BRAND MANAGEMENT IN CRISES

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Purpose: Brand management is an essential issue for academic researchers and managers. The aim of this study was to determine the state of development of the topic of brand management in crisis situations with particular reference to the thematic areas, based on a bibliometric analysis.

Design/methodology/approach: A bibliometric analysis was used with five stages: design, compilation, analysis, visualization, and interpretation. A total of 624 and 572 publications were obtained through an advanced search in the Scopus and Web of Science databases, respectively. Publication- and citation-related indicators and science mapping in the context of keyword co-occurrence were applied.

Findings: The first publication on brand management in crises and indexed in the Scopus or Web of Science database was published in 1985. 17 and 16 clusters of keyword co-occurrence were identified for publications indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases, respectively. Cluster analysis conducted for three time periods identified 4 clusters in 1985-2008, 11 clusters in 2009-2019, and 12 clusters in 2020-2024 for keywords in publications indexed in the Scopus database. For publications indexed in the Web of Science database, 3, 13, and 15 clusters were obtained, respectively.

Research limitations/implications: Bibliometric analysis was performed for different brands, but the division between luxury and economy brands and between corporate and product brands was not analyzed. Second, scientific mappings were presented for all items in the period under study. Cases of individual brands and types of crisis situations were not considered either.

Practical implications: The practical implications relate to crisis management, image shaping, and technological transformation. Companies should create data-driven strategies for creating proactive communication strategies, segmenting, and personalizing customers. In addition, companies should integrate social responsibility into their core strategy and establish moral standards in response to rising social standards and laws.

Originality/value: This bibliometric analysis fills a research gap because there aren't many studies on brand management in crises in the literature. The study indicates thematic clusters throughout the period studied, as well as in the three periods separated by the financial crisis and the pandemic outbreak.

Keywords: brand management, crises, bibliometric analysis.

Category of the paper: literature review.

1. Introduction

The significance of brand management is a crucial topic for academic researchers and managers (Banerjee, 2008; Beverland, 2021; Heding et al., 2008; Kapferer, 2004; King, 1991; Muller, 1998). This is due to the perception of the brand as a combination of tangible and intangible elements (Romero, Yagüe, 2016; Sammut-Bonnici, 2015) and the function of the brand for consumers and entrepreneurs. The most well-known brands can create a special relationship with consumers based on intangible qualities that evoke strong emotional responses (Holt, 2003; Su, Reynolds, 2017). In addition, brands enable the identification of products and market assortment from different producers (Alnawas, Altarifi, 2015; Appiah et al., 2019), create consumer experiences (Lin, 2015), and differentiate products by introducing distinction and differentiation (Aaker, 2004; Ishola, 2022).

The literature points to different approaches to brand crisis management, identifying various types of crises. These include crises of an internal nature and those resulting from external circumstances. Many difficulties that affect brands may significantly impact their reputation and financial success. Effective crisis management is necessary to minimize harm and restore brand value. Effective crisis management includes proactive planning (De Matteis et al., 2023; Deveney, 2018), crisis response strategies (Caulton et al., 2022; Dutta, Pullig, 2011), open communication (Doberstein, 2018; Morgan, Wilk, 2021; Ren, Yan, 2024), and post-crisis recovery (Doberstein, 2018; Srivastava, 2019). Each time a crisis occurs, it is necessary to adopt a specific plan of action. However, bibliometric analyses and/or systematic literature reviews relating to brand management in crisis are lacking in the literature. The available publications refer to specific crisis situations, specific industries, geographical regions, social groups, or specific brands.

Therefore, the aim of this study was to determine the state of development of the topic of brand management in crisis situations with reference to the thematic areas, based on a bibliometric analysis. The following research questions were developed:

1. What is the state of development of the research area on brand management in crises?
2. What thematic areas have been analyzed in the context of brand management in crises?
3. Are there differences in the thematic areas of brand management in crisis situations in different periods of time?

The structure of this publication is as follows. After the introduction, a literature review is presented in subsection two. In subsection three, the methodology is given. Subsection four describes the results and includes three sections on the number of publications and citations and thematic clusters of publications indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases. The next subsection includes a discussion of the results and practical implications. The final section is conclusions, limitations, and direction for future research.

2. Literature review

In the literature, brand management is widely analyzed, indicating the definitions, determinants, and evolution of this process (Beverland, 2021; Górska-Warsewicz, 2025; Kapferer, 2012; Paek et al., 2020; Pereira-Villazón et al., 2021). One of the earlier studies distinguishes four eras of brand management. The first era was dominated by company-owner-entrepreneurs and high-level manufacturers in the United States and the successes of nationally branded consumer products. In the second era, from 1915 to 1929, the focus was on managing existing brands and introducing new ones to the market in cooperation with advertising agencies. The third era lasted until 1949, with the period of war, crises, and economic changes. In the fourth stage, which continues to this day, brand managers were introduced, new types of brands appeared, and at the same time loyalty to brands decreased (Low, Fullerton, 1994).

Defining brand management has been intensifying in recent years (Kasemsap, 2018; Kulkarni et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2008; Rahman et al., 2018; Yanenko et al., 2020). For example, it was indicated that one aspect of marketing is brand management, which employs strategies to gradually raise a product line's or brand's perceived value (Saraf, Sujatha, 2018). It necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the market, taking into account both the competitive environment and the changing consumer preferences (Cain, 2014). The positioning of brands in the marketplace, including intangibles like consumer perceptions and brand equity as well as tangibles like price, packaging, and the marketing mix, is another definition of brand management (Cain, 2014). In this concept, brand management is seen as a top management task, involving strategic, visionary, and multifunctional processes (Tollin, 2007). Additionally, any organizational culture, system, or structure that supports a company's brand operations is referred to as brand management (Lee et al., 2008). It includes components such as brand-oriented organizations, culture, and brand knowledge (Gisip, Harun, 2013; Lee et al., 2008), as well as marketing capabilities, brand orientation, and innovations (Gisip, Harun, 2013).

The literature provides various elements of brand management, including brand positioning, messaging, differentiation, communication, monitoring, and identity development (Kulkarni et al., 2023; Yanenko et al., 2020). Brand monitoring is the process of continuously evaluating the brand's performance and making necessary adjustments to strategies (Kulkarni et al., 2023); positioning is perceived as establishing a unique place for the brand in the market in comparison to competitors; messaging is the process of crafting and communicating the brand's message to resonate with the target audience; differentiation is defined as highlighting unique features and benefits that set the brand apart from competitors; and communication is described as engagement of customers through various channels to reinforce the brand's message and values (Kulkarni et al., 2023), and identity development is the process of creating a distinctive brand identity through elements like logos, symbols, and slogans (Yanenko et al., 2020).

The importance of brand management relates to several aspects. Strong, devoted customer relationships are created by efficient brand management through consistent brand experiences and favorable brand associations (Kulkarni et al., 2023; Saraf, Sujatha, 2018). It improves brand equity, which is the brand value perceived by consumers (Cain, 2014; Rahman et al., 2018). In a crowded market, a well-managed brand is a source of competitive advantage (Kulkarni et al., 2023; Yanenko et al., 2020). In this aspect, increased revenue, a larger market share, and better overall company success can result from effective brand management (Kasemsap, 2018).

Brand management in the literature refers to corporate brand management (Balmer, Burghausen, 2015; Chang et al., 2015; Cooper, Merrilees, et al., 2015; Paek et al., 2020; Schultz, Hatch, 2003) and product brand management (Kim et al., 2011; Rajagopal, Sanchez, 2004; Sevel et al., 2018). In addition, different approaches were analyzed; for example, the economic approach was first cited, referring to transaction theory and an economic management perspective (Heding et al., 2008). The identity approach pointed to corporate brand management in the context of corporate branding, organizational vision, mission, identity, and culture (Aaker, Joachimsthaler, 2000; Rajagopal, Sanchez, 2004). The development of brands, including corporate and product brands, resulted in another approach referring to a consumer-based approach to brand management (Keller, 1993). A further four approaches referred to personality, relationship, community, and culture perspectives (Heding et al., 2008), each time pointing to key publications relating to brand personality and archetypes (Aaker, 1997), brand consumer relationships (Fournier, 1998), brand communities (Muniz, O'Guinn, 2001), as well as brand cultures and icons (Holt, 2002). In the stakeholder approach of brand management, the corporate behavior of many stakeholder groups, including management, staff, clients, financial market participants, and others, is influenced by brand management (Maio, 2003). Subsequent approaches to brand management have pointed to approaches based on authenticity (Beverland, 2005) and heritage (Wiedmann et al., 2011).

