSE stands out of: (1) creating contact experiences that can be positively associated by the public and (2) expanding the institution's presence in the media. Both objectives are within the scope of public relations, which, for Kunsch (2011) is an activity that in its applied dimension “works with the planning and management of communication in and from organizations” (Kunsch , 2011, p. 74). In this framework, the Press Office (*media relations*) is one of the most important Public Relations tools (Skinner et al., 1999) to promote a product, organization or personality in front of public opinion (Ribeiro, 2014). In addition to the relationship with the media, Public Relations and the Press Office use the promotion of *media events* (Dayan, 2013) , in line with other sectors of the organization, capable of generating news value to the point of receiving journalistic coverage (Ribeiro, 2014) and positively influencing the media agenda and, consequently, the media reputation. As highlighted by Skinner et al. (2013), “promotional activities tend to be attractive and sensitive to the media, and public relations professionals dedicate a lot of time and effort to them. Promotional

activities range from organizing conferences and teleconferences to planning exhibitions, preparing audiovisual material” (Skinner et al., 2013, p. 21) .

In this sense, itinerant projects in the Cultural Heritage intervention area should be worked on as strategic instruments of action, such as, for example, the CIMFonia project⁷. These activities make it possible to repeat news on the same topic in each municipality visited. In this way, they help to maintain CIMBSE 's presence in the *media* during the period in which the projects are running, in order to increase the quantity of published news. At the same time, the shows and other activities of the Cultural Heritage axis establish ambiances conducive to creating significant experiences that, according to Alba and Hutchinson (1987) and Capriotti (2016), have the potential to trigger the memory of the public/spectator in order to fix the organization's brand to positive associations. Another important point, in these cases, is the physical proximity between the organization and the public at these events, which facilitates establishing a direct interaction along the lines of the symmetric bidirectional model proposed by Grunig and Hunter (1984).

Regarding the Transport axis, the high negativity in the *media agenda* stands out, requiring intervention, at the level of communication advisory services, to revert the published image. However, this action will always depend on the promotion of a service that is more suited to the expectations of users.

CIMBSE is responsible for offering, managing and granting support to public transport between the municipalities in the coverage area. This is a factor with a strong presence in the daily lives of these users and, therefore, with a greater possibility of generating harmful associations in the public to the image of the institution and its brand (subject's assessment) if the service is not carried out satisfactorily, and this may perception being reproduced by the *media*. Furthermore, negative framing in news extends the reach of negative evaluation beyond direct users.

Therefore, the situation revealed indicates the need for the public relations sector to follow the news published about the organization to identify possible problems and make this knowledge reach the competent sectors. Subsequently, in a strategic and integrated manner with the responsible sector, act to mitigate the effects of negative exposures of CIMBSE in the media. It is observed, therefore, that both in the Transport axis and in Cultural Heritage, actions to promote media recognition and reputation are not only under the scope of the communication sector, but include other sectors that, in an integrated manner, can contribute in this sense. In any case, Gonçalves (2010) points out that despite the importance of working together, it is important to ensure the independence of communication decision-making in relation to others.

Data analysis also shed light on other aspects of the *media framing* of CIMBSE. We highlight the high positivity of the Entrepreneurship and Tourism axes, which justifies a joint effort between communication and the respective sectors to expand the number of activities and projects in both areas capable of providing greater media attention.

⁷ The CIMfonia project is based in the municipality of Guarda and performs classical music presentations in the municipalities that are part of the CIMBSE.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

We conclude that published news related to the Cultural Heritage and Transport axes of action can affect in opposite ways the recognition of the CIMBSE brand associated with positive memories. The Cultural Heritage axis acts favorably due, firstly, to being the one that had the most presence of its activities publicized in the local *media*, in addition to presenting insignificant negativity. In other words, it is, among the others, the most important factor for promoting media visibility (quantitatively measured) and one of the most important for promoting media attributes and media valuation associated with positive perceptions, in the sense of an excellent media reputation. Another advantage is that part of the news refers to events that create direct ambiances with the public/spectators. Therefore, these activities are also ways that allow moments of contact with publics capable of promoting positive associations, which can occur directly (such as, for example, the exhibition of videos and posters about CIMBSE before and after cultural events) or indirectly, through the *media* when producing journalistic coverage of these events.

On the other hand, the Transport axis requires follow-up by the communication sector with the *media* in order to mitigate the effects of the high negativity observed in the content analysis, preferably providing answers and explanations to all articles/news and negative external comments that are detected. The observed situation may produce increased visibility, however, associated with negative perceptions and, therefore, harmful to media reputation. Therefore, whenever possible, preventive action should be taken. The communication strategy must be drawn up by integrating the Communication and Transport sectors. In the same perspective, the organization must take advantage of the new channels of contact with the public to establish a two-way dialogue in order to identify their demands and proceed with the expected responses and actions.

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