

## METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO ASSESSING CORPORATE REPUTATION AND ECONOMIC SECURITY OF ENTERPRISES

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**Abstract.** This article systematizes methodological approaches to assessing the economic security of enterprises and their corporate reputation, treating reputation as a multidimensional, stakeholder-oriented intangible asset that shapes performance, consumer behavior, and competitive positioning. The aim of the article is to synthesize core approaches and conceptual foundations of reputation assessment and to organize practical methods and limitations into a coherent, decision-useful framework. Methodologically, the study integrates stakeholder-centered perspectives with quantitative and qualitative indicators, multidisciplinary lenses (management, marketing, social psychology), and sensitivity to the dynamic, evolving character of reputation. It summarizes sector-specific contingencies and consolidates principal methods - reputation indices and rankings, stakeholder surveys and interviews, media and content analysis (including sentiment and thematic analysis), social-media and digital analytics, reputation audits, and economic-impact analysis - highlighting their complementary roles in benchmarking, real-time monitoring, internal diagnostics, and financial linkage. The main results include a structured conceptual basis for reputation evaluation; a systematization of theoretical frameworks (stakeholder theory, resource-based view, social identity theory, signaling theory) and their instruments; and a synthesis of key challenges such as subjectivity and bias, data quality and availability, the dynamic and context-specific nature of reputation, and the integration of digital with traditional metrics. The conclusion underscores the need for adaptive, context-dependent methodologies that triangulate multiple data sources, employ longitudinal and event-based designs, and leverage real-time analytics to capture inflection points. The perspectives emphasize continuous refinement to integrate ESG considerations, tailor indicators to industry conditions, and apply advanced diagnostics for early-warning detection—thereby enabling organizations to sustain and enhance reputational capital in an interconnected environment.

**Keywords:** corporate reputation; economic security; stakeholder-oriented assessment; reputation indices; media and content analysis; social-media analytics; reputation audit; economic-impact analysis; ESG; multidisciplinary approach.

**JEL Classification:** G 32, G 34, H56

**Formulas:** 0; **fig.:** 1; **tabl.:** 3; **bibl.:** 27

**Introduction.** In the contemporary global economy, corporate reputation has become a pivotal intangible asset that directly influences the competitiveness, resilience, and long-term sustainability of enterprises. Reputation reflects not only financial performance but also the trust of stakeholders, ethical practices, brand perception, and alignment with societal expectations. In conditions of heightened digital transparency and accelerated globalization, reputation is increasingly exposed to real-time scrutiny through media, social platforms, and stakeholder interactions. Consequently, organizations are compelled to adopt systematic and evidence-based methodologies for its assessment, integrating diverse indicators and perspectives to form a holistic understanding of their reputational capital.

The complexity of reputation lies in its multidimensional and dynamic nature. It is simultaneously a relational construct, shaped by the perceptions of multiple stakeholders, and a strategic resource that contributes to market positioning, customer loyalty, and investor confidence. Moreover, reputation is context-dependent: sectoral specificities, regulatory environments, and cultural frameworks introduce variability in how it is formed and interpreted. Traditional approaches, such as reputation indices and stakeholder surveys, have provided valuable benchmarks; however, they are no longer sufficient to capture the full scope of reputational dynamics in a rapidly changing digital environment.

The rise of advanced analytical tools—media sentiment analysis, digital engagement metrics, and AI-driven monitoring—has broadened the methodological landscape, offering new opportunities for real-time assessment and predictive insight. At the same time, the growing emphasis on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors underscores the need to integrate sustainability-related indicators into reputation assessment frameworks.

Against this backdrop, the article addresses the pressing need to consolidate methodological approaches to reputation evaluation. It systematizes traditional and contemporary methods, explores their theoretical foundations, highlights key strengths and limitations, and identifies pathways for their further refinement. By doing so, it provides both an academic contribution to the conceptualization of reputation and practical guidance for enterprises seeking to manage and enhance their reputational capital in an interconnected world.