At the same time, the antecedents and outcomes of the brand management process have been analyzed in the literature. The antecedents include, for example, brand authenticity (Beverland, 2005; Górska-Warsewicz, 2025; Moulard et al., 2016), brand history, culture (Górska-Warsewicz, 2025), brand identity (Górska-Warsewicz, 2025; Heding et al., 2008; Kapferer, 2012; Rajagopal & Sanchez, 2004), brand architecture (Aaker, Joachimsthaler, 2000), consumer loyalty (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 1993; Keller, Lehmann, 2006), and also brand heritage (Wiedmann et al., 2012, 2013). Various measures of brand performance are given as outcomes. They point to consumer measures such as loyalty, relative satisfaction, reputation, awareness (Coleman et al., 2015), customer retention, and acquisition (Herlinawati et al., 2019). Financial measures include sales, profit growth (Herlinawati et al., 2019), and financial ratios measuring return on investment and assets (Rauch et al., 2009). Business performance indicators (profitability, sales growth, market share growth, market share, and return on investment), new product performance (success rate and new product turnover) (Lee, Tsai,

2005), as well as marketing assets and brand equity (Romero, Yagüe, 2016), were also mentioned. Additionally, measures of brand performance include two groups relating to brand market performance (brand loyalty, channel support, price premium, quality, and market penetration) and to brand financial performance (market share, sales value, return on investment, gross margin, and return on assets) (Luxton et al., 2015). A's brand model, including appraisal, awareness, acquaintance, association, and allegiance metrics, is also cited in the literature (Rajagopal, 2007).

Crisis management has been widely analyzed in the literature (Boers, Henschel, 2022; Ghaderi, Paraskevas, 2022; Mokhtarifar et al., 2023; Zabłocka-Kluczka, Sałamacha, 2023; Zenker et al., 2019), referring to various levels, including brand management (Cooper, Miller, et al., 2015; Custance et al., 2012; Drewniak, Karaszewski, 2016; Greyser, 2009; Savelli, 2011). Brand crises are known as major incidents that harm brand reputation and frequently result in monetary losses as well as harm the company's reputation and future operations (Johnson et al., 2022). Lack of human-centered strategy, crisis prevention, market knowledge, leadership, management abilities, innovation, and quality assurance are some of the factors that might cause internal brand crises. These elements have the potential to compound and result in crises pertaining to values and performance (Do et al., 2019). Additionally, events involving the public and media where customers discuss their experiences are frequently examples of external causes. Reputational harm may result from these occurrences, which may impact a particular product or the entire product category (Černikovaitė, Černikovaitė, 2018).

The literature indicates various approaches to brand crisis management. Brands experience a variety of crises that can impact their financial performance and reputation. Restoring brand equity and minimizing harm require effective crisis management. Proactive planning (De Matteis et al., 2023; Deveney, 2018), crisis response strategies (Caulton et al., 2022; Dutta, Pullig, 2011), open communication (Doberstein, 2018; Morgan, Wilk, 2021; Ren, Yan, 2024), and post-crisis recovery (Doberstein, 2018; Srivastava, 2019) are all components of effective crisis management. Companies are more likely to preserve their reputation and come out stronger if they respond swiftly to crises, interact with their audience, and take lessons from them. Proactive planning is a pre-crisis planning strategy. Companies that take a proactive approach to crisis management prepare their reaction strategies in advance and train their crisis management staff (Deveney, 2018). At the same time, business continuity management is known to be one of the most effective processes used by companies to cope with crises to continue or resume business activities, thus contributing to strengthening organizational resilience (De Matteis et al., 2023).

Crisis response strategies include corrective action, reduction of offensiveness, denial (Caulton et al., 2022; Dutta, Pullig, 2011), and defensive and accommodative strategies (Fang et al., 2011). Corrective action as a strategy involves taking responsibility and repairing the damage, which is often effective in reducing brand dilution (Caulton et al., 2022). Moreover, reducing offensiveness refers to an approach aimed at minimizing the perceived severity of the

crisis (Dutta, Pullig, 2011). At the same time, denying the crisis can sometimes be effective, but its success depends on the nature of the crisis (Caulton et al., 2022; Dutta, Pullig, 2011). In contrast, defensive strategies perform better in defensible crises, while accommodative strategies perform better in indefensible crises (Fang et al., 2011).

In the context of communication in crises, a quick response and clear communication are needed to manage public perception and maintain trust (Doberstein, 2018). At the same time, social media management is important because of the crucial importance of monitoring and responding to social media sentiment. This is important since the public's reaction can significantly affect brand perception (Morgan, Wilk, 2021; Ren, Yan, 2024). In post-crisis recovery, rebuilding trust requires brands to communicate honestly and consistently (Srivastava, 2019). Additionally, companies can enhance their future crisis management tactics by taking lessons from past crises (Doberstein, 2018).

3. Methodology

The aim of the study was to determine the state of development of the topic of brand management in crisis situations with reference to the thematic areas, based on a bibliometric analysis. This is a frequently used method of analysis (Fang et al., 2022; Khalil, Gotway, Crawford, 2015; Saini et al., 2022; Songdi et al., 2021; Valenzuela-Fernandez et al., 2019) as a way to assess the current state of the area of study from a historical standpoint and forecast future development trends (Donthu et al., 2021a; Gan et al., 2022).

Five stages were used in the bibliometric analysis (Zupic, Čater, 2015). Research topics and the study's design were developed in the first stage, identified as design. In the second stage, defined as a compilation, bibliometric data in the form of 624 publications were obtained from the Scopus database and 572 publications from the Web of Science database. The search was conducted as of 27 December 2024. Databases were searched using the following search paths for Scopus (TITLE-ABS-KEY (brand AND management) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (crisis)) and for Web of Science (brand (Topic) and (management (Topic) and crisis (Topic)). The papers that met the inclusion requirements for this analysis had to be published between 1985 and 2024, have relevance to the subject of brand management in crises, and be indexed in the Scopus or Web of Science databases. Only articles about brand crisis management—such as those about reputation, product damage, and crisis communication—were included. Publications from a range of industries, including food safety, healthcare, and tourism, were included if they addressed crisis brand management. Relevance to the particular research issue served as the basis for the exclusion criteria. Publications that did not offer substantial insights into the subject area or that did not concentrate on brand management during crises were not included. Studies published in languages other than English and those not included in

the databases above were also disregarded. In particular, brand, crisis, and management were highlighted by the keywords like "brand management", "crisis communication", "reputation management", "consumer behavior", and "sustainability".

The data analysis at the third step included science mapping and performance analysis. Citation- and publication-related measures, such as the total number of publications and citations and the average number of publications and citations per year, were employed (Donthu et al., 2021b). The thematic areas in publications indexed in Web of Science and Scopus databases were examined using the bibliometric analysis. In the fourth stage, referred to as visualization, charts showing the quantity of items and clusters were part of the bibliometric counting method of science mapping. An examination of co-occurrence was found using mapping techniques. A minimum of two keyword co-occurrences were covered by a counting approach. To prepare bibliometric counting and co-occurrence analysis, VOSviewer (Nees Jan van Eck and Ludo Waltman, Leiden University, version 1.6.20) was utilized. This software is frequently used for bibliometric mapping and analysis (van Eck, Waltman, 2010). Clusters were presented for the entire period under study, starting from the first publication indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases and divided into three periods. The following division was used: until 2008, 2009-2019, and 2020-2024. The financial crisis and the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic were considered breakthrough dates. The aim of such division was to identify the subject of brand management in the context of crisis situations. The final step of the bibliometric study, known as interpretation, involves summarizing the responses to the research questions.

4. Results

1.1. Number of publications and citations related to brand management in crises

The number of publications on crisis brand management in the Scopus database at the end of 2024 was 624 (Figure 1), with an average value of 15.6 publications per year. The first two publications appeared in 1985 in Social Marketing Forum. By 2000, 22 publications had been published; in subsequent periods, the number of publications was as follows: 77 publications in 2001-2010, 275 in 2011-2020, and 250 in 2021-2024. The number of citations was 7446, with an average value of 186.15 citations per year. Just under 400 (395) publications were cited, giving an h-index of 44. The number of citations exceeded 100 in 2011, 500 in 2020, and 1000 in 2023. The highest number of citations was recorded in 2024, accounting for 20.9% of all citations. On the other hand, 61.6% of all citations were identified in 2021-2024. The number of publications and citations showed an increasing trend, as presented by the trend line with R^2 values of 0.9572 and 0.9812, respectively.

