

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS: IMPORTANCE, MAIN FEATURES AND MAJOR MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES.

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ABSTRACT: Nonprofit organizations play role of primary importance in addressing humanitarian issues at both domestical and international levels. Despite NPOs' huge efforts that resulted in alleviating suffering for millions all over the world, issues remain. More important results require not only more resources but also more performant management and marketing strategy. Researches revealed shortcomings in the nonprofit organizations' marketing. In compliance with marketing researchers advocations Npos should adopt comprehensive marketing strategy towards donators, volunteers and customers (beneficiaries). In addition, nonprofits should better implement fundraising, their part in cause related marketing and consider social entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Nonprofits, marketing strategy, fundraising, cause related marketing, nonprofits founded ventures .

JEL Classification: M31

1. INTRODUCTION:

Although for profits and nonprofits share the same goal of making life better, they mainly differ in the means used and the ultimate reward sought: While for profits use paid production factors to ultimately generate profit, nonprofits use free afforded production's factors (donations, volunteers' workforce), provided by the community to address societal issues.

Completely dedicated to serving neglected and disadvantaged segments of society often in unhelpful conditions (Padaki and Vaz, 2005), nonprofits unlike for profits do not aim any profit, never pay share of profits to individuals or shareholders, are not concerned by taxes and their success is determined vis-à-vis their respective mission (Burnett, 2007).

Indeed, nonprofits are almost exclusively concerned with mission, they are more mission focused organizations: any eventual financial surplus is devoted to enhance and improve the fulfillment of their missions that revolve around of relieving suffering and improving lives, whereas, dividends in for profits are shared by stakeholders. Legally, a

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nonprofit is required to exclusively serve its mission rather than seeking to make profits. Any excess income from sales, must plowed back into the nonprofit, this condition should be fulfilled to maintain the tax-exempt status of the NPO (Kinzey, 2013).

According to Holland and Ritvo (2008), nonprofits importance is outlined by both their curative and preventive roles. Playing such important role relies on the distinctive NPOS' ability to catch, organize and channel the huge caring social energy towards addressing large range of problems including poverty, homeless, disabled, families at risk, empower women and children, health, civil rights, women issues and to fulfill the wide range of societal needs of well-being, education, health, culture, arts, community services; Not providing solutions to society issues will surely lead to a fragility state that will evolve to worse. This highlight the preventive role of nonprofits. Nonprofits not only reflect the effort of society to organize itself to solve its domestic various issues but also to act beyond the borders to bring help to foreign communities in need.

The reports of the NPOs' past actions testify their effectiveness and positive results in their fighting against tragedies of hunger, disease, injustice, illiteracy, environmental degradation ...

Even though nonprofits have not yet completely eradicated all humanitarian issues, nevertheless nonprofits were effective to large extent in their mission. Figures forbid any doubt about that: *World Food Program (WFP)* provided food assistance to 87.8 million people in 78 countries, in five decades *the High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)* has helped about 50 million people, *Noor Dubai* humanitarian association dedicated to the fight against blindness in the world has helped 23 million people in Africa and Asia... Nonprofits succeed in organizing huge social energy: 65.4 million volunteered in USA in 2005, In France, an estimated 13 million volunteers in associations during 2016, and in Canada Volunteer activities equate to 1 million full-time jobs, very numerous similar illustrations of the positive NPOs' actions impact, are available, however, despite their high intensity, humanitarian actions remain insufficient in the face of the challenges posed by the size of the tragedies of access to water, child mortality, hunger, poverty, disease, illiteracy...

Higher level of effectiveness in addressing humanitarian issues, obviously would require significant additional resources, more effective marketing and more performant management to ensure.

Since, nonprofits demonstrated effectiveness in addressing societal issues, public showed rising expectations from them, creating hence, and public pressure. Furthermore, within context of resources' scarcity NPOs face fierce competition for resources (funds and volunteers); thus, the need to fulfill their missions and develop, translates into managerial and marketing challenges for nonprofits.

Managing nonprofit comprises a peculiar focus on social responsibility and stewardship (Holland and Ritvo, 2009) Social responsibility is obviously a core principle of nonprofits, since their mission is to improve lives and answering to social concerns of sustainability, enforcement of protective laws, ecological issues, and human well – being in general. NPOs' actions, programs aiming to fulfill these social expectations are directed by a set of values named social responsibility.