**Literature Review.** Assessment of corporate reputation is a critical task for firms seeking to preserve competitive advantage, strengthen stakeholder trust, and ensure long-term resilience. A robust evaluation methodology enables organizations to identify how they are perceived publicly, diagnose strengths, and surface potential reputation risks. This literature review synthesizes core approaches to reputation assessment, their theoretical underpinnings, and emerging practices in the digital era. Corporate reputation—an essential intangible asset—is multidimensional, extending beyond financial indicators to encompass stakeholder trust, social responsibility, brand perceptions, and ethical conduct. It strongly shapes organizational performance, consumer behavior, and sustained competitive positioning (Barnett, Jermier, & Lafferty, 2006; Dowling, 2001; Rindova, Williamson, & Petkova, 2005). Scholars emphasize the need for systematic, structured methodologies capable of capturing the

complexity and dynamism of reputation (Fombrun & van Riel, 2004; Whetten & Mackey, 2002).

A first conceptual pillar comprises stakeholder-oriented approaches. Reputation is intrinsically relational: it is constructed through the perceptions of distinct stakeholder groups, each bringing specific expectations and evaluative criteria (Freeman, 1984; Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997). Customers often privilege product innovation, service reliability, and brand trust, which translate into loyalty and market success. Employees evaluate internal reputation through workplace satisfaction, retention, and cultural alignment. Investors and shareholders attend to financial credibility and ethical business conduct as signals of risk and value creation. Regulators and communities focus on compliance, sustainability practices, and contributions to societal welfare. Comprehensive assessment frameworks therefore integrate feedback across these constituencies to provide a balanced, holistic view of organizational reputation (Fombrun, Gardberg, & Sever, 2000; Deephouse, 2000).

A second pillar is the integration of quantitative and qualitative indicators. Effective reputation evaluation combines objective performance metrics with subjective stakeholder perceptions to avoid measurement bias and construct validity threats (Barnett et al., 2006). Typical quantitative indicators include financial performance (e.g., revenue growth, profitability, market share), aggregate online ratings and reviews (e.g., consumer platforms and social media metrics), and media coverage volume and sentiment derived from computational text analysis (Deephouse, 2000; Einwiller, Carroll, & Korn, 2010). Complementary qualitative indicators capture nuance: stakeholder interviews, surveys, and focus groups reveal attribution patterns and salience; brand narratives and experience-based accounts illuminate emotional attachment, legitimacy judgments, and loyalty mechanisms (Rindova et al., 2005; Whetten & Mackey, 2002). Triangulating these sources improves reliability and enhances the explanatory power of reputation diagnostics.

Third, multidisciplinary foundations enrich the assessment of reputation as a complex construct. Management research frames reputation as a strategic resource that influences decision-making, leadership, and organizational resilience (Barney, 1991; Roberts & Dowling, 2002). Marketing scholarship explicates the links among brand image, customer loyalty, and market positioning as integral components of reputational capital (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1996). Social psychology contributes insights on collective perception formation, social norms, and group dynamics that shape reputational judgments across audiences (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Drawing on these traditions supports more comprehensive models and measurement strategies.

Finally, robust assessment must recognize the dynamic and evolutionary character of reputation. Public evaluations are continually reshaped by market trends, technological change, and shifting societal expectations, including heightened scrutiny of corporate social responsibility and ethical standards in digital environments (Fombrun & van Riel, 2004; Schultz, Mouritsen, & Gabrielsen, 2001). Methodologies therefore benefit from longitudinal designs, real-time monitoring (e.g., social listening, media analytics), and adaptive indicators that capture inflection points—both risks and

opportunities – in an organization’s reputational trajectory (Deephouse, 2000; Roberts & Dowling, 2002). In sum, a rigorous reputation-assessment framework integrates stakeholder perspectives, blends quantitative and qualitative evidence, leverages multidisciplinary theory, and incorporates temporal sensitivity to the evolving context in which corporate reputations are constructed and contested.

Key factors shaping the dynamics of corporate reputation include technological change and the rise of CSR/ESG expectations. First, technological influence—especially digitization – has heightened the transparency and visibility of reputational signals, exposing firms to continuous public scrutiny through online platforms and social media; this accelerates feedback cycles and amplifies both positive and negative stakeholder evaluations (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011; Luo, Zhang, & Duan, 2013). Second, CSR and ESG trends have moved to the center of stakeholder judgments: contemporary audiences increasingly evaluate firms by their contributions to environmental stewardship, social outcomes, and sound governance, redefining what counts as reputational strength (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Eccles, Ioannou, & Serafeim, 2014). To remain decision-useful in such an environment, assessment methodologies must adapt by integrating real-time analytics, social listening, and proactive monitoring systems that capture rapid, platform-mediated shifts in sentiment and salience (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010; Fombrun & van Riel, 2004).