The chart displays the following equations:

$$y = 0{,}0055x^4 - 0{,}3524x^3 + 7{,}4984x^2 - 56{,}793x + 105{,}18$$
$$R^2 = 0{,}9812$$

$$y = 8E\text{-}05x^4 - 0{,}0042x^3 + 0{,}1087x^2 - 0{,}9217x + 2{,}4105$$
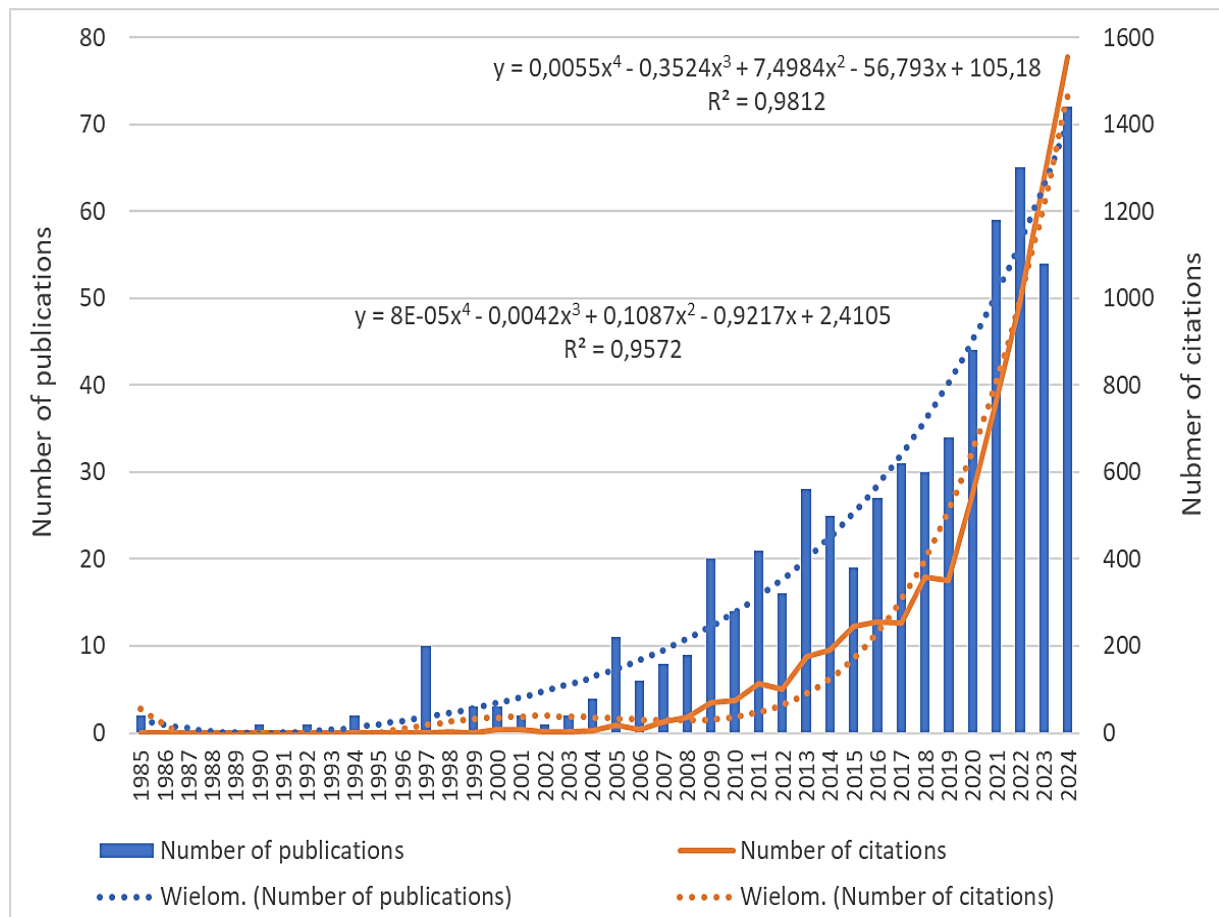$$R^2 = 0{,}9572$$

Figure 1. Number of publications and citations related to brand management in crises between 1985 and 2024 (Scopus database).

Source: Scopus data with trend line, as of 27.12.2024.

The number of publications on brand management in crises in the Web of Science database at the end of 2024 was 572 (Figure 2), with an average value of 19.03 publications per year. The first publication appeared in 1995 in Veterinary Clinics of North America – Small Animal Practice. By 2000, 4 publications had been published; in subsequent periods, the number of publications was as follows: 59 publications in 2001-2010, 282 in 2011-2020, and 226 in 2021-2024. The number of citations was 8,503, with an average value of 283.43 citations per year and an h-index of 44. The number of citations exceeded 100 in 2013, 500 in 2019, and 1,000 in 2021. The highest number of citations was recorded in 2023, accounting for 16.6% of all citations. In contrast, the number of citations in 2021-2024 accounted for 62.1% of all citations. The number of publications and citations showed an increasing trend, as shown by the trend line with R^2 values of 0.914 and 0.9721, respectively.
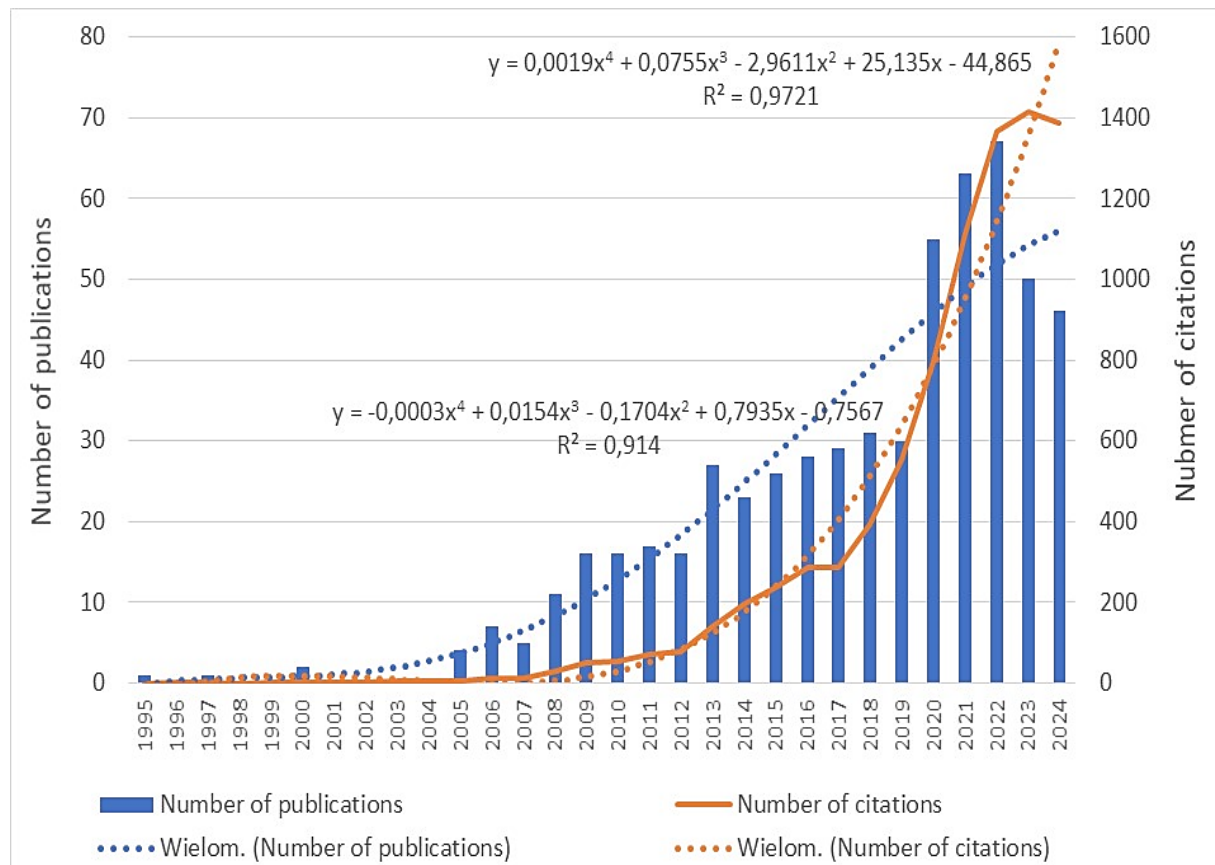
Figure 2. Number of publications and citations related to brand management in crises between 1985 and 2024 (Web of Science database).

Source: Web of Science data with trend line, as of 27.12.2024.

In the Scopus database, the study with the highest number of citations (295) was the article *The impact of a product-harm crisis on marketing effectiveness* published in Marketing Science in 2007 (Van Heerde et al., 2007) (Table 1). The article analyzed product crises using the example of the Australian market and Kraft peanut butter. It was pointed out that there is a quadruple threat in the event of a product crisis relating to loss of core sales, reduced effectiveness of marketing instruments, increased cross-sensitivity to the marketing-mix activities of competing companies, and the impact of marketing-mix instruments on sales of competing brands. This article ranked second in terms of the number of citations in the Web of Science database. On the other hand, the publication with the highest number of citations (595) was the article *Impact of product-harm crises on brand equity: The moderating role of consumer expectations* published in the Journal of Marketing Research in 2000 (Dawar, Pillutla, 2000). The aim of the study was to determine the impact of companies' responses to crises on customer-based brand equity. It was shown that consumers interpret company reactions based on their prior expectations of the company. Furthermore, the interaction of expectations and company reactions influences brand equity after a crisis. Different company responses (i.e., explicit support, ambiguous responses, and explicit concealment) and their impact on brand equity were identified.

Table 1.
Most cited publications on brand management in crises

No.		Title	Authors	Journal	Year	Number of citations	
Scopus	WoS					Scopus	WoS
1.	2	The impact of a product-harm crisis on marketing effectiveness	Van Heerde, H., Helsen, K., Dekimpe, M.G.	Marketing Science, 26(2), pp. 230-245.	2007	295	267
2.	4	An online discursive inquiry into the social dynamics of multi-stakeholder brand meaning co-creation	Vallaster, C., Wallpach, S.	Journal of Business Research, 66(9), pp. 1505-1515.	2013	230	178
3.		Reputation and its risks	Eccles, R.G., Newquist, S.C., Schatz, R.	Harvard Business Review, 85(2), pp. 104-114.	2007	185	
	1	Impact of product-harm crises on brand equity: The moderating role of consumer expectations	Dawar, N., Pillutla, M.M.	Journal of Marketing Research, 37(2), pp. 215-226.	2000		595
4.	5.	Negative spillover in brand portfolios: Exploring the antecedents of asymmetric effects	Lei, J., Dawar, N., Lemmink, J.	Journal of Marketing, 72(3), pp. 111-123.	2008	184	169
5.		From new deal institutions to capital markets: Commercial consumer risk scores and the making of subprime mortgage finance	Poon, M.	Accounting, Organizations and Society, 34(5), pp. 654-674.	2009	171	
	3.	Online damage control: The effects of proactive versus reactive webcare interventions in consumer-generated and brand-generated platforms	Van Noort, G., Willemsen, L.M.	Journal of Interactive Marketing, 26(3), pp. 131-140.	2012	398	264
	4	An online discursive inquiry into the social dynamics of multi-stakeholder brand meaning co-creation	Vallaster, C., Wallpach, S.	Journal of Business Research, 66(9), pp. 1505-1515.	2013		178

Source: Scopus and Web of Science data, as of 27.12.2024

Of the five publications with the highest number of citations, three were repeated in both databases. In addition to the article described above, two articles had the highest number of citations in both databases*: An online discursive inquiry into the social dynamics of multi-stakeholder brand meaning co-creation* published in the Journal of Business Research, and *Negative spillover in brand portfolios: Exploring the antecedents of asymmetric effects*

published in the Journal of Marketing. The aim of the first article was to identify the process of co-creation of brand meaning by multiple stakeholders in a virtual environment using social media. The crisis of the UK brand Gate Gourmet was taken as an example. The article argues that brand meaning arises from the simultaneous interactions between interdependent stakeholders in a network (referred to as a multi-log) (Vallaster, von Wallpach, 2013). The second article examines inter-brand linkages in brand portfolios in the context of marketing effectiveness and brand equity diffusion. It was pointed out that the creation of inter-brand linkages can expose brands to negative spillover effects. Based on two experiments, it was shown that the magnitude of the spillover effect between brands is a function not only of the strength of brand associations but also of their direction. In this context, the directional strength of associations depended on the number and importance of associations (Lei, Lemmink, 2008).

1.2. Thematic areas of keyword co-occurrence of publications related to brand management in crises indexed in the Scopus database

All publications related to brand management in crises and indexed in the Scopus database possessed 2,249 keywords. An analysis of the co-occurrence of keywords in 624 publications on brand management in crises in publications indexed in the Scopus database between 1985 and 2024 identified 17 clusters with varying themes (Figure 3). The first cluster, *Crisis management and communication in the digital age,* focused on the challenges of crisis management in the digital age, where the internet, social media, and mobile technologies play a key role. The impact of social media and the speed at which information is shared have made it necessary for brands to respond to crises in real time. Modern communication techniques were also necessary for enhanced transparency, information availability, and immediate contact with the customer. In the second cluster, *Strategic management and industrial development in a global economy*, the effects of a shifting global economy on brand management, industrial development, and strategic management were examined. In crises, companies had to adjust flexibly to new market conditions. Considering this, brand management is increasingly being incorporated into growth strategies in dynamic, international marketplaces. Consumer behavior's influence on brand management tactics was examined in the papers included in Cluster No. 3, *Brand management, consumer behavior, and social responsibility*. Companies had to pay attention to corporate ethics and social responsibility during the crises and modify their operations to meet shifting consumer expectations. Social values and sustainability were part of well-managed branding in this context, especially in times of crisis.

Figure 3. Bibliometric mapping of keyword co-occurrence in publications related to brand management in crises indexed in Scopus in the total period.

Source: VOSviewer based on Scopus data, as of 27.12.2024.

Topics in Cluster No. 4, *Public health, food safety, and data analytics in the context of crises,* referred to brand management in the context of public health and food safety, especially during health crises such as a pandemic. The use of data analytics enabled accurate decisions to be made regarding risk management and brand image protection. In this context, companies had to respond to health crises with full awareness of the impact they have on the perceived quality of their products. The research in Cluster No. 5, *Brand management and marketing communications in the context of crisis and digital transformation,* focused on the impact of digital transformation on brand management and marketing communications in crises. It was underlined that modern crises have required companies to respond quickly. At the same time, effectively online and digital communication tools have become essential in maintaining relationships with consumers. Crises accelerated the digitalization of processes, and brands had to skillfully combine traditional and new forms of communication to maintain their reputation.

The publications in Cluster No. 6, *Branding, globalization, and tourism development in the context of developing economies,* explored how globalization affects the development of the tourism industry in developing countries, particularly in the context of crises that may affect the economic and tourism transition in these regions. Challenges related to economic, political, or health crises influenced the perceived tourism value of a region and how a brand is managed in the context of international tourism. The themes of the publication in Cluster No. 7, *Risk, reputation, and commitment management in the context of crises and strategic communication,* focused on risk, reputation, and commitment management during crises. Strategic communication appeared to be key to maintaining a positive brand image, while risk and

reputation management in times of crisis became a cornerstone of crisis management. Companies needed to be prepared for different scenarios to not only minimize losses but also to build long-term engagement with their stakeholders. The articles in Cluster No. 8, *Management and marketing of health services in developing countries,* examined the difficulties in marketing and managing health services in developing countries, especially in the event of epidemics or other health emergencies. In the health sector, responsible communication and efficient marketing techniques that may foster trust and address medical emergencies were essential for good brand management. Cluster No. 9 on brand and crisis management methods in evolving marketplaces addressed how to modify brand management tactics considering the shifting market conditions and crisis situations. Companies needed to modify their brand strategies to new circumstances and react flexibly to crises because of shifting market conditions.

Customer relationship management and crisis communication management were the main issues of the publications in Cluster No. 10. Companies had to be cautious to keep their customers loyal, particularly during crises when it was essential to communicate with customers in a timely and suitable manner to reduce the harm to their brand's reputation. The difficulties of managing a brand in the face of societal diversity and pandemics were examined in the publications in Cluster No. 11, *Brand management in the context of pandemics and diversity.* The challenges of social and cultural diversity in the face of global crises such as pandemics have proved important, modifying their marketing and communication strategies to reflect the changing reality. Cluster No. 12, *Brand and communication management in business strategy*, focused on how important these elements were to overall corporate strategy, particularly during crises. It has been demonstrated that sustaining the integrity of business operations and promptly repairing reputations during a crisis depend on effective communication and brand management.

Cluster No. 13, *Investment in sustainable development, recycling, and waste management,* discussed recycling, waste management, and sustainability investments, all of which can aid in a brand's recovery from environmental crises. In this regard, it was noted that companies can enhance their brands and win over customers by making investments in sustainability and environmental responsibility. How the food sector, and specifically branding tactics, had to adapt to shifts in consumer behavior during a pandemic was examined in the papers in Cluster No. 14, *Branding strategies and consumer behavior in the context of the food market and pandemics.* The changing goals and demands of consumers during this period required companies to be flexible and modify their marketing strategies. Emotional and ethical methods were important in crisis management, according to Cluster No. 15, *Crisis management, emotional approach, and ethics in communication.* To communicate effectively during a crisis, it was necessary to maintain ethical communication standards while properly addressing the needs and feelings of stakeholders. Cluster No. 16, *Business ethics, image crises, and scandal management,* covered these topics, particularly when it comes to scandals. A brand reputation

could be harmed by such crises; thus, careful crises management that considers moral considerations and openness of action is essential. Brand relations management in the context of crises was the focus of Cluster No. 17, *Managing brand relations in the context of crises.* Maintaining brand value in the view of consumers and limiting the negative effects of crises now depends on maintaining customer loyalty, transparency in operations, and responding appropriately to crises.

Cluster analysis was also carried out over three time periods (Table 2). In the first period, i.e., 1985-2008, 65 publications with 399 keywords were identified. Four clusters were extracted describing key aspects of organizational management, public health, brands, and communication in the face of contemporary global challenges. It was examined how companies, governmental organizations, and communities react to situations that are always changing, such as health, economic, and ecological crises. The role of innovation, effective communication, and risk management strategies in building the resilience and competitiveness of organizations was highlighted. Special attention was given to the management and development of trade in emerging countries. At the public health level, the importance of proper management of medical services and public education was emphasized for improving well-being and effectively combating pandemics. In the context of brands and reputation, the importance of image management, building customer trust, and using modern tools such as digital communications in the face of global competitiveness and social concerns was emphasized. It was noted that modern management is inclusive and requires cooperation in many areas to achieve sustainability and organizational resilience.

In the second period (2009-2019), 264 publications with 1381 keywords were included. Analysis of co-occurrence of keywords identified 11 clusters. These clusters' articles focused on the difficulties and tactics of managing in a rapidly evolving global corporate, technological, social, and industrial context. Several aspects of risk management, crisis response, and building organizational resilience are examined considering global values, dynamic supply chains, and sustainability. With an emphasis on social media and artificial intelligence, which are transforming communication tactics and customer interactions, the importance of brands, reputation, and ethical marketing in the digital age was emphasized. Studies were conducted on consumer behavior and the use of innovation in particular industries. Furthermore, it became clear that sustainability, competitiveness, and change management were important in both local and international marketplaces. In this regard, the publication's themes emphasized the convergence of brand management tactics, innovation, social responsibility, and competitiveness in a global environment where technology, changing consumer tastes, and escalating environmental issues are radically changing the way companies and sectors operate.