In addition to social responsibility, nonprofits managers burden the bear of the accountability to both donors and clients. Monetary resources come from donors naturally demanding their good use and the promised positive impact. All this, is translated to NPOs' managers by a core principle of stewardship which means effective and efficient use of resources in the pursuit of their organizations' mission.

In short, good managing nonprofits are a challenging requirement of their mission and public expectations, whereas good managing of for profit is ultimately a profit's requirement. The needs of good management within NPOs could be sometimes more important than in commercial ventures at the same scale of operation (Padaki and Vaz, 2005).

According to Kaplan (2001) since nonprofits are typically more mission-focused, thus the traditional performance measurement system limited to financial perspective is not sufficient to provide measures that would enable managers to plan and implement improvement of processes, customers services and learning. As an effective alternative to the strictly financial performance measurement system, Kaplan advocated a four – perspectives measurement system comprising financial, processes, customer and learning dimensions, as a mean to amount effectiveness and to direct toward needed improvements. This measurement system named balance scorecard is by Kaplan, a greater system when applied by nonprofits.

Moreover, marketing scholars' community emphasized on that nonprofits' success relies to large extent on comprehensive adoption of marketing in addressing their major issues related to resources, development, image-credibility, acceptance and leverage. However, within nonprofits organizations, marketing faced hurdles of misconception, confusion with its components and allocation of insufficient resources leading to limited advantages and persistent issues.

2. MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR NONPROFIT

Nonprofits organizations initially portrayed an unexpected limited adoption of marketing, and even surprising negative attitude towards it. Indeed, some NPOs' managers considered marketing as both a strange and incompatible discipline with the voluntary sector, justifying themselves in this, by that marketing is mainly driven by profit; Another group of NPOs' responsible talked about marketing in terms of unwanted source of

expenditures which does not contribute to the achievement of the nonprofits' objectives (Benett, 2007).

If currently, nonprofit sector shows an increasing marketing orientation (Round and Halstead, 2016) nevertheless, it took several decades to nonprofits to evolve to marketing orientation; despite they were advised to do so by Kotler since early 70's.

Indeed, across a period starting from Kotler (1970) study to at NGBU survey (2013), researches revealed limited comprehension and thus less profitable practice of marketing by nonprofits. Although, Kotler made a key recommendation of entrusting marketing functions to experts or qualified staff to climb to more gaining implementation of marketing, nonprofit showed a stagnant limited adoption of marketing.

In 1979, Kotler noticed that more and more NPO managers were adopting marketing to develop in more competitive environment, though Kotler noticed as well that these managers had confining comprehension of marketing to its sub functions of advertising and selling.

Andreasen, in 1979, noticed that nonprofits were either product or selling oriented. That means that their managers focus on products or promotion. Such focus is less favorable to solve their usual financial difficulties. Thus, Andreasen advocated to nonprofits to switch to customer-oriented mindset to gain the knowing of their customers' current needs and wanting, follow their evolution and satisfy them continuously.

Two decades later, state of marketing within nonprofits did not improve and showed some alarming signs. In 2001, a survey conducted in the USA by the Maryland Association of NPO, revealed that 63% of the staff in charge of marketing had no formal education in marketing.

The same alarming signs were revealed by the cross continental study conducted by Donilcar and Lazarevski in 2007; Through their cross continental study Donilcar established an interesting accurate portray of marketing toolbox's usage within American, Australian and United Kingdom's nonprofits: just 1 % of the respondent assessed marketing research as the most important activity, 3 % and 4 % of the same interviewees respectively made the same assessment about marketing strategy and marketing segmentation. Interviewed NPOs' managers in USA, United Kingdom and Australia, had promotion focused view of marketing and 70% had stated that marketing could just contributes to success of their organizations (Marketing contributes to success without being crucial).

The more recent cross continental study conducted by NCBU Global Nonprofit Management Team, in 2013 reported that NPOs' managers from 15 countries recognized that they should engage in online marketing, yet lack of funds prevented them to take advantage from the huge opportunities offered by online marketing.

Within a context made of tremendous growth of nonprofits' population along with the limited available funds, a fierce competition for both funds and volunteers arose; It has become more difficult for nonprofits to gain donations and volunteer hours (Pioche Khare, 2011). Ignoring marketing would result into vulnerable competitive positions. The absence of the marketing process (analysis, planning, implementation, control and improvement) leads to random actions with uncertain impacts, moreover impossible to improve due to the absence of the control phase in the NPOs' processes.

Keeping in mind that nonprofits' public encompasses donators, volunteers and customers; To gain more from marketing some academics highlighted a broader and more benefit orientation consisting in three-dimensional concept of market orientation, which includes customer orientation, competition orientation and inter-functional coordination.

Knowing customer orientation means close follows of customers' needs and satisfying them continuously. Second, competitor orientation is vital attitude because it directs to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the main current and potential competitors. Finally, inter-functional coordination serves creating value for targets through coordinating company's resources. Hence, Market oriented organization can both better serve its targets and anticipate and avoid the negative consequences of competing strategies

On the other hand, since donors constitutes a vital part of nonprofits' public, Pope and al (2009) outlined that segmenting donors' market, is a major problem for nonprofit, whose resolution would lead to an effective fundraising strategy, which consists in targeting only the most likely segments to provide donations.

Finally, since nonprofits activities are mainly performed by volunteers who became a so scarcer resource that some nonprofits try to attract volunteers of other NPOs (Goswami et al). All this make the need for strategy towards volunteers more imperious. However, nonprofits present abnormality of not having marketing strategy towards volunteers' market (Pope et al, 2009).

Effective strategy of attracting good volunteers relies on knowing general motivations to volunteer and knowing drivers to serve particular cause, and volunteers' loyalty causes (McCurley, 1994) whereas keeping good volunteers requires to provide them with benefits (Briggs, Landry and Wood, 2007). Caring measures in the direction of volunteers consist on training, good work conditions, recognition and opportunities to gain moral satisfaction (Kotler, 1994)

Success in adopting marketing requires being aware of failures factors. Previous researches agreed on the factors that can prevent successful adoption of marketing by nonprofits: a narrow conception of marketing that reducing it to promotion and sales, insufficient budget allocations and unqualified staff were pointed out as the factors of marketing's failure in nonprofits.

3. VOLUNTEERS AND SKILLED STAFF.

To emphasize importance of NPOs' staff Kotler (1994) portrayed it as the fifth element of marketing mix, thus NPOs should show caring measures towards their volunteers: training, good work conditions, recognition and opportunities to gain moral satisfaction. Volunteers are characterized by their dedication and belief in the organization; moreover they can bring key contributions to the organization's success (Burnett, 2007).

Indeed, Nonprofits' contributions are performed thanks to their respective volunteers, who portray as specific kind of staff distinguished by its non-financial motivation and ideal of improving life of their community members without aiming any monetary reward. Set of volunteering reasons comprises: the need to fulfill civic duty, personal interest in the cause, experience related to the NPO's mission, hope that effort will change or help to solve an issue and the so often favorable answer to a request for help.

Volunteers are the concrete carriers of the useful value of working together to address community issues. Thanks to Volunteers, nonprofits make solidarity a living-value in the society. Nonprofit sector gathers and channels a huge social energy: 65.4 million volunteered in USA in 2005, in 2010, Americans dedicated 8.1 billion hours to volunteering activities, 12 million Canadian volunteered in 2013 (it means 44% of the all Canadian population).

Nonprofits and for profits have in common evolving in competitive environment with limited resources; However, we could suspect that resources are more limited in NPOs and more difficult to gather especially during difficult economic stages. If general skilled volunteers, are less or more available and relatively accessible for NPOs, contrariwise the high skilled ones are unfortunately difficult to hire due to financial constraints.

Researches confirmed the expected negative impact of small budget on crucial parts of npos' whole strategy: some complex managerial functions require skilled staff working on full – time basis, thus for a salary in accordance with their competences. Ha Jungbok (2015) reported Kotler's recommendation that marketing should be entrusted to high skilled person or structure such as marketing director, marketing consultant, marketing advertising agency, marketing research firm or marketing board. However, nonprofits' limited funds do not allow them hiring the needed experts and nurturing skilled staff's motivation. Prior field researches showed that because of lack of financial resources to hire experts in marketing, NPOs managers entrust marketing to not enough qualified persons (NUCB Global Nonprofit Management Team, 2013), therefore going in the opposite direction of Kotler's recommendation to adopt customer centered mindset for more effectiveness.

4. FUNDRAISING.

Providing help to the needy is the ultimate action of non-profit organizations, preceded by prior effort of gathering resources and planning. Not-for-profit organizations must fundraise, attract volunteers, build relationships and communicate in ways that attract donors, volunteers and at the same time differentiate themselves from the competition (Nicolau I, 2016).

Nonprofits' financial resources are partially gathered through fund raising which is very apparent distinctive feature between for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Only NPOs perform this activity. NPOs need bigger budget to fulfill their mission and an increasing number of them apply marketing techniques to gather the needed funds.

(Blery and al, 2009) identified a range of factors that favors collecting funds. To spark the community's willingness to donate, nonprofits should use marketing to develop, maintain a strong image of effective contributors to addressing social issues. Internet represents a huge opportunity for effective low-cost promotion. Alliances with newspapers, magazines enable NPOs to implement promotion free of charge. On the other hand, low prices (low contributions asked from donators) and incentives provided to donators through alliances account as favorable factors for fundraising.

However, Nonprofits' fundraising effectiveness would be affected by flaws in adopting and implementing marketing. NPOs show tendency to not-adopting comprehensive marketing strategy (Akchin, 2001), Although NPOs recognize the importance of segmentation but few of them apply it (Bulla,2006), only small part of the personal in charge of npos' marketing is trained in marketing (Donilcar and Lazarevski,2009), with such marketing human resources nonprofits cannot plan comprehensive marketing strategy that will allow to identify and to attract donators.

Cacija (2016) empirically confirmed that to reach a high level of performance, nonprofit fundraising should be undertaken within the comprehensive nonprofit marketing process. Cacija, demonstrated that marketing activities have a positive influence on fundraising performance.

On the other hand, fundraising is affected by economic environment; difficult economic stage makes people reluctant to donate, finally, some missions are subject to aging and become outdated and this is naturally accompanied with the decrease of the number of donators (Blery and al, 2009).

5. NONPROFITS FOUNDED VENTURES (NFVS):

Financing doubtless is a major issue for nonprofit. Within a context of a challenging funding, more and more nonprofits are entering the field of social entrepreneurship aiming in that to gather the needed funds for their social goals. Indeed, significant drawbacks of traditional external funding lead nonprofits to consider alternative funds' sources to alleviate their threatening full-reliance on external funds

sources and gain more financial self-sufficiency through creating their own sources of funds.

Traditional external funding could be accompanied with disadvantages and issues of scarcity, decrease, instability, unreliability and inflexibility (money's tied with donors' wishes). The offered funds are often accompanied with some restrictions, tied to donors' wishes, consequently Nonprofits cannot always use funds at their discretion.

Concretely, nonprofits perform social entrepreneurship through a kind of venture called nonprofit founded ventures (NFVs), especially created to address societal issues by using for profits methods. Conversely to classical ventures interested in profit.

Roundy and Halstead (2016) investigated aspects related to the creation and success of NFVs. Nonprofits create NFVs to improve their ability to fulfill their social mission of addressing societal issue.

Lauching NFVs is especially difficult at its start-up stage when it is unlikely cash flow positive or profitable and need resources to grow and become viable. Ideally, nonprofits founder is resource rich, able to full fund the starting NFV, if not, supportive environment is necessary. NFVs' start-up, development and success are probable, since they are supported by crucial environments' parts such as grant governments agencies, angel investors and consumers who are described as active seekers of NFV's products and services. NFVs' Founders are only interested in NFV that first, would achieve self-supporting stage in at most one year and would have profit-making potential in the long term.

6. CAUSE RELATED MARKETING (CRM).

CRM is concept introduced to the marketing literature in 1998 by Varadarajan and Menon, that refers to for profit corporate and nonprofit organization partnership designed ultimately to provide funds to the NPO through product sales (Gupta and Pirsch, 2006). Cause related marketing programs are planned and implemented for mutual benefits (Pringle and Thompson, 1999), Adkins (1999) added that CRM is win: win: win program that allows all the parties involved (nonprofits, companies and customers) to access to significant benefits.

First, customers are provided, through CRM, with the opportunity to fulfill their needs to do useful thing for other community members. Using CRM, Marketers go beyond the usual marketing goals of satisfying customers' needs and wants, they (marketers) satisfy the human, the altruistic needs of customer (Kotler and Levy).

Second, for corporates CRM is a mean to increase sales through supporting relevant cause, a strategic positioning tool (Pringle and Thompson, 1999), a way to make positive impact on community (Adkins, 1999) within context of increased community expectations for corporate social contributions (Christofi and al, 2015), CRM is also way to

reach targets on an emotional level (Roy,2010), and finally, CRM supports sales, actually customers when evaluating their purchase options look into corporate behavior (Yanli and al, 2003).

For Nonprofits, cause-related marketing represents a mean to gain several benefits, mainly funds. Gupta and Pirsch (2006) outlined CRM's contributions as a method of differentiation in saturated market and communication mean to increase public awareness about NPOs mission. Cause related marketing effort results in favorable consumers attitude towards NPOs cause (Christofi and al, 2015).

Cause related marketing could be viewed with doubt as CRM involves consumers' purchase that result in profit, thus consumers could develop suspicious evaluation (Malero and Montaner, 2016), Successful CRM program should demonstrate compelling altruistic motivation otherwise it would be perceived as self-interested effort to increase corporate sales and profits.

According to Shu-Pei Tsai (2009) Larson's model (1992) is proven helpful in enhancing CRM persuasiveness. Larson's model portrays the five requirements of compelling cause-related activities: meaningful theme (identity), cause corresponding to society's need (legitimacy), convenient to participate (participation), supported by an integrated marketing communication program (Penetration) and finally, CRM's responsible must prove to the public that the proceeds (incomes) go to those in need (distribution).

CRM is not systematic win: win: win process, each CRMs' stakeholders runs significant risks in case of failure. Making wrong NPO selection and thus linking with not engaging cause would cause to the firm the lose money engaged in funding its CRM program. CRM is more likely to success when the firm supports nonprofit whose cause relates to its own and when consumers approve the association (Gupta and Pirsch, 2006). Not convincing public about the altruistic motivations of the corporate's CRM effort is the other cause of CRM's failure and the consequential loses of funds.

In their turn, Nonprofits run serious risk of being perceived as deceived intermediary by self-interested in profit firm to achieve benefits using their causes ?

Lack of financial resources prevents nonprofits from hiring skilled staff and marketing experts, who cannot be recruited without attractive packages. Lack of such skilled staff, leads to the nonprofits' marketing limitations. The unavailability of marketing experts within nonprofits staff leads to low brand recognition, no strategy towards the npos' three-parts market, no competitive strategy, inefficient online marketing (NUCB Global Nonprofit Management Team, 2013). Each of these limitations acts as a hurdle in front of collecting financial resources. Entrusting marketing tasks to more and more qualified staff constitutes to the way for nonprofits to enhance their resources, processes and ultimately their missions' fulfillment.

Such not enough qualified staff has negative effect on npos' marketing strategy, such staff misconceives Marketing and confuses it with its sub-function of promotion. Moreover, limited npos' budgets and the resulting close ability to hire experts, generate limited capability to analyze their environment, to design and implement strategies. 66 % of the nonprofits responsible interviewed stated that they have not a formalized marketing strategy (Donilcar and Lazarevski, 2009)

If fundraising offers to nonprofits the possibility to be completely focused on their mission, nevertheless fundraising exposes nonprofits to restrictive full-reliance on donors who represents external source of funds. Cause related marketing and social entrepreneurship are the other funding ways used by nonprofits.

Nonprofits mission is more important than profit, in conformity with this principle, NFVs do not go in projects that are not aligned with their mission: business that do not serve their clients are just rejected. Social mission must be present in the project otherwise the NFV would lose community support and get greater failure risks.

Although, cause-related marketing is implemented to bring additional funds for causes, translated in more benefits for nonprofits' customers, the CRM induce unintentionally the wrong belief that npos is not in need of any more donations among its traditional and potential funders, thus causing loses in donations and less services for customers. This is a paradoxical effect since NPOs seek through CRM for increased contributions.

7- Conclusion:

Since the beginning of the 21st century, everything has changed in the organizational world. The evolution of the social and societal dimensions of life was behind a big part of these changes. Marketing as one of the most important services in Organizations knew a huge shift from developing practices to attract customers and propose commercial values in order to meet the financial goal of companies to building a socially responsible corporation. However, Nonprofit organizations developed their own marketing practices. The particularity in non NPOs' marketing strategies is at the first place in the list of stakeholders (Citizens, Sponsors, Civil Society, volunteers ...) and then in the resources deployed such as (funds, donations, volunteering,).

Researchers and practitioners highlighted a list of problems that struggles marketing strategies deployment in NPOs, lack of money is in the center of these problems, without the required financial resources they cannot recruit skillful stuff, nor develop a visible and well-known brands.

At the end we have to mention that social entrepreneurship and innovation has become a tendency and their evolution will continue because they are focusing on durable development strategies.

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