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Miscellaneous on the Reputation of NGOs in Spain and Latin America – Review of the book Comunicación y Tercer Sector de Acción Social (Communication and the Third Sector of Social Action)

Miscelánea sobre la Reputación de las ONG en España y Latinoamérica – Reseña del libro Comunicación y Tercer Sector de Acción Social

Miscelânea sobre a Reputação das ONGs na Espanha e na América Latina – Resenha do livro Comunicación y Tercer Sector de Acción Social (Comunicação e Terceiro Setor de Ação Social)

Author: Lorena López Font (ed.)
Publisher: Tirant Humanidades
Number of Pages: 436
Year of publication: 2023
City: Valencia - Spain | Language: Spanish
ISBN: 978-84-19226-03-7, 9788419226044
https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/libro?codigo=943819

This book serves as the inaugural discourse emanating from discussions instigated by the ENCOM group in the Research Project entitled "Measuring the Corporate Reputation of the Cruz Roja Española (Spanish Red Cross): creating a Model for the Third Sector" of the Universitat Jaume I in 2018. In this context, the editor Lorena López-Font cites the challenges magnified by the pandemic, in order to support the importance of the current literary compilation and driving advancements in corporate communication for the Third Sector of Social Action (TSSA).

Javier Senent-García, President of the Spanish Red Cross, and Rafael Gandía-Balaguer, President of the Autonomous Committee of the Spanish Red Cross in the Valencian Community, authored the preface. They underscore the compelling necessity for transformation towards innovation and digitalization of management and the significance of authentic communication models, adaptable to varied audiences and channels, and capable of engendering awareness and fortifying commitment to transparency in the Third Sector.

In this context, the book compiles 17 articles from 30 authors representing 15 distinct universities within the realm of Communication for Social Change and management within the TSSA. Drawing upon examples from Spain and Abya Yala, the articles are categorized into three thematic blocks. The initial block encompasses four chapters devoted to examining Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs and their influence on the reputation of Nonprofit Organizations (NPOs).

The second block, comprised of seven chapters, concentrates on enhancing the professional administration of information and knowledge exchange, specifically delving into the domain of corporate communication by NGOs employing digital technologies. Lastly, the third block amalgamates six chapters that advocate for a socially oriented approach in scrutinizing and critically identifying fundamental concepts intertwined with reputation within the TSSA and corporate

BLOCK I – On the "Reputation and CSR" Tandem. The Coexistence of the TSSA with the Business, Social and Institutional fabric

The block begins with the chapter written by Javier Corral-Lage, Juan-Jesús Donoso-Azañón, and Julio Moreno-Aragoneses, which presents foundations for the design and implementation of CSR in NPOs. It underscores this significance, especially given the need for comprehensive information encompassing non-financial aspects and addressing the existing legal gap regarding transparency. NPOs are advised to publish an execution report of the CSR plan, not only as an example for other entities, but also to enhance quality and innovation.

In the second chapter, Estrella Barrio-Fraile investigates the incorporation of corporate volunteering programs within the framework of CSR strategies, utilizing the case study of Leroy Merlin Spain as an exemplar. Additionally, an analysis is conducted to unveil the company's orchestration of diverse corporate volunteering initiatives. These initiatives involve employees, retirees, and their relatives in activities aimed at improving the social and environmental conditions of the community.

In the third chapter, Herlinda Ortiz-Rodriguez analyzes how educational foundations in Mexico manage their reputation and communicate their Organizational Social Responsibility (OSR) through their official website. The evaluation of 20 educational foundations studied allows us to reflect on the main challenge educational foundations

face: the management of their reputation, and their OSR with their audiences of interest. Therefore, corporate communication is essential for these types of organizations to strengthen their social capital and increase the social impact of their actions.

In the concluding chapter, Eva Breva-Franch and María-Consuelo Balado-Albiol examine companies' authentic integration of philosophical principles when incorporating CSR into their overarching strategies. They emphasize the importance of extending CSR initiatives throughout all business operations and advocating for creative communication strategies. A discernible business trend is emerging, indicating a notable commitment to social responsibility; and this commitment is not confined to the core business strategy alone, but is extending to include the communication strategy as well.

BLOCK II – On Professional Communication and Reputation Management at TSSA in the Digital Era

In the inaugural chapter, Patricia Durán-Bravo delineates the strategic communication direction within Third Sector Organizations (TSOs). The development of a Systemic Map is emphasized, serving as a tool that underscores the perceptual realm within TSOs as a continual source of symbolic and emotional production. Furthermore, the chapter highlights the association of effectiveness with the augmentation of symbolic and social assets, encompassing elements such as credibility, trust, and participation.

The second chapter analyzes communication and Public Relations management within a sample of four NGOs in Spain and four in Colombia. María-Pilar Paricio-Esteban, Ana-María Almansa-Martínez, and Beatriz-Eugenia Quiceno-Castañeda conduct qualitative research and comparative analysis, yielding insights into the structures of communication offices, strategic initiatives, interactions with the media, and the significance attributed to digital channels. The study reveals similarities in the management of communication among the analyzed NGOs. However, it also brings substantial differences in the composition of communication departments to light, with a notable absence of graduates in Public Relations.

María Pallarés-Renau delves, in the third chapter, into the role of measurement in reputation within NGOs to pinpoint evaluation models applicable to third-sector entities. The study identifies ongoing advancements in models, manifested through case studies and the proposal of new systems within the academic sphere. These endeavors aim to progress towards more precise indicators for assessing reputational performance in the TSSA. Within this framework, it is understood that aspects such as transparency and ethical behavior are intrinsic to this sector.

In the fourth chapter, Jose Moriano scrutinizes the role of Spanish social communication agencies and their contribution to the corporate reputation of NGOs, by conducting 40 interviews with social communication agencies across Spain. Among

other noteworthy characteristics, he includes the imperative to employ diverse strategies for communication with social purposes once the agencies extensively adopt the commercial objectives. Consequently, brand image is relegated to a peripheral activity within the social communication agency sector, sometimes even perceived as diverging from social values.

The fifth chapter, authored by Blanca Esteban-Regules, Isidoro Arroyo-Almaraz, and Samuel Calle-Mendoza, delves into the differentiation within the third sector and the shifts in communicative strategies on Facebook, prompted by the impact of COVID-19. This investigation employs a quantitative approach, specifically focusing on identifying, quantifying, and evaluating indicators associated with various aspects (such as format and communication objectives) of Facebook publications by selected NGOs in Spain. The study underscores the transformative capacity of new technologies, enabling organizations to engage in digital fundraising.

In the sixth chapter, Rebeca-Illiana Arévalo-Martínez and Rogelio del Prado-Flores conduct a comprehensive analysis of the reputation of third-sector organizations, exploring their communicative processes on another social network, Twitter, distinguished by its high flexibility in facilitating socialization and the creation of communities centered around shared interests. Consequently, within reputation management, the critical focal points encompass the organization's commitment to its values, dedication to stakeholders, and a proactive engagement approach.

Lastly, in the seventh chapter, a gender-focused study is undertaken by Magdalena Mut-Camacho and Laura García-Huguet. They conduct a qualitative examination of the utilization of social networks by Spanish women's NGOs. Based on this analysis, the authors delineate the trends in social media usage. The comprehensive analyses provided encompass diverse channels and strategies, including presence, frequency of publications, interactions, pursued objectives, and the incorporation of visual elements.

BLOCK III – A Critical Look at the Reputation of NGOs. On their Communicative Influence

The block commences with a study on reputation management and reputational risk within the TSSA, conducted by Sonia-Aránzazu Ferruz-González. The author delves into the intangible value of reputation, particularly in an environment characterized by uncertainty and continual change.

This approach focuses on stakeholders who play a pivotal role in the emergence of reputational risks. Consequently, the study advocates for placing these stakeholders at the forefront of reputation management efforts, incorporating their perspectives into risk assessments, and prevention and response plans. The second chapter examines discourses about aging and old age within the communication strategies of TSSA

organizations. The study focuses on communication from the website of the Hogares Compartidos association in Valencia, Spain. Authored by Elvira Antón-Carrillo and Rocío Blay-Arráez, the analysis interprets old age as a complex interplay of biological and sociocultural constructions and processes. A reflection on solidarity characterizes the examination of representations of social actors.

In the third chapter, Pablo Gómez-Iniesta and Juan-Luis Manfredi-Sánchez explore the transformative role of the new communicative logic in NGO corporate diplomacy. The authors delve into the profound influence of social networks and influencers in political communication, illustrating their consequential impact on NGOs. This discussion aligns with the theme of transparency as a guiding principle, a concept consistently emphasized in preceding chapters.

The subsequent chapter delves into the triumphs and setbacks social organizations encounter in their contemporary pursuit of influence. The author examines influence, political impact, and trust against the backdrop of the TikTok era and the post-COVID-19 landscape. José-María Herranz-De la Casa explores novel forms of activism, incorporating the framework of the UN 2030 Agenda. The chapter underscores the imperative to refine communication and social mobilization strategies, emphasizing the anticipation of digital trends through a thorough analysis of audience behavior within each generation (X, Y, or Z) in this digital ecosystem.

Eloísa Nos-Aldás and Tamer Al-Najjar-Trujillo engage in an epistemological, critical, cultural, organizational, and regulatory discourse in the fifth chapter. They advocate for reevaluating the communication, educational, and organizational models within NGDOs. This approach integrates the concept of cultural efficacy (Nos-Aldás, 2007) along with epistemologies of the South, aspiring toward an ecosocial transition within changes in structures.

The subsequent framework delineates the parameters for a Transgressive Communication of Social Action, offering an analysis of three communication initiatives undertaken by QUEPO, Intermón Oxfam, and NGO 100% for Børnene (100% for kids). These initiatives are presented as exemplary practices embodying a transgressive communication of social action- characterized as transformative, activist, mobilizing, non- violent, with socio-political impact. This form of communication is seen as capable of establishing alliances with influential agents and operating networks through dialogue.

The thought-provoking title, "Reputación y tercer sector: ¿trampa o necesidad?" (Reputation and the Third Sector: Trap or Necessity?), opens the book's concluding contribution, presented by authors Chaime Marcuello-Servós and Carmen Marcuello. They address the tendency to prioritize accumulating numbers of interactions and followers over fulfilling the foundational objectives of the respective entities. The authors also illuminate the significance of cultivating support networks, embracing plurality, and fostering dynamic interactions. They conclude by asserting that trust is built through active participation and open dialogue, thus emphasizing the multifaceted nature of reputation within the context of the Third Sector.

In conclusion, this reading offers a constructive perspective, contemporary insights, and a wealth of knowledge that significantly contributes to the Communication for Social Change field within the academic community, NGOs, and civil society. It is noteworthy for its theoretical-practical approach, yielding impactful results that inspire and drive action to social change.

Additionally, the book advocates for collaborative efforts, creativity, and the integration of digital technologies. At the same time, it prioritizes transparency, ethics, reputation, and good governance within organizations in varied sectors. The reading is recommended for students, communication professionals, educators, researchers, individuals engaged in the Third Sector, public administrators, private entities, activists, and the public interested in communication for social and environmental impact.

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