Table 2.

Cluster comparison of keyword co-occurrence of publications related to brand management in crises indexed in the Scopus database by analyzed periods

Period	Publi-cations	Key-words	Clusters	Cluster specifications
Total period 1985-2024	624	2249	17	1. crisis management and communication in the digital age 2. strategic management and industrial development in a global economy 3. brand management, consumer behavior, and social responsibility 4. public health, food safety, and data analytics in the context of crises 5. brand management and marketing communications in the context of crisis and digital transformation 6. branding, globalization, and tourism development in the context of developing economies 7. risk, reputation, and commitment management in the context of crises and strategic communication 8. management and marketing of health services in developing countries 9. brand and crisis management strategies in changing markets 10. customer relationship and crisis communication management 11. brand management in the context of pandemics and diversity 12. brand and communication management in business strategy 13. waste management, recycling, and investment in sustainable development 14. branding strategies and consumer behavior in the context of food markets and pandemics 15. crisis management, emotional approach, and ethics in communication 16. business ethics, image crises, and scandal management 17. managing brand relations in the context of crises
First period: 1985-2008	65	399	4	1. managing brand, risk, communication, and product development in the context of global challenges 2. public health and health service management 3. organizational governance, innovation, and trade in the context of developing countries 4. brand management, corporate communications, and reputation building
Second period: 2009-2019	264	1381	11	1. risk management, business continuity, and crisis response in an organizational context 2. brand, crisis, and reputation management in the age of artificial intelligence and social media 3. managing change and competitiveness in global value chains 4. advertising strategies and innovation in industrial sectors 5. brand management, consumer behavior, and ethical marketing in the digital era 6. crisis management, brand reputation, and corporate social responsibility in the advertising and food industry 7. crisis response, innovation, and sustainability in industries 8. brand management and consumer behavior in emerging markets 9. economic and social impacts of sustainable development in global and regional markets 10. brand management and organizational performance in the airline industry 11. the impact of modern developments in transport, quality control, and marketing on the economy

Cont. table 2.

Third period: 2020-2024	285	1416	12	1. crisis management, consumer attitudes, and corporate strategies in the context of sustainability 2. consumer behavior, healthcare, and economic challenges in the pandemic 3. sustainable development, competitiveness, and crisis management 4. brand development, e-commerce, and sustainability in pandemic times 5. brand, crisis, and reputation management in the context of business ethics and entrepreneurship 6. risk management, sustainability, and innovation in the tourism industry 7. innovation, strategic management, and marketing in pandemic 8. brand trust, crisis, and reputation in pandemic times 9. brand reputation management, and crisis communication in social media 10. brand management and digital marketing 11. brand management, ethics, and consumer psychology 12. airline industry management, tourism, and marketing

Source: Scopus data, as of 27.12.2024.

In the last period (2020-2024), there were 285 publications with 1416 keywords, which identified 12 clusters. Considering global issues including pandemics, climate change, and technological advances, the cluster topics explored the complex interactions between crisis management, sustainability, brand strategies, and innovation. Its main areas of study were corporate strategies, consumer behavior, and the growing significance of business ethics. Particularly in the era of social media, where the quick dissemination of information affects how the public views organizations, issues like reputation management, fostering brand trust, and crisis communication were crucial. Another key element was the integration of innovation and sustainable practices into sectors that are undergoing significant transformations due to global crises. The clusters additionally considered the significance of consumer psychology, strategic management, and digital marketing in fostering and preserving competitiveness in global marketplaces. In industries that are vital to the global economy, like healthcare, aviation, and tourism, they concentrated on creating value for stakeholders through sustainability, ethical business practices, and efficient management. To achieve sustainable growth and organizational resilience in the face of ongoing change and global difficulties, recent cluster themes have highlighted the necessity of combining innovative, socially responsible, and brand management strategies.

1.3. Thematic areas of keyword co-occurrence of publications related to brand management in crises indexed in the Web of Science database

All publications related to brand management in crises and indexed in the Web of Science database carried 2,647 keywords. An analysis of the keyword co-occurrence in 572 publications on brand management in crises identified 16 clusters with varying themes (Figure 4).

Topics related to crises, brand management, and consumer behavior in the face of uncertainty were covered in publications in Cluster No. 1, *The dynamics of consumer behavior, brand management, and responses to crises in the context of contemporary challenges.* Studies

were conducted on topics such as consumer behavior, product safety, brand anthropomorphizing, anti-consumption, brand bonding, and brand crisis management. They also looked at coping mechanisms and interaction between customers and the brand in crises.
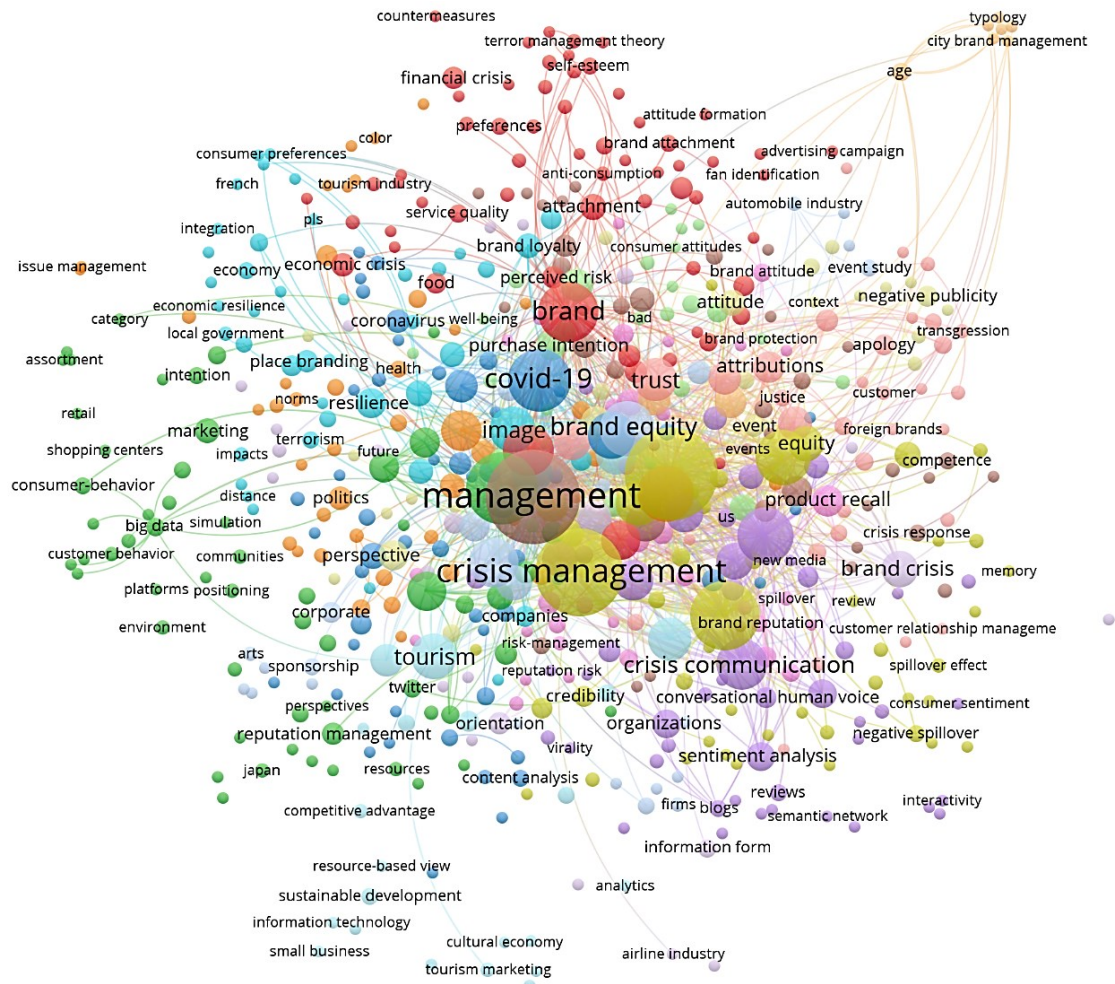

Figure 4. Bibliometric mapping of keyword co-occurrence in publications related to brand management in crises indexed in Web of Science in the total period.

Source: VOSviewer based on Web of Science data, as of 27.12.2024.

The application of contemporary technology in marketing, risk management, and strategic decision-making were the subjects covered in Cluster No. 2, *Managing communication, technology, and innovation in times of global change*. Additionally covered were issues including digital platforms, data analytics, crisis management, e-commerce, big data, and risk perception. The potential and difficulties generated by digital transformation in companies were also highlighted. Brand image, customer loyalty, and corporate social responsibility are among the publication subjects in Cluster No. 3, *Sustainable development, innovation, and corporate social responsibility in the global context*. Pandemics, sustainability, sustainable tourism, resource management, and knowledge management featured among the subjects covered. It also explored how ethical principles and social responsibility affected how people perceive brands.

Subjects of publications in Cluster No. 4, *Brand-consumer relations and reputation management in the digital age*, centered on methods for establishing a brand through social media, crisis communication, and consumer interactions. Publications covered subjects such as relationship marketing, crisis management, brand image management, love/hate relationships with brands, and the effect of social media on brand perception. Strategies to improve the relationship between the brand and its customers were also examined. Aspects of crisis communication, business reputation, and online engagement were covered in the studies of Cluster No. 5, *Crisis communication and opinion analysis in the social media*. Publications explored such topics as social media, sentiment analysis, semantic networks, situational theory of crisis communication, and electronic word-of-mouth. Furthermore, an analysis was conducted on how companies handle crises and maintain their online reputation. Consumer preferences, local branding, and quality perceptions were the main issues in studies in Cluster No. 6, *Brand image, service quality, and consumer perceptions in global markets*. Topics covered included social responsibility, consumer behavior, location branding, and product quality. It also looked at how local characteristics affect consumer loyalty and brand perceptions.

Marketing strategies and their connections to cultural values and brand perception were examined in Cluster No. 7, *Creativity, sustainability, and values in strategic marketing*. National branding, internal communication, sustainability, and planned customer behavior were among the subjects covered. Analysis was also done on social norms and how they affect communication tactics. The emotional aspect of crisis management and trust-building were the main issues of Cluster No. 8, *Crisis management and social responsibility in an organizational context*. Subjects covered included consumer attitudes, internal crisis communication, signaling theories, empathy, emotions, and resource management ideas. It was investigated how emotions and empathy affected crisis response tactics. Competition management, product quality, and marketing were among the subjects covered in Cluster No. 9, *Product, sales, and communication management as market challenges*. Furthermore, topics like competition, social responsibility, product crisis management, and brand reputation were covered. It focuses on how companies develop their position and deal with market forces.

Consumer responses to crises and ways to minimize them were the main topics of Cluster No. 10, *Consumer responses to crises and strategies for rebuilding brand reputation*. Among the topics discussed were consumer reactions, brand forgiveness, product crises, and psychological contract breaks. Furthermore, methods for restoring trust and enhancing reputation were investigated. Concerns of national culture, ethics, and globalization were covered in Cluster No. 11, *Globalization, ethics, and quality in marketing and brand management*. Greenwashing, legitimacy, education, and product safety were among the subjects covered. Companies' management methods and ethical attitudes were examined in relation to both local and global concerns. Brand value, philanthropy, and industry effectiveness were examined in publications in Cluster No. 12, *The impact of sponsorship and philanthropy*

on corporate image in a changing market environment. Public-private partnerships, sponsorship, brand equity, and how the capital markets react to business decisions were among the subjects covered. Analysis was conducted on how to combine social responsibility and corporate efficiency.

Sports and media celebrities' image management was one of the topics covered in Cluster No. 13, *The use of celebrity and sport images in brand building in crises*. Among the subjects covered were unfavorable publicity, internal branding, sports marketing, and image alignment. The cluster investigated how sports and celebrities affect the efficacy of advertising initiatives. Building resilience in the face of crises was the main topic of Cluster No. 14, *Crisis management and brand strategy in the transport and hospitality industries*. Social media, strategic choices, crisis management, and forward-looking analysis were among the subjects discussed. It examined whether organizations could adapt and survive in a changing business environment. Innovation, the tourism sector, and sustainability were the main subjects of the publication in Cluster No. 15, *Sustainability strategies and reputation management in tourism and small business*. Stakeholder management, small business development, destination branding, and competitive advantage were among the subjects covered. It was investigated how sustainable strategies affected competitiveness. Public communication, media, and government digital strategies were the topics of publication in Cluster No. 16, *Brand management of cities and public communication in the digital age*. Among the subjects covered were typologies, e-government, city brand management, and strategic communication. It explored the use of technology by public administration to enhance their reputation.

The cluster analysis was conducted over three time periods. In the first period, i.e., 1995-2008, 30 publications with 131 keywords were identified (Table 3). Three clusters with an emphasis on product safety, market image, and strategic brand management were found. Methods of creating, maintaining, and protecting brand value were examined, as well as instruments for forming ties with customers and business partners. Product safety and risk management were discussed as being crucial to preserving customer trust and brand reputation during crises. Corporate image and advertising were viewed as communication instruments that aided in the development of brands. Their responsibilities included building recognition, establishing an emotional connection with customers, and differentiating the company from its competitors. It also examined the market linkages in which the brand mediates consumer interactions, generating value for the company and its customers. It was noted that brand equity has a significant role in determining customer sentiments, loyalty, and the success of marketing initiatives.

Table 3.
Cluster comparison of keyword co-occurrence of publications related to brand management in crises indexed in the Web of Science database by analyzed periods

Period	Publi-cations	Key-words	Clus-ters	Cluster specifications
Total period 1995-2024	572	2647	16	1. the dynamics of consumer behavior, brand management, and responses to crises in the context of contemporary challenges. 2. managing communication, technology, and innovation in times of global change. 3. sustainable development, innovation, and corporate social responsibility in the global context. 4. brand-consumer relations and reputation management in the digital age. 5. crisis communication and opinion analysis in social media. 6. brand image, service quality, and consumer perceptions in global markets. 7. creativity, sustainability, and values in strategic marketing. 8. crisis management and social responsibility in an organizational context. 9. product, sales, and communication management as market challenges. 10. consumer responses to crises and strategies for rebuilding brand reputation. 11. globalization, ethics, and quality in marketing and brand management. 12. the impact of sponsorship and philanthropy on corporate image in a changing market environment. 13. the use of celebrity and sport images in brand building in crises. 14. crisis management and brand strategy in the transport and hospitality industries. 15. sustainability strategies and reputation management in tourism and small business. 16. brand management of cities and public communication in the digital age.
First period: 1995-2008	30	131	3	5. managing brand equity, and product safety in the context of market image. 6. advertising and corporate image as branding tools. 7. mediating role and brand value in market relationship analysis.
Second period: 2009-2019	230	1126	13	1. communication, reputation, and crisis management. 2. brand loyalty, trust, and marketing. 3. consumer behavior and market trends. 4. public policy, image, and reputation. 5. social responsibility, sustainability, and brand equity. 6. crisis response strategies and brand management. 7. advertising effectiveness and risk management. 8. branding, strategy, and sustainability in companies. 9. sentiment analysis, trust, and social responsibility. 10. brand image, crisis, and social responsibility. 11. consumer preferences and challenges in the financial market. 12. crisis management, strategy, and brand management. 13. crisis and issue management in the context of reputational equity.

Cont. table 3.

Third period: 2020-2024	311	1810	15	1. consumer behavior, psychology, and crisis response. 2. corporate strategy and branding in the context of competitive advantage. 3. consumer engagement, crisis communication, and reputation management. 4. corporate social responsibility, ethics, and crisis management. 5. consumer behavior in the era of digital and content marketing. 6. market strategies, customer satisfaction, and product quality. 7. corporate governance, image, and communication. 8. innovation, risk management, and digital transformation. 9. brand loyalty, consumer perception, and marketing communication. 10. corporate governance, performance, and strategic management. 11. health communication, crisis management, and public relations. 12. crisis and risk management in the context of strategic recovery. 13. consumer behavior, machine learning, and data analytics. 14. public communication, governance, and digital media. 15. small business, technology, and service management.

Source: Web of Science data, as of 27.12.2024.

In the second period (2009-2019), 230 publications with 1,126 keywords were included. Thirteen clusters covering a wide range of issues related to brand management, reputation, crises, and communication strategy in the context of various business and social elements were identified based on a co-occurrence analysis of keywords. It looked at how businesses handle their brand and reputation when faced with issues including social responsibility, shifting consumer preferences, and crises. For organizations looking to keep a favorable image during challenging times, crisis management was mentioned in relation to organizational reputation, crisis response, crisis communication, and response techniques. Aspects of marketing like brand trust, customer loyalty, and the success of advertising campaigns were also looked at. Sustainability, corporate social responsibility, and the effects of these initiatives on reputation and brand value were also highlighted. Key components of marketing strategy include concerns about customer behavior, market trends, and the effects of social media, technology, and innovation. In a review of modern marketing strategies, image and reputation threat management emerged as a key element, as has the increasing importance of technological innovation, social media, and new communication channels.

In the most recent period (2020-2024), 311 publications with 1810 keywords were included, identifying 15 clusters. In the context of modern technology and management, these clusters provide a range of concerns related to marketing tactics, corporate communications, crisis management, consumer behavior, and innovation. Cluster subjects covered consumer behavior, preferences, loyalty, and crisis management, among other psychological aspects of consuming. In addition, topics including branding, communication tactics, reputation management, and corporate social responsibility were discussed as they related to establishing and maintaining competitive advantage and brand management. Customer satisfaction, product quality management, marketing efficacy, and the application of new technology for data analysis were the main points of analysis. Innovation, risk management, and digital transformation have been shown to have a significant influence in helping companies better

handle the difficulties of the contemporary market. To create a sustainable and favorable perception of companies in the view of stakeholders and customers, special emphasis was placed on crisis management techniques, social responsibility, communication, and customer interaction.

8. Discussion of results and implications

The study aimed to determine the state of development of the topic of brand management in crisis situations with reference to the thematic areas, based on a bibliometric analysis. Three research questions have been formulated, and a discussion of the results follows according to these questions.

The first research question relates to the state of the development of brand management in crisis situations, presented in terms of the number of publications and citations. The first publication on this topic indexed in Scopus appeared in 1985 in Social Marketing Forum, while the first document indexed in Web of Science was published in 1995 in Veterinary Clinics of North America – Small Animal Practice. Since then, there have been 624 publications indexed in the Scopus database with 7446 citations. In the period 2021-2024, 49% of all studies were published, and the number of citations in this period was 61.6% of all citations. Considering publications indexed in the Web of Science database, 572 studies were published with a total of 8503 citations. In the last period, 39.6% of all studies were published, and the number of citations accounted for 62.1% of all citations.

Answering the second question, clusters reflecting the keyword co-occurrence in publications indexed in Scopus and Web of Science databases addressed approaches to contemporary challenges in brand, communication, and crisis management, considering sustainability, social responsibility, and innovation in a global context. Key areas covered several aspects, including crisis management and communication, brand and consumer relationship management, as well as social responsibility and business ethics. Seventeen clusters illustrating the keyword co-occurrence in publications indexed in the Scopus database and 16 clusters based on the Web of Science database were identified. The topics of the clusters included the crisis management strategies in various industries, taking into account the role of technology, social media, and emotions in communication. In addition, the dynamics of brand-customer relations, management of brand image and reputation, and rebuilding relationships after crises were explored. Sustainability, pro-social activities (e.g., philanthropy, sponsorship), and ethics in business strategies were taken into account. In the area of globalization, the challenges of developing economies and diversity in approaches to brand management were presented. The role of technology and innovation in communication, branding, and relationship management in times of global change and in relation to specific economic sectors was pointed

out. The topics presented in the clusters identified based on the keyword co-occurrence in publications indexed in both databases focused on crisis management and brand strategies in the context of contemporary challenges but differed in their emphasis on specific sectors, subject areas, and approaches to ethics and social responsibility. Clusters of keyword co-occurrence in publications indexed in the Scopus database referred more to specific industries, while those from the Web of Science approached marketing and management challenges in a global context.

To answer question three, the keyword co-occurrence in publications indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases was presented as clusters for three periods: (1) up to 2008, (2) 2009-2019, and (3) 2020-2024. In all three periods, clusters formed based on the keyword co-occurrence in publications focused on brand, reputation, and communications management, although in different contexts. Risk and crisis management were analyzed, with different emphases on global development, pandemics, and technology. Sustainability was examined in the first period in the context of global challenges, in the second period – in relation to innovation and industrial sustainability, and in the third period – in the context of pandemics and tourism, including consumer and business perspectives. The analysis of innovation covered the entire period studied in different contexts: in relation to organizational management in the first period and in the context of value chains, industrial sectors, and responses to crises in the second and third periods.

Cluster themes reflecting the keyword co-occurrence in publications up to 2008 referred to general aspects in the context of risk management, communication, public health, and innovation in developing countries. For example, it was pointed out that a good corporate reputation is a reservoir of goodwill that protects companies from market declines in times of uncertainty and economic turbulence (Jones et al., 2000). Appropriate reputation management (Margaritis, 2000), crisis management (Davies, 2005; Tucker, Melewar, 2005), and product-harm crisis issues (Van Heerde et al., 2007) have been studied.

At the same time, a comparative analysis of the co-occurrence clusters of keywords in publications on brand management in crisis indexed in Scopus and Web of Science databases during the first period analyzed reveals significant differences in topic coverage, research depth, and disciplinary orientation. The main differences are shown by comparing keyword co-occurrence clusters from publications on brand management in crises that were indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases during the first analysis period. Despite the fact that both datasets cover comparable periods (Scopus: 1985-2008; Web of Science: 1995-2008), their clustering results show different viewpoints on the concept and analysis of brand management in the early crisis-related literature.

During this period, Web of Science clusters indicate a more conventional and limited approach to branding. Management of brand equity and product safety as instruments of market image maintenance, advertising and corporate image as strategic branding levers, and the mediating function of brand value in the analysis of market relations are key areas of

focus. Taken as a whole, these clusters demonstrate a marketing-centric perspective, in which brand management is viewed mainly as a tool for maintaining competitive positioning and consumer perception. Crises are hidden circumstances that impact brand strength and reputation rather than being major subjects in themselves. The method is largely static and focuses on traditional concepts such as value perception, company image, and promotional communication.

Clusters developed from the Scopus database, on the other hand, suggest a more complex, multidisciplinary, and dynamic understanding of crisis brand management. In the face of global difficulties, one notable cluster links brand management to risk, communication, and product development, demonstrating an early understanding of the connection between market dynamics and the more general environmental unpredictability. Public health and health service management were introduced in another cluster, indicating a connection between branding and social infrastructure that is conspicuously lacking in the Web of Science clusters. Other clusters concentrate on brand management as a component of a larger corporate communication and reputation-building strategy, as well as organizational management, innovation, and international trade in the context of developing countries.

Between 2009 and 2019, the themes of the keyword co-occurrence clusters indicated a concretization of the issues studied in relation to specific industries and the use of new technologies. Corporate brand reputation and brand crisis management (Greyser, 2009), the role of brand equity in product-harm crisis (Rea et al., 2014), brand management in economic crisis (Drewniak, Karaszewski, 2016), and brand crisis communication (Wang, 2016) were analyzed. Brand management has also been studied in the context of luxury brands (Savelli, 2011), automotive brands (Heller, Darling, 2011, 2012), powdered milk for children (Custance et al., 2012), and food brands (Assiouras et al., 2013). Reference was also made to individual brand crises, indicating that emotional attachment to the brand provided the basis for rebuilding trust in the brand after a crisis by increasing perceptions of brand authenticity among consumers. This, in turn, provided the basis for reinstating the intent to purchase (Roy et al., 2018).

There are differences in the approach to the topics of brand management, with a focus on risk management, crisis response, sustainability, and corporate social responsibility, according to a comparison of clusters from the two databases (Scopus and Web of Science) for publications on crisis brand management from 2009 to 2019.

The second period's Scopus database has eleven clusters with a broad topic focus that includes crisis response in an organizational setting, risk management, and business continuity. In the era of social media and artificial intelligence, there is also a lot of focus on the relationship between brand, crisis, and reputation management. Other clusters concentrate on advertising strategies and innovation in industrial sectors, managing transformation and competition in global value chains, brand management, consumer behavior, and ethical marketing in the digital age. In the context of corporate social responsibility, crisis response and brand reputation management are also clearly prioritized, especially in the food and advertising sectors.

Other clusters cover topics including industry sustainability, the impact of modern advances on transportation, and airline brand management and organizational performance. Additionally, emerging markets and their impact on brand management are discussed.

The Web of Science database, on the other hand, contains 13 clusters that are thematically focused on marketing, brand loyalty, trust, and reputation, as well as communication and crisis management. Along with public policy, image, and reputation management in crisis situations, consumer behavior and market developments are also major topics. In addition to crisis response plans and brand management, other key topics include social responsibility, sustainability, and brand equity. Along with branding, strategy, and sustainability, there is also a focus on risk management and advertising effectiveness. Notably, there are clusters that concentrate on social responsibility, trust, and sentiment analysis. In addition, strategy, brand management, and crisis management are discussed, with an emphasis on crisis and issue management in relation to reputational equity.

In this context, a more comprehensive approach to brand management during crises is provided by the Scopus database, which incorporates not only communication elements but also changes in global value chains, technical progress and their impact on various industries, and the unique difficulties faced by emerging markets. Additionally, Scopus integrates sustainability with brand management and consumer behavior, with a greater emphasis on the business and social environment. However, Web of Science offers a more diverse set of clusters, emphasizing public policy, corporate social responsibility, consumer loyalty, and reputation management in relation to brand management. A more theoretical and structural approach to brand management is indicated by Web of Science's greater emphasis on sentiment and trust analysis in crisis situations as well as the connection between sustainability and brand.

In contrast, from 2020 to 2024, the cluster themes focused most on pandemics, sustainability, and business ethics in the context of global challenges. The issues of the pandemic, its impact on the economy, marketing, and sustainability were analyzed in detail. Various aspects of artificial intelligence for brand management in crisis situations were explored. Topics included research, analytics, and intelligence in crises (LaVail et al., 2024), effective crisis communication (Chiames, Smulyan, 2024), and rebranding as a crisis response (Meintjes, Botha, 2024). The importance of online brand communities in product-harm crises is demonstrated when members engage in interactions with others in online brand communities, seeking and reviewing information, creating meaning, and forming opinions (Casey et al., 2024). In the context of Ukrainian brands and communications conducted on Instagram during the Ukraine-Russia war, the importance of public and digital diplomacy was demonstrated, alongside the more specific concepts of nation branding, diplomacy, and reputation security (Ventura, 2024). The issue of COVID-19 in the context of brand management was analyzed in various aspects, including managing tourism crises (Varghese et al., 2022), crises in luxury fashion segments (Karaosman et al., 2023), the impact of marketing signals on the activities of

foreign subsidiaries (Georgopoulos et al., 2024), and university opinion leaders in global crises (Guo, Feng, 2024).

Regarding crisis brand management, the comparison of the co-occurrence clusters between the Scopus and Web of Science databases for the third period (2020-2024) shows a difference in thematic focus and research orientation. There are 12 clusters in the Scopus database for the 2020-2024 period, with a focus on corporate strategies, consumer behavior, and crisis management, particularly in relation to sustainability. Important topics include consumer behavior and the difficulties caused by healthcare and economic disruptions, especially during pandemics. With references to sustainability, competitiveness, and crisis management, as well as the convergence of brand development, e-commerce, and sustainability during a pandemic, sustainability often appears in several clusters. The management of reputation, crises, and brand in relation to entrepreneurship and corporate ethics are the subject of another notable cluster. In the tourism sector, risk management, innovation, and sustainability are emphasized. Brand trust, crises, and reputation management are also covered, especially in light of social media and pandemics. Discussions on consumer psychology, brand management ethics, digital marketing, and airline industry management are among the other clusters.

The Web of Science database, on the other hand, offers 15 clusters with a wider range of topics. Consumer behavior and crisis response are strongly emphasized, alongside psychological elements and the impact of crises on consumer sentiments. In addition to customer involvement, crisis communication, and reputation management, corporate strategy and branding are also studied in relation to competitive advantage. A recurring theme, which echoes issues identified in Scopus but places greater emphasis on broader ethical implications, is corporate social responsibility, ethics, and crisis management. Furthermore, the Web of Science explores the application of advanced technologies in crisis management and brand strategy, highlighting the significance of digital transformation, machine learning, and data analytics. Alongside smaller but equally important clusters, such as the use of technology in small businesses and service management, other clusters focus on market strategies, customer satisfaction, corporate governance, innovation, and public communication.

Over time, the two databases differ primarily in the diversity of their content as well as in the technological and strategic focus of their clusters. Scopus offers a more targeted approach to pandemic-related issues, digital marketing, and sustainability, especially in sectors such as travel and aviation. It also examines brand management in relation to ethics and entrepreneurship, highlighting them as essential elements of long-term crisis resilience. In contrast, the Web of Science provides a more comprehensive perspective, with clusters spanning digital transformation, machine learning, and data analytics, suggesting a more advanced technological approach to crisis and brand management. Moreover, the Web of Science is more detailed in its consumer-focused strategies, placing greater emphasis on marketing approaches, customer loyalty, and customer satisfaction in connection with branding.

Regarding brand management during crises, the clusters studied over time in the Scopus and Web of Science databases offer important insights into the types of crises that have been researched. Throughout the entire time from 1985 to 2024, several types of crises are identified. Considering technological change, one of the main crisis types relates to crisis management and communication in the digital era, highlighting the growing significance of digital tools in crisis response. The focus lies on how brands handle crises in the digital environment, especially in light of the influence of social media on public perceptions of crisis management.

Global economic and organizational crises are another form of crisis observed across the analyzed periods. Several clusters focus on issues such as business continuity, economic downturns, and crisis management strategies. These crises often involve disruptions such as financial recessions or internal organizational challenges, as brands attempt to navigate uncertain economic conditions. Public health and safety crises have also attracted considerable attention, particularly in sectors like healthcare and food safety. Crisis communication and brand reputation frameworks are employed to address incidents related to health, such as product contamination or medical errors. These types of crises were especially prominent in earlier years and experienced a resurgence during the pandemic.

Reputation crises and brand image issues are continuously discussed across all periods, with a particular focus on how companies manage public relations and maintain consumer trust in the face of events such as product recalls, corporate scandals, or other incidents that damage brand reputation. Over time, especially in the second and third periods, the issues of sustainability and social responsibility gained importance. These crises underscore the role of ethical dilemmas, weak corporate governance, and environmental challenges in shaping societal expectations regarding responsibility and sustainability.

In the most recent time, health crises and pandemics—especially the COVID-19 pandemic—have received significant attention. These crises encompass global health emergencies, changes in consumer behavior, and the profound impact of health-related issues on businesses, particularly in the healthcare, e-commerce, and tourism sectors. Brands have had to manage not only the immediate crisis response but also the long-term consequences of the pandemic for consumer trust and brand reputation.

The relevance of different types of crises shifted across the three periods. During the first period (1985-2008), the primary focus was on reputation crises related to corporate image management, brand risk, and product safety. These crises were often more traditional in nature, requiring brands to protect their image in situations such as product recalls or health-related issues.

The second period (2009-2019) reflected the increasing influence of new technologies, with a shift toward crises driven by digital and social media. In the era of social media, digital communication, and artificial intelligence, maintaining brand reputation required adaptation. Brands also began to face growing social and environmental challenges, as well as economic

crises affecting sectors such as food and aviation. Ethical marketing and corporate social responsibility became increasingly prominent.

During the third period (2020-2024), pandemic-related crises intensified, with particular attention paid to health communication, healthcare system challenges, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global trade. The clusters from this period reflect how businesses managed pandemic-related challenges, with a focus on consumer behavior, sustainability, crisis communication, and brand trust in the digital era. Innovation and digital transformation emerged as key themes as brands adopted new technologies and marketing strategies to address the crisis.

In conclusion, the nature of crises studied in the context of brand management has evolved significantly over time. The scope has expanded—from traditional reputation crises to more complex issues involving digital transformation, sustainability, and global health emergencies—mirroring broader societal and technological changes. Each period reveals the challenges and opportunities brands have encountered while responding to crises, with new themes emerging as global circumstances have shifted.

Considering current global issues, the thematic clusters identified in the Scopus and Web of Science databases reflect the growing complexity of brand management and crisis communication research. These findings reveal several theoretical and practical ramifications that are crucial to both academic research and organizational strategy decision-making. First, the results highlight the need for an integrated approach to crisis communication and brand management. Studies (Scopus: clusters No. 5, 9, 10, and 17; Web of Science: clusters No. 1, 10, and 14) show that crisis communication is becoming an increasingly important factor in brand management. In practice, this requires creation of comprehensive response plans that not only protect corporate reputation but also strengthen stakeholder interactions in uncertain times.

Second, the clusters (Scopus: clusters No. 1 and 7; Web of Science: clusters No. 2, 5, and 16) highlight the growing importance of social media and digital transformation in crisis management. These technologies enable real-time monitoring and rapid response, prompting companies to enhance their digital communication capabilities and make crisis management more adaptive. Another key conclusion concerns the importance of ethics, social responsibility, and trust as fundamental pillars of brand communication strategies. Several clusters highlight the significance of incorporating ethical behavior and corporate social responsibility into branding initiatives, particularly during periods of reputational risk (Scopus: clusters No. 3, 14, and 16; Web of Science: clusters No. 3, 8, and 11). This implies that companies must increase transparency and align marketing strategies with principles that appeal to socially conscious customers.

Another important subject that comes up is sector-specific methods to crisis management. According to research on sectors including healthcare, tourism, and transportation (Scopus: clusters No. 4, 6, and 8; Web of Science: clusters No. 14 and 15), crisis response plans must be

tailored to the unique dynamics of each sector. This has practical implications for developing policies and crisis response scenarios specific to individual industries.

Furthermore, another significant implication is the changing character of brand-consumer connections in the face of uncertainty and globalization (Scopus: clusters No. 11 and 12; Web of Science: clusters No. 1, 4, and 6). To stay relevant and loyal during times of crisis, companies need to provide not only functional value but also emotional and symbolic meaning. Additionally emphasized as crucial reactions to market shocks are creativity and innovation (Web of Science: clusters No. 2, 7, and 9). For companies operating in unstable environments, the ability to innovate in product offerings, marketing tactics, and technology implementation is considered crucial.

Finally, reputation is recognized as a strategic asset, especially in times of crises (Scopus: clusters No. 7 and 16; Web of Science: clusters No. 4, 10, and 12). The research indicates that building and maintaining a strong reputation requires a long-term strategy supported by authentic communication, CSR programs, and open brand conduct.

9. Conclusions, limitations, and future research

Brand management in crises is an important decision-making and management issue. Aspects related to brand reputation, brand awareness, product quality, marketing, social media, marketing communication, branding, and sustainable development indicate the need for a holistic approach to brand management in crisis situations. Bibliometric analysis has proven the importance of this area in the scientific literature, showing a quantitative increase in the number of publications and citations. Above all, however, this study shows research areas related to brand management in crises, identifying thematic clusters throughout the period under study, divided into three research periods limited by the financial crisis and the outbreak of the pandemic.

Despite these advantages, the study has its limitations. Firstly, brand management in crises was analyzed in relation to different crises and brands, but the breakdown between brand and crisis types was not analyzed. Secondly, keyword mapping was presented, and clusters were listed for the three periods. However, changes in these issues across geographical regions were not analyzed.

As directions for future research, it is worth pointing out the different types of crises and strategies for dealing with them to maintain and strengthen brand image and reputation. It is also worth highlighting different brands, including corporate brands and product brands. Another direction of research should be the issue of social media marketing, real-time marketing, content marketing, and influencer marketing. The impact of crises on brand equity

and brand value should also be analyzed across different areas, including digital brands, luxury brands, retail brands, university brands, and others.

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