

Marketing Awareness in NGOs: Necessary Evil or Basic Principle to Meet the Stakeholders' Needs?

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Accountability towards donors and intensive competition in the donations' market as well as the organizations' aim to meet the needs of the numerous other stakeholder groups forces NGO managers in developing countries to professionalize the provision and deployment of financial resources. This trend calls for more market orientation of NGOs' managerial decisions. Nonetheless, there is little evidence in the literature on theoretical, organizational and even managerial specifics in NGO marketing. Anyhow, a formal guideline to set up marketing in NPOs is given by Schwarz (2005) in the Freiburger Marketing-Management Model (FMMM) which starts with strategic marketing planning and treats fundraising as one operational area that has to fit to the overall market positioning. In this research, the phenomenon of fundraising in the context of marketing is investigated in a Tanzanian NGO, a middle-sized orphanage with 150 children, founded by an English social worker in 2000. . The case study seeks to adopt the FMMM to the Tanzanian NGO based on identifying the marketing awareness of managers and employees as well as on understanding the organization's fundraising processes, marketing practices and conditions that sustain those processes and practices. For this reason, the fieldwork has been designed along the principles of qualitative methodology In a period of four weeks, the first author conducted fourteen qualitative interviews with members of three stakeholder groups, namely the founder team, volunteers and employees. The lead questions were targeted on exploring the diversity of the interviewees' perceptions of the marketing situation, their experiences with marketing activities and their personal attitudes towards the orphanage's appearance on the market of donors and competitors. It was a matter of particular interest to ask the interviewees how they would devise and implement marketing within the organization's strategy. Beside the textual data gained from the interview transcripts, photos, the organization's website, brochures, and correspondence were evaluated using Mayring's qualitative content analysis (2005). In the first instance, categories - organisation's goals, history, mission, services, publics, staff patterns, future, marketing awareness and marketing understanding, marketing-organisation, marketing application areas, fundraising-understanding, fundraising-organisation, fundraising-exchange system, fundraising-mix) - were deductively defined from topics derived from the literature on cultural and structural specifics of NGOs (topic coding) and the FMMM. Additionally, the course of the data coding also allowed for inductively oriented categorization. For supporting its intersubjectively comprehensible documentation, the qualitative software package QSR-N6 has been applied. In reviewing the interviