

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT: IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON BURGER KING BRAZIL'S FACEBOOK

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ABSTRACT: Among other outcomes, the COVID-19 pandemic strengthened the online relations between different publics and organizations. Such strengthening was expected to change the digital inclusion of people with disabilities. We sought to analyze how this intense digital interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced in the use of accessible formats for people with sensory disabilities regarding digital organizational communication. For this purpose, we evaluated the communication formats used by Burger King Brasil's Facebook page before (2019) and during (2021) the pandemic, using automatic and manual techniques to verify the accessibility of 12 publications, 6 for each period studied. Our results suggest the permanence of accessibility barriers (as a direct reflection of ableist social structures), now adapted to the current scenario.

KEYWORDS: Organizational Communication; Accessibility; Social Media; Sensory Impairment; Online Communication.

COMUNICACIÓN ORGANIZACIONAL Y RECURSOS DE ACCESIBILIDAD EN EL ENTORNO DIGITAL: INFLUENCIAS DE LA PANDEMIA DE COVID-19 EN LA PÁGINA DE FACEBOOK DE BURGER KING BRASIL.

RESUMEN: Una de las consecuencias de la pandemia de Covid-19 fue el fortalecimiento de la relación entre públicos y organizaciones en Internet. Durante algún tiempo, se

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pensó que esto conduciría a cambios en el entorno digital, especialmente en la inclusión de las personas con discapacidad. Este texto pretende verificar cómo la intensificación de las formas de interacción en el entorno digital durante la pandemia del Covid-19 influyó en los cambios y en el uso de formatos accesibles para personas con discapacidad sensorial en la comunicación digital de las organizaciones. Privilegiamos la búsqueda de similitudes y disonancias entre las formas de comunicación en las redes sociales en los períodos pre-pandémico (2019) y durante el pandémico (2021), tomando como objeto de estudio la página de Facebook de la organización Burger King Brasil. Para ello, utilizamos técnicas de verificación automática y manuales y la accesibilidad web en una selección de doce publicaciones, siendo seis de ellas de cada uno de los períodos estudiados. Concluido el estudio, los resultados sugieren que no se han superado las barreras de accesibilidad, reflejo directo de estructuras sociales como el capacitismo. Lo que se pudo observar fue la permanencia de estas tensiones, ahora adaptadas al escenario actual.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Comunicación Organizacional; Accesibilidad; Redes Sociales, Deficiencia Sensorial; Comunicación en Rede.

COMUNICAÇÃO ORGANIZACIONAL E RECURSOS DE ACESSIBILIDADE NO AMBIENTE DIGITAL: INFLUÊNCIAS DA PANDEMIA DA COVID-19 NO FACEBOOK DO BURGER KING BRASIL

RESUMO: Um dos reflexos da pandemia da Covid-19 foi o fortalecimento da relação entre públicos e organizações na internet. Por algum tempo, esperou-se que isso acarretaria mudanças no ambiente digital, principalmente sobre a inclusão de pessoas com deficiência. Este estudo visa verificar como a intensificação das formas de interação no ambiente digital durante a pandemia da Covid-19 influenciou mudanças no uso de formatos acessíveis para pessoas com deficiência sensorial na comunicação digital de organizações. Voltamos a atenção a encontrar similaridades e dissonâncias entre as formas de comunicação em redes sociais nos períodos pré-pandêmico (2019) e durante (2021), tomando como objeto a página do Facebook da organização Burger King Brasil. Para tanto, foram mobilizadas técnicas de verificação automática e manual de acessibilidade web de um recorte de 12 publicações da página, sendo 6 delas de cada um dos períodos estudados. Após a conclusão do estudo, os resultados sugerem que as barreiras de acessibilidade, reflexo direto de estruturas sociais como o capacitismo, não foram superadas. O que pôde ser observado foi a permanência desses tensionamentos, adaptados, agora, ao cenário da atualidade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: comunicação organizacional / acessibilidade / redes sociais / deficiência sensorial / comunicação on-line.

1. INTRODUCTION

As a locus of participation, the digital environment allows to socialize meanings and develop the public sphere. Due to the numerous interactivity devices available, Internet users gain a capacity that, until then, was exclusive to media conglomerates: to interfere directly in communicative processes, interacting, creating new meanings, mobilizing and debating issues against public opinion (Leite & Luvizotto, 2017). Such a behavior allows for the birth, expansion and consolidation of digital social networks that can either reinforce relations already consolidated in the offline world or become fertile ground for others, created exclusively in the digital environment (Recuero, 2009).

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about profound changes to several aspects of this scenario. For organizations, among other outcomes such as economic and social repercussions, the pandemic strengthened voices that demanded an organizational performance beyond their own interests (Carareto et al., 2021). Plunged into uncertainties caused by phenomena such as COVID-19—the #BlackLivesMatter movement and the climate crisis, for example—organizations have found themselves needing to adapt to social pressures that have long existed in the public sphere, but which have been enhanced by the hyper-connectedness caused by social distancing. Brand communication turned to values and missions, engaging in more complex agendas and conversations (Raposo & Terra, 2021).

Authors such as Goggin and Ellis (2020) expected that this new moment would serve as an opportunity to raise awareness about the reality faced by people with disabilities in social interaction. But what at first seemed like a possibility of positive change soon became fragmented, resulting in consequences different from those anticipated. Despite the social isolation and this hopeful discourse in circulation, what we saw was the persistence of issues as structural and structuring as ableism (Gesser et al., 2020) and the lack of accessibility (Goggin & Ellis, 2020).

Faced with such fragmentation and the new challenges imposed by the current scenario, this research sought to analyze how this intense digital interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the use of accessible formats for people with sensory disabilities regarding digital organizational communication. For this purpose, we evaluated the communication formats used by Burger King Brasil's Facebook page before (2019) and during (2021) the pandemic, using automatic and manual techniques to verify the accessibility of 12 publications, 6 for each period studied.

Our results suggest the permanence of accessibility barriers (as a direct reflection of ableist social structures), now adapted to the current scenario.

Besides this introduction, this article consists of four sections. Section two presents our theoretical reflections, divided into two blocks. The third section describes the data analysis method which underpins the discussion in section fourth. Finally, we present some final considerations and future horizons.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND ITS INTERFACES WITH SOCIETY

According to Porém (2020), organizations are psychosocial, political, and cultural phenomena resulting from the interaction between individuals who share feelings, perceptions, anxieties, conflicts and interests with each other. More than their structures and material spaces, organizations are defined by their capacity to bring together groups of people around a common goal or demand. We can thus view them as collective social actors (Soares & Monteiro, 2012).

Communicative processes are responsible for building and rebuilding organizations, as individuals create and share meanings through them (Porém, 2020). Organizational communication is therefore intrinsic to the nature of organizations. Moreover, Porém (2020) argues communication enables exchanges and interactions between individuals in pursuit of a common goal. Hence, it is in the relations built between the organizational subjects and with the organization itself that senses and behaviors get articulated in a collective structure of meanings (Oliveira, 2009a), responsible for reproducing the organizations' discursive nature.

Reflecting on organizational communication and its relations with contemporary society also implies recognizing the phenomena in the virtual environment. In this scenario, the Internet represents more than systems and technological contributions, assuming a central position in relation to other spheres of society, influencing new forms of interaction, sociability, and participation. As the web 2.0 has made it possible to publish arguments, raise debates and collaborate in collective creations, information mediation no longer belongs only to mass media conglomerates and users experience new forms of meaning creation, interaction, and manifestation (Leite & Luvizotto, 2017). In the current mediatized scenario, organizations are expected to establish dialogues with Internet users (Barichello, 2014). Several other factors attract organizations to create a digital presence, such as increased visibility and rapprochement with various public segments.

Contrary to previous models, based on organizational control and stability, current times require that these social actors seek further legitimacy with society. Oliveira (2009b) points out the increased level of citizen participation and citizen awareness as factors that enhance the demands of public opinion. Compelled to react to this changing context, organizations "need to understand the choices (decisions) made as acts imbued with social and moral implications, in addition to assessing the risks they may cause" (Oliveira & Paula, 2008, p. 104). Thus, organizations must negotiate new forms of interaction based on ideals of sustainability and responsibility to obtain moral support.

Considering the nature of organizations and their discursive power, we can define the social changes to which organizations are willing to contribute and which are opposed. Among other numerous transformations in society, we will focus on the full participation of people with disabilities in the digital environment.

3. WEB ACCESSIBILITY AND DIGITAL SOCIAL PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Disability and how individuals and society relate to it can be understood in several ways. Here, based on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Brazilian Law of Inclusion (LBI), we define it as a biopsychosocial phenomenon. In other words, we recognize that psychological factors, bodily functions, and restrict social participation come into play to define the disabled person as “one who has a long-term impairment of a physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory nature, which, in interaction with one or more barriers, may obstruct their full and effective participation in society under equal conditions” (Law no. 13,146, 2015).

Reflecting on disability as a social phenomenon allows us to understand it beyond the individuality of the human body. We thus recognize the social mechanisms that produce disability in certain types of body and mind, and operate by their exclusion. Specialized literature has addressed this process by focusing on the concept of ableism. Gesser et al. (2020) understand it as an axis of social oppression that discriminates against people because of disabilities, a structural and structuring part of society.

Ableism, therefore, serves as an operating logic responsible for influencing practices, guiding policies, and supporting worldviews that situate disability as an inherently negative aspect (Campbell, 2009 as cited by Gesser et al., 2020). We thus understand that this perspective imposes barriers that hinder, or even prevent, social participation of individuals with bodies and minds that escape normativity. The Brazilian Law for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities defines these barriers as

... any obstacle, hindrance, attitude or behavior that limits or prevents one's social participation, as well as the enjoyment, fruition and exercise of their rights to accessibility, freedom of movement and expression, communication, access to information, understanding, and safe circulation, among others. (Law no. 13,146, 2015).

As a structuring and constitutive element, ableism transcends the different social spheres. As an operating logic, it emerges in the most varied environments, including the Internet. In terms of web accessibility, the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is one of the main references. Through determinations and conventions, the W3C is a body responsible for stipulating guidelines that contribute to a healthy development of the Internet. In this process, one of its main objectives is to ensure universal access to the digital environment, so that everyone can “use the web, can perceive, understand, navigate, interact and contribute to the web” (W3C, 2018).

Fundamentally, the importance of web accessibility lies in the fact that, according to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, virtual space is recognized as an integral part of public space (United Nations, 2006). Looking further, we note

how digital technologies are responsible for expanding the range of forms of interaction and participation for people with disabilities. Ellis and Kent (2011) argue that given the numerous physical, behavioral, and discursive barriers to this population living in offline environments, the development of digital technologies allows access to new forms of communication. Such is the case of social networks, blogs, and portals that enable the creation of digital communities: spaces for socialization, relationships, entertainment, and mobilization for rights and representation.

Going further, Salvatori (2021) states that digital communication works as a catalyst for activists to challenge dominant discourses. Given their capacity for decentralized and integrated organization and intervention, social networks “provide a platform for the emergence of multiple competing perspectives” (Salvatori, 2021, p. 116), a feature that can be used by democratic social movements to propose alternative identity values.

González-Perea (2018) highlights the *Guía de Accesibilidad a los Medios de Comunicación de Personas con Discapacidad Sensorial* [Media Accessibility Guide for Persons with Sensory Impairment], which lists the main format alternatives to be offered on the internet to ensure access for people with visual or hearing disabilities, namely audio description, image description, sign language, captions and descriptions of sound information, among others.

Internet users use different technological contributions to browse and consume content. According to the LBI (Law no. 13,146), Assistive Technology (AT) is any product, equipment, software and hardware device, methodologies and practices aimed at the autonomy, participation and quality of life of people with disabilities. This type of resource is available in a wide variety of contexts and with different functionalities, recognizing the plurality of disability experiences. As for digital information access, the main TA features include screen readers and magnifiers, Braille displays, audio transcription software and sign language avatars (Ferraz, 2020).

For these resources to be used optimally, making content available in the appropriate formats is insufficient. Besides the poignant issue of digital inclusion in Brazil—still incipient and far from being a reality for the whole population—we must also consider the accessibility of platforms, websites, and applications (Magalhães & Maciel, 2021). Web development, therefore, must consider different forms of access and accessibility guidelines, among which the W3C’s Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) is a main reference. Their primary function is to ensure that the different web programming standards are used to contemplate users with sensory, motor, cognitive, or speech impairments (W3C, 2018). In Brazil, the Modelo de Acessibilidade de Governo Eletrônico (eGovernment Accessibility Model – eMAG), based on WCAG, stands out as a federal initiative to ensure full access to public agency websites. As the main set of accessibility guidelines in Brazilian Portuguese, eMAG has also become a reference for private organization pages (Ferraz, 2020).

According to Ferraz (2020), the main difference between WCAG and eMAG is that the latter is simpler to read, making it easier to understand the guidelines. With recommendations concerning different programming aspects (Markup, Behavior, Content/Information, Presentation/Design, Multimedia, and Format), eMAG presents the criteria to be met, relating them to the W3C documentation and providing practical code examples.

By reflecting, therefore, on the potential of organizations, we realize that they act as transforming agents in our society. They are able to encourage or rebuke behaviors and worldviews, to make causes visible or invisible, to publicize discussions of public interest, and to construct meaning as they interact and communicate with different audiences. If communication is the means by which this organization-society interaction manifests itself, excluding certain social groups from this communication also means preventing participation in the numerous phenomena mentioned above.

Once the theoretical notions underpinning the present study have been articulated, we will now present the methodological procedures that supported our analysis and discussion of the results obtained.

4. METHODS

A qualitative approach was chosen due to the nature of the studied phenomenon and research objective: to analyze how digital forms of interaction, intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic, influenced organizations' digital communication regarding the use of accessible formats for people with sensory disabilities. For this purpose, we evaluated and compared the communication practices employed by Burger King Brasil's Facebook page before (2019) and during (2021) the pandemic, giving special attention to alternative formats and accessibility resources offered to people with disabilities.

First, we performed a bibliographic search on themes such as organizations, their relations with communication and society, access to information and participation by people with disabilities. This bibliographic survey supported our communicational approach of the phenomenon.

As our research continues earlier reflections, we returned to a profile previously investigated: that of Burger King Brazil. This choice was made based on this organization's history of publications aimed at highlighting institutional values such as diversity and inclusion—as, for example, in a recent campaign starring a disabled actor (Rogenski, 2019). We then decided on the scope of our corpus, selecting posts with the highest engagement in each month, during two periods: the second half of 2019 and the first half of 2021, one year after the first wave of COVID-19 cases. The following table lists the selected publications.

Table 1*Posts with the most reactions each month studied.*

Post	Month of publication	Theme	Access link
1	July 2019	Comer com 5 Reais? [Eat with five reais?]	Link to Post 1
2	August 2019	Liga da Justiça – King Jr [Justice League – King Jr]	Link to Post 2
3	September 2019	Hash Fries no BK [Hash Fries at BK]	Link to Post 3
4	October 2019	Emoji – King Jr	Link to Post 4
5	November 2019	BK Friday	Link to Post 5
6	December 2019	Super Combo BK [Super Combination BK]	Link to Post 6
7	January 2021	Paulo Guedes	Link to Post 7
8	February 2021	Não dê Zoom [Don't zoom in]	Link to Post 8
9	March 2021	O Sonho do Big [Big's Dream]	Link to Post 9
10	April 2021	Comunicado Oficial [Official Press Release]	Link to Post 10
11	May 2021	#BKoróscopo [#BKoroscope]	Link to Post 11
12	June 2021	Como Explicar? [How to explain?]	Link to Post 12

We began the analysis by automatically verifying compliance with the eMAG accessibility parameters using the Website Accessibility Simulator and Evaluator (ASES), a software capable of scanning a web page code and presenting its percentage of compliance with accessibility criteria. Accessibility in programming serves as a basis for building pages that consider users with sensory abilities and the most varied means of Internet access. For an overview of this compliance in 2019, we considered the percentage found by Magalhães and Maciel (2021), who performed an automatic verification of publications made by the Burger King Brazil page in the same period. This was necessary because ASES can only access the latest code of a given platform, not allowing to verify previous versions of the programming.

Another fundamental criterion for digital inclusion and participation is the availability of content in various formats, a central point of accessibility 2.0 (Ellis & Kent, 2011). For this reason, we conducted a second verification step, this time manual. According to Ferraz (2020), this second verification is essential to detect barriers not yet verified by automated tools, at the level of navigation, content formats and user experience. As discussed above, offering multiple alternative content formats is fundamental to expand autonomous media access to people with sensory disabilities (González-Perea, 2018).

In the present study, we chose to analyze the use of Accessible Audiovisual Translation modalities—a category proposed by Araújo and Alves (2017) that includes audio description, Sign Language interpreter and captions—, in addition to image description, as an alternative to non-textual elements, and audio version, as an alternative media to text (W3C, 2018).

More than just verifying the presence (or absence) of these resources in the posts, we aimed to understand, in light of the theoretical framework, how such elements contribute to more inclusive communication practices and to compare the forms of communication employed by Burger King Brazil in each period.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Resuming Magalhães and Maciel's (2021) automatic verification of seven Burger King posts published in the second half of 2019 for ASES evaluation, we found a 85.3% of compliance with the eMAG parameters. Sole exception was a post hosted on Facebook Watch, the platform's video management system, which showed a 75.6% compliance rate.

Conversely, the 2021 publications all showed the same accessibility performance in the ASES automatic verification: a compliance rate of 90.72%. Unlike the first period analyzed, this time we found no difference in performance between the video and image publications. This may be because the video (Post 12) could be accessed directly on Burger King Brasil's main page, without intermediation by Facebook Watch.

Importantly, the automatic verification is only analyzing the Facebook platform. Thus, although Burger King Brazil has chosen the network as one of its channels to establish relations and communicate with its public, many issues related to programming, navigability and user experience are beyond its control. However, this result speaks to the general platform accessibility on the Brazilian web.

According to a 2021 survey conducted by BigDataCorp, an increasing number of websites are passing all accessibility tests. Of the 16.89 million active websites on the Brazilian internet in 2021, 0.89% successfully completed all accessibility tests. This number, although small, is 20.74% higher than that found in the previous year (MWPT, 2021). Although incipient, this result suggests that organizations are moving towards greater compliance with the determinations to expand Internet access. A movement in which, according to the automatic verification, Facebook Brazil takes part on.

However, even with the increased compliance percentage between the two analyzed periods, some programming errors and unmet criteria remain. Unlike other web accessibility parameters, eMAG does not distinguish between compulsory and optional criteria (Ferraz, 2020). Thus, according to eMAG, a website can only be considered fully accessible if its programming meets 100% of the established criteria, since they are all essential for navigation and user experience.

For manual verification of the alternative formats offered, we considered the original format of each publication. In other words, we expected posts containing videos to use formats and resources applicable to the audiovisual medium: audio description, Sign Language interpreter and captions. In posts accompanied only by static images, we looked for audio versions and image description (Jesus, 2018). An audio version works as an alternative media for the text, presenting the same information as in the original content (W3C, 2018). Finally, image description in social media is a more dynamic and less formal descriptive text format, employed to make photos, comic books, cartoons, illustrations and every other type of image accessible by screen readers (Jesus, 2018). The following table summarizes the results.

Table 2.
Manual verification of accessibility features.

Post	Format	Audio description	Sign Language interpreter	Caption	Audio version	Image description
1	Video	No	No	No	No	Yes
2	Video	No	No	No	No	Yes
3	Image	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	No	Yes
4	Video	No	No	No	No	Yes
5	Image	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	No	No
6	Video	No	No	No	No	Yes
7	Image	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	No	Yes
8	Image	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	No	Yes
9	Image	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	No	Yes
10	Image	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	No	Yes
11	Image	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	No	Yes
12	Video	No	No	Yes	No	Yes

Of the five possible alternative formats, only two were used by publications in the analyzed period. Except for *Post 5*, all publications included an image description, even those containing videos, where the descriptive text simply summarizes the main visual

information. The second format identified was captioning, employed in *Post 12*, the sole publication containing a video which makes use of captions.

Image description may be widely used due to its relatively simple execution. Whereas audio description, Sign Language interpreter and captioning requires technical knowledge and previous competence in recording, editing and assembling audiovisual products. Image description, in turn, is a descriptive text format that can be made available as a Textual Alternative in the alt component or via inclusive hashtags (Jesus, 2018). Many social networks, and especially Facebook, present the possibility of including an alternative text the time of writing; it takes just a few moments to include it in the post. The increased familiarity of Internet users with this alternative format results in image description becoming a more frequent and requested practice in social media, conquering space, promoting changes in behavior and as observed, reaching brands such as Burger King Brazil.

In summary, our two-step verification revealed the following changes in Burger King Brasil's communication on Facebook: increased percentage of compliance with the eMAG accessibility parameters; increased use of image descriptions; initial use of an alternative format absent in the first period analyzed—captioning. However, three formats were not identified in either of the two periods: audio description, Sign Language interpreter, and audio version of the written text.

When comparing the analysis results for each period, a first aspect that stands out is the change in the predominant content format. While posts containing videos predominated in 2019, most publications made in 2021 included static images. Importantly, our scope of analysis did not aim at a proportional representation of each format in the respective periods, but rather to gather those with greater public engagement.

This reversal in post format also shows a change in behavior by the page's followers. Recognizing such specificity of the relations between public and organization is paramount, especially since organizational communication is constituted by and in the exchanges of meaning between people and organizations (Oliveira, 2009a). Based on our theoretical framework, the emergence of other forms of content interaction can shift the meanings construed about the organization and those that it builds about itself. This is because segments of the public also act substantially as social actors capable of assigning meanings to organizational practices (Oliveira, 2009a). Hence why organizations should know and consider the different audiences with which they interact.

Attracted by the possibilities of establishing dialogue and cultivating relations with their audiences, many organizations turn part of their communication effort to the Internet (Barichello, 2014). But by ignoring the forms of access used by people with sensory impairment, organizations fail to establish a link with this community which includes the most different types of public segment.

By failing to provide one or more of these formats in its digital communication, Burger King Brazil harms (or even prevents) the participation of Internet users with disabilities. If offering more formats of content access expands digital inclusion (Ellis & Kent, 2011), lacking them imposes barriers that hinder not only access to information, but also the possibilities of sharing opinions, claiming rights and mobilizing against or in favor of causes.

Excluding people with disabilities from a set of practices or restricting their participation in spaces of dialogue can reflect ableist logics. Besides acting as a structural and structuring factor in society (Gesser et al., 2020), ableism also permeates organizations and the relationships established by them. This structure, therefore, influences how organizational communication is thought and planned, and reverberates in the mediated society.

According to Oliveira and Paula (2008), it is through interaction provided by communication that organizations build and order their intended meanings. Thus, communication is intrinsic to constructing the reality of the organization and to manifesting its interests in the implicated environment. The meanings constructed and publicized by organizational communication play a role in society, since organizations and society maintain a two-way relationship (Lima & Oliveira, 2014), each transforming and being transformed by the other. As such, by ignoring the various forms of access to information, organizations end up disregarding people with sensory impairment as interlocutors able to participate in the dialogues they promote in the different social spheres.

Finally, in a mediated and hyperconnected society, meanings circulate far beyond their original intentionality. According to Leite and Luvizotto (2017), as the capacity to mediate information ceases to be exclusive to mass media conglomerates, individuals and social groups gain the power to interfere and reframe communication flows in contemporary society. The same is applicable to people with disabilities: although the lack of accessibility compromise their participation in the interaction environments instituted by organizations—here, Burger King Brasil's Facebook page—, this does not mean that they do not have their turn in the discursive and communicational processes. If institutional spaces do not assure participation for people with sensory impairment, meaning construction occurs in scenarios beyond control and organizational intentionality, the spoken dimension of organizational communication. In them, this community can influence what is said and thought about organizations, including Burger King Brazil.

6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Our study sought to analyze how digital forms of interaction, intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic, influenced Burger King Brasil's digital communication regarding the use of accessible formats for people with sensory disabilities. Results showed advances both

in the organization's use of image description resources and captions, while some alternative formats, such as audio description, Sign Language interpreter, and audio version (as an alternative to written text) are yet to be offered.

Despite the platform's increase compliance with accessibility parameters observed between the two periods studied, the standard established by eMAG is that all accessibility criteria must be met. By failing to comply with all eMAG criteria, Facebook Brazil established itself as an inaccessible platform. Consequently, Burger King Brazil, by choosing this platform as one of its communication channels, is also noncompliant with the determinations aimed at expanding internet access to people with disabilities.

Overcoming such barriers and offering adequate alternative content formats are initial steps to provide access for people with sensory disabilities to social media contents and, above all, to expand their possibilities of engaging in online discussions and debates. This partial accessibility is mitigated by people with disabilities finding their own ways to gain access and space in these environments. To disregard this aspect would be to render their prominent role in the anti-ableist struggle and in the recent advances in rights achieved invisible. Whether by using the comments section or by creating other pages within Facebook or other platforms, this community is present, dialogues, poses questions and articulates itself as a social group, supported by digital interaction and communication tools. Thus, they establish new and proper forms of participating, communicating, and circulating meanings.

Studies on communicative processes emphasize the role communication plays in disseminating meanings recovered, articulated, and reframed by dialogue. It is through communication that organizations become collective social actors and realize the meanings and values underlying their decisions, practices and policies. Expanding and fostering engagement possibilities for people with disabilities is fundamental to strengthen these voices in debates and social interactions.

Ensuring accessible formats in organizational digital communication is a means to mitigate some of the barriers to the inclusion and participation of this community. We recommend, therefore, that organizations progressively increase the offer of these formats, allowing access to their content and consequently adapting their spaces for engagement and reconfiguring the dominant exclusionary logics.

Despite centering our analysis on the publications with greater engagement on both studied periods, we recognize that Burger King Brasil's organizational communication extends far beyond one social network, being present in other media, engaging with its public and with society itself. Thus, to advance research and understanding about the changes caused by intensified virtualization, new studies should focus this same phenomenon from other perspectives, such as that of the community of people with sensory disabilities.

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