A contextual and sector-specific approach is likewise essential. In highly regulated industries (e.g., healthcare, finance), compliance performance and ethical rigor weigh more heavily in reputation formation, given elevated scrutiny by regulators and heightened downside risk (Deephouse, 2000; Roberts & Dowling, 2002). In creative industries, reputation often hinges on innovation, originality, and cultural impact that shape identity and symbolic value (Rindova, Petkova, & Kotha, 2007). For global enterprises, cross-national variation in cultural norms and regulatory regimes compounds reputational complexity, creating liabilities of foreignness and legitimacy gaps that firms must manage across institutional environments (Kostova & Zaheer, 1999; Gardberg & Fombrun, 2006). Tailoring measurement frameworks to these sectoral contingencies yields more accurate diagnostic insight into reputational status and risk.

Conceptually, reputation remains a multifaceted, stakeholder-oriented construct. By integrating quantitative and qualitative indicators – for example, financial outcomes, media volume and sentiment, and platform ratings alongside interviews, focus groups, and narrative analyses – organizations can obtain comprehensive, actionable profiles of how they are perceived and why (Barnett, Jermier, & Lafferty, 2006; Einwiller, Carroll, & Korn, 2010). At the same time, the dynamic, evolutionary character of reputation, shaped by technological, social, and sector-level forces, underscores the need for adaptive, context-dependent methods that track longitudinal change, detect inflection points, and link reputation drivers to strategic responses (Fombrun & van Riel, 2004; Roberts & Dowling, 2002). These foundations guide the design of robust assessment methodologies capable of addressing the complex reputational challenges of today’s interconnected economy.

**Table 1. The conceptual bases for evaluating a firm’s corporate reputation**

Aspect	Key components	Examples/applications	Consequences
Stakeholder-centered approaches	Reputation is shaped by the perceptions of different stakeholder groups: 1. Customers (product quality, service reliability) 2. Employees (job satisfaction, retention) 3. Investors/shareholders (financial and ethical practices) 4. Regulators/communities (compliance, CSR)	Customer priority: innovation and service excellence. - Regulator focus: aligning ethical business and CSR. - Employee survey for internal reputation assessment.	Provides a multidimensional view of reputation by integrating diverse expectations, offering a balanced and holistic view of an organization's reputation.
Quantitative and qualitative indicators	Quantitative metrics: 1. Financial metrics (revenue growth, profitability) 2. Online ratings and reviews (aggregate scores) 3. Media coverage (volume and sentiment analysis) Qualitative metrics: 1. Stakeholder opinions (surveys, interviews) 2. Brand narratives (storytelling of experiences)	Quantitative: Using sentiment analysis to assess trends in media coverage. Qualitative: Direct surveys to capture nuances of reputation perceptions.	Combines objective metrics with subjective perceptions, offering a comprehensive and effective framework for assessing reputational performance and gaps.
Reputation as a multidisciplinary construct	Engages in various disciplines to enrich understanding: 1. Management Science (Strategic Influence) 2. Marketing (Brand Loyalty and Positioning) 3. Social Psychology (Group Behavior and Social Norms)	- Management: Using reputation as a strategic resource. - Marketing: Aligning brand image with stakeholder needs. - Psychology: Study of collective perception.	Provides a comprehensive understanding through the integration of diverse academic and practical perspectives, providing a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of reputation.
Dynamic and evolving nature	Reputation is shaped by external trends and technological advancements: - Technological impact: digital transformation and visibility. - CSR/ESG trends: stakeholders are focused on sustainability and ethical practices.	- Real-time analytics to track reputation changes through technological advancements. - Monitoring CSR/ESG compliance to align with changing stakeholder expectations.	Ensures compliance by adapting methodologies to rapidly changing external factors, promoting flexibility in reputation management and assessment.
Contextual and sector-specific approaches	Reputation assessment depends on the industry and context: 1. Highly regulated industries: healthcare, finance (focus on compliance). 2. Creative industries: innovation and cultural impact. 3. Global enterprises: managing diverse cultural and regulatory landscapes.	- Healthcare: Upholding strict ethical standards. - Creative industries: Focusing on originality and impact. - Global companies: Managing the nuances of regional reputation.	Custom methodologies enhance accuracy and relevance, ensuring assessments meet the industry and contextual requirements of stakeholders and markets.

Source: compiled by the author

Table 1 summarizes the conceptual framework for reputation assessment, organizing the information by key aspects, components, examples, and implications for clarity and ease of understanding.

**Aims.** The aim of the article is to synthesize core approaches and conceptual foundations of reputation assessment and to organize practical methods and limitations into a coherent, decision-useful framework.

**Methodology.** The study employs a layered synthesis design that integrates stakeholder-oriented assessment with mixed-methods measurement, multidisciplinary theorization, and sector-specific tailoring. First, stakeholder orientation is operationalized through a mapping of salient groups (customers, employees, investors, regulators, communities) and the alignment of indicators with their distinct evaluative criteria. Second, a mixed quantitative–qualitative schema is constructed to triangulate objective signals (e.g., index scores, sentiment trajectories, event-study effects on financials) with subjective judgements (e.g., interview narratives, focus-group insights, open-ended survey data). Third, a multidisciplinary scaffold—drawing on management, marketing, and social psychology—guides construct specification (e.g., trust, legitimacy, identity congruence) and reduces common-method and mono-disciplinary bias. Fourth, sectoral adaptation is achieved by calibrating thresholds, weights, and observables to regulatory intensity, innovation cycles, and exposure to public scrutiny across industries.

Methodologically, the article enumerates and standardizes core techniques—indices and rankings; stakeholder surveys and interviews; media and content analysis (including sentiment and thematic models); social-media and digital analytics; reputation audits; and economic-impact analyses—and specifies data requirements, typical preprocessing steps, and decision rules for each. To surface implementation risks and improvement paths, recurring challenges (e.g., sampling bias, construct drift, model staticity, data-quality variance, over-aggregation) are organized into structured tables and figures alongside mitigation levers (e.g., multi-source triangulation, rolling revalidation, anomaly detection, and sector-level priors). This yields a replicable workflow that links question formulation to indicator selection, evidence integration, and reporting.

**Results.** Business reputation assessment is deeply rooted in established theoretical frameworks that provide a structured understanding of how reputational capital is formed, maintained, and used. These theories help explain the mechanisms by which reputation influences stakeholder behavior and organizational success, and guide the development of assessment methodologies.

Based on the results of the study, the main theories of business reputation assessment were systematized (Table 2).

This table organizes an extended account of the theoretical foundations in a structured format, offering an overview of each framework’s core ideas, applications, strengths, and limitations for corporate-reputation assessment.

*Stakeholder theory.* Organizations operate within a web of relationships with multiple stakeholder groups, each bearing distinct expectations and influence. Foundational work by Freeman (1984) emphasized that a firm’s success depends on its ability to address the needs of diverse stakeholders—including customers, employees, investors, suppliers, communities, and regulators. Reputation-assessment methodologies grounded in stakeholder theory therefore prioritize the direct collection

of evidence from these constituencies to form a holistic picture of organizational reputation (Freeman, 1984). Key instruments include (a) surveys and interviews, which elicit stakeholders’ perceptions of organizational performance, ethical conduct, and social responsibility; and (b) stakeholder mapping, which identifies and ranks salient groups to ensure targeted evaluation that incorporates heterogeneous viewpoints.

**Table 2. Characteristics of the main theories of business reputation assessment of enterprises**

Theoretical Frameworks	Methodology Applications	Strengths and Relevance	Challenges
Stakeholder Theory	Surveys and Interviews: Direct engagement to assess stakeholder perceptions of performance, ethics, and accountability.	Provides a relational and multidimensional perspective on reputation.	Balancing conflicting stakeholder expectations (e.g., customer demands versus regulatory compliance).
Resource-Based View (RBV)	Stakeholder Mapping: Identifying and prioritizing key groups for targeted assessment.	Helps identify specific issues, build trust, and close reputation gaps.	Focusing on financial results may overlook qualitative aspects such as employee satisfaction or community trust.
Social Identity Theory	Economic Impact Analysis: Linking reputation to financial outcomes such as stock price or revenue growth.	Emphasizes the financial and strategic importance of reputation.	Emotional factors are difficult to quantify.
Signaling Theory	Benchmarking and Indexes: Comparing organizations based on reputation rankings, such as RepTrak or Fortune's Most Admired Companies.	Aligns reputation assessment with organizational goals.	Discrepancies between internal and external perceptions complicate evaluation.

Source: Compiled by the author

*Resource-based view (RBV).* In the RBV tradition, reputation is conceptualized as a value-creating strategic asset that can be valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN), thereby contributing to sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). Evaluation methodologies inspired by RBV quantify the contribution of reputation to performance outcomes such as market share, revenue growth, and shareholder value. Typical instruments include (a) economic-impact analyses that relate reputational shifts to stock-price reactions or revenue changes, and (b) comparative rankings and indices—for example, the Reputation Institute’s RepTrak system and Fortune’s “World’s Most Admired Companies”—which benchmark reputation as a competitive resource across firms and industries (Fombrun, Gardberg, & Sever, 2000; Fortune Media, 2025).

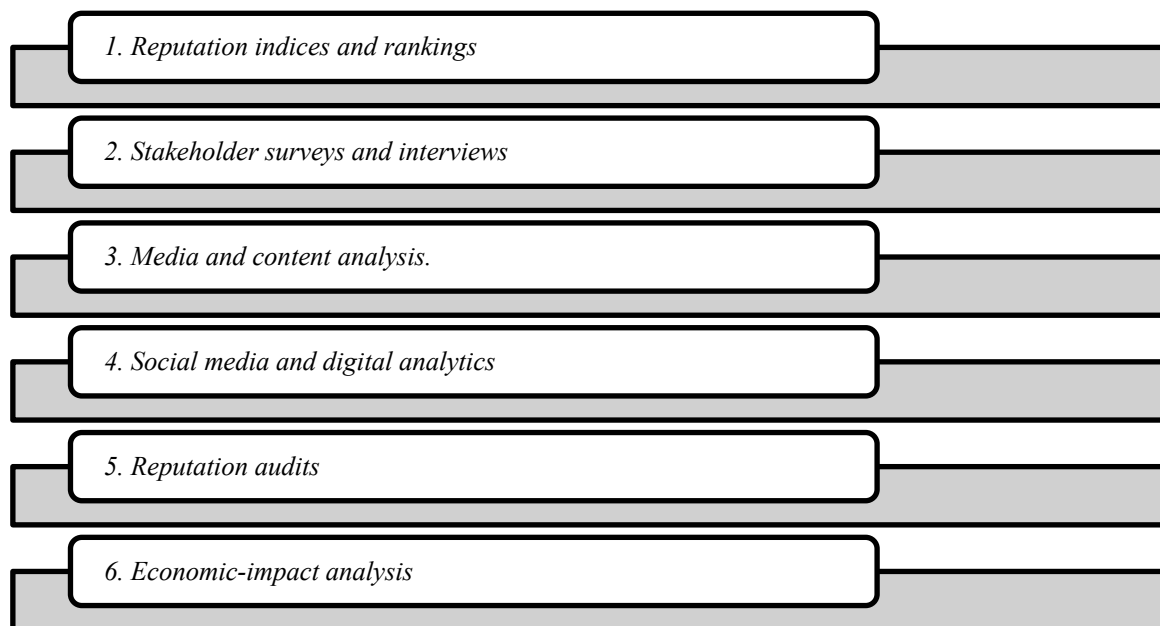
*Social identity theory.* Tajfel and Turner (1979) argue that individuals derive part of their self-concept from the organizations with which they identify. Reputation thus shapes stakeholder loyalty and cohesion – especially among employees, customers, and local communities – by reinforcing shared values and identity. Assessment tools aligned with this perspective include (a) media and content analysis, which examines the alignment between public narratives and stakeholder identity claims to reveal how reputation influences emotional and psychological bonds; and (b) employee-

engagement surveys, which gauge identification with the organization's mission and values as indicators of internal (workforce) reputation.

*Signaling theory.* Spence (1973) explains how actors convey unobservable quality under information asymmetry. Corporate reputation functions as a signal of reliability and competence to customers, investors, and other audiences, reducing uncertainty and fostering trust. Methodologies consistent with signaling theory include (a) economic-impact studies that test how reputational signals affect investment decisions, customer acquisition, or market share, and (b) social-media analytics that track online sentiment and engagement to observe how organizations communicate values, strengths, and credibility to external audiences.

Each framework contributes a distinct lens to reputation assessment: stakeholder theory foregrounds relational, multi-perspective measurement; the RBV highlights strategic and financial value creation; social identity theory captures identity-driven and affective dynamics; and signaling theory clarifies the role of reputation in lowering uncertainty and strengthening trust. By integrating these perspectives, organizations can design comprehensive, context-sensitive methodologies that reflect both strategic objectives and stakeholder expectations.

Based on the study's results, the principal reputation-assessment methodologies were systematized and are summarized in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Core methodologies for assessing corporate reputation**

Source: compiled by the author

The main principal reputation-assessment methodologies are:

1. *Reputation indices and rankings.* Reputation indices and rankings provide standardized, cross-industry comparisons of firms' reputational standing by combining structured data collection with statistical modeling. Fortune's World's Most Admired Companies ranks firms on criteria such as innovation, product/service quality, people management, and global competitiveness, based on surveys of executives, directors,

and analysts - i.e., a peer-based assessment that commands legitimacy but may reflect subjective judgments and industry-specific biases (Fortune Media, n.d.). The RepTrak System, developed by the Reputation Institute, quantifies reputation along seven dimensions – emotional appeal, products/services, innovation, workplace, governance, citizenship, and leadership – using large-scale surveys to produce a composite, comparable score. While widely adopted, it is sometimes critiqued for compressing complex and dynamic nuances of reputation into a single metric (Fombrun, Gardberg, & Sever, 2000). In short, indices yield high-level benchmarking that is well suited to comparative analysis, yet they can lack the granularity needed to diagnose sector-specific dynamics or real-time shifts.

2. *Stakeholder surveys and interviews.* Direct engagement with stakeholders generates qualitative and quantitative insight into reputation by foregrounding perceptions among key groups such as customers, employees, investors, and regulators. Customer-satisfaction surveys assess perceived quality, reliability, and value; instruments like the Net Promoter Score (NPS) are frequently used to gauge loyalty and advocacy, offering actionable signals for reputation enhancement (Reichheld, 2003). Employee surveys capture internal reputation – workplace culture, ethical climate, and leadership efficacy – which is pivotal for attracting and retaining talent and often precedes external signals. Although indispensable for pinpointing issues and improvement areas, surveys and interviews can be time-consuming and susceptible to recall and recency biases, since responses may be shaped by the most recent interactions or salient incidents (Barnett, Jermier, & Lafferty, 2006).

3. *Media and content analysis.* Analysis of media coverage and online content has become a cornerstone of reputation assessment in the digital era, clarifying how organizations are portrayed in public narratives. Sentiment analysis applies natural language processing to news, blogs, and social-media discussions to quantify tonal valence and track positive/negative trends over time. Thematic analysis identifies recurring frames and topics in coverage, revealing which issues dominate public perception and how they align with organizational goals or challenges. Media analytics are well suited for near-real-time trend detection and early warning of reputational crises; however, their reliability depends on source quality, representativeness, and modeling accuracy (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011; Einwiller, Carroll, & Korn, 2010).

4. *Social media and digital analytics.* Social-media analytics are indispensable for contemporary reputation work because they surface real-time public opinion and stakeholder engagement. Engagement metrics (e.g., likes, shares, comments, mentions) proxy brand salience and communicative effectiveness, while influencer and network analysis maps the actors and structures that amplify (or undermine) reputational signals. Partnering with credible advocates can strengthen reputation, whereas timely, evidence-based responses to critical voices can mitigate risk. The trade-off is resource intensity: meaningful insight typically requires continuous monitoring and advanced analytical capability to separate signal from noise at scale (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Luo, Zhang, & Duan, 2013).

5. *Reputation audits.* A reputation audit is a holistic appraisal of organizational

policies, practices, and stakeholder perceptions that yields a multi-faceted diagnostic of reputational health. Internal document analysis—mission statements, CSR/ESG reports, codes of conduct, and internal communications—tests alignment between stated values and enacted behavior. External feedback collection from customers, partners, and industry experts provides an outside-in benchmark relative to peers. Audits excel at uncovering root causes of strengths and weaknesses, yet they are often time- and cost-intensive and may require specialized expertise to execute and interpret credibly (Fombrun & van Riel, 2004; Roberts & Dowling, 2002).

6. *Economic-impact analysis.* Economic-impact methods link reputation directly to financial outcomes, offering a powerful way to quantify tangible value. Stock-price reactions to reputational events (e.g., scandals, awards) provide market-based evidence of financial impact through event-study designs. Revenue and market-share relationships capture how positive reputation enhances loyalty and acquisition, transmitting to top-line growth and competitive position. Although financially compelling, these approaches can understate less tangible but critical elements – trust, brand equity, and stakeholder loyalty – that resist precise quantification (Deephouse, 2000; Roberts & Dowling, 2002).

Despite significant methodological progress, current approaches face inherent challenges – ranging from subjectivity and sampling bias to data-quality constraints and over-aggregation – that can affect validity, reliability, and decision-usefulness. These limitations, summarized in Table 3, indicate clear directions for refinement: triangulating multiple data sources, leveraging real-time analytics, tailoring sector-specific indicators, and transparently reporting assumptions and uncertainty to preserve interpretability and strategic relevance (Barnett et al., 2006; Fombrun & van Riel, 2004).

**Table 3. Main challenges and limitations in using existing methods for assessing the business reputation of enterprises**

Problem	Description	Impact	Opportunities for improvement
Subjectivity and bias	Reputation assessment methodologies are often based on stakeholder opinions, media content, and qualitative analysis, which can introduce bias.	Bias limits the reliability of assessments, which can lead to distorted perceptions and erroneous decisions.	Use mixed methods of assessment, use of machine learning algorithms to minimize bias.
Data quality and availability	Reputation assessment depends on the quality and availability of data. Social media, fake reviews, and regional differences can distort results.	Fragmented assessments, failure to identify new risks, reputation distortion.	Implement data validation, use of alternative sources (employee feedback, competitive analysis).
Dynamic and context-specific nature of reputation	Reputations change rapidly, influenced by external and internal factors. Reputation expectations vary by industry and region.	Static models may not account for reputation evolution, making assessments inaccurate.	Use of dynamic assessment models, adaptation of methods to specific factors of the industry, region.
Integrating digital and traditional metrics	It is difficult to combine digital analytics with traditional metrics, resulting in disparate assessments.	Incomplete or inconsistent assessments, limited ability to respond to risks.	Integration of digital and traditional methods of analysis, development of analytical systems for complex assessment.

Source: compiled by the author

Methodologies for assessing corporate reputation have advanced markedly, reflecting the construct's complexity and dynamism in a digitalized, global environment. Moving beyond traditional indices and stakeholder surveys to incorporate sophisticated social-media analytics and AI-enabled tools, contemporary approaches offer complementary lenses for understanding and managing reputational capital. Yet these methods must continue to evolve to address emergent challenges: systematically integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations; tailoring indicators to sector-specific conditions; and exploiting real-time digital signals without sacrificing validity or interpretability. By iteratively refining measurement frameworks -triangulating qualitative and quantitative evidence, adopting longitudinal and event-based designs, and deploying machine-learning diagnostics for early-warning detection – organizations can achieve a deeper, decision-useful understanding of reputation and craft proactive strategies to sustain and enhance it in an increasingly interconnected world.

**Discussion.** A composite approach to reputation assessment outperforms single-method strategies because it couples high-level benchmarking with fine-grained diagnostics. Indices and rankings provide comparability and longitudinal baselines; stakeholder instruments elicit the attributions that actually drive support or opposition across key audiences; media, sentiment, and thematic analyses trace how issues emerge, diffuse, and refract through public narratives; digital analytics add temporal acuity by capturing engagement spikes and networked amplification in real time; audits test the congruence between declared values and enacted practices; and economic-impact designs translate reputational movement into financial relevance. Critically, these lenses are complementary rather than substitutable: benchmarking flags where a firm stands, while diagnostics explain why – and how to intervene.

Contextualization further sharpens inference. In highly regulated sectors, compliance and integrity signals require heavier weighting; in creative industries, novelty and cultural resonance are more predictive; in global enterprises, legitimacy must be modelled across heterogeneous institutional settings. Continuous monitoring addresses rapid regime shifts induced by digitization and the salience of CSR/ESG expectations, while explicit acknowledgement of limitations – bias in respondent pools, coverage gaps in data, model brittleness under distributional change, and integration frictions across sources – motivates designs that are adaptive by default: rolling samples, re-estimation windows, sensitivity analyses, and cross-modal validation.

**Conclusion.** Contemporary methodologies for assessing corporate reputation have matured into a coherent toolkit but now face a premium on adaptability. Priority enhancements include systematic integration of ESG constructs into indicator sets; sector-sensitive calibration of weights and thresholds; fusion of digital and traditional measures with explicit validation protocols; and broader use of longitudinal and event-based designs coupled with real-time analytics to detect inflection points early. Implemented together, these refinements convert disparate signals into a comprehensive, decision-useful profile of reputational status and risk – supporting timely, targeted actions to preserve and enhance reputational capital in an increasingly interconnected environment.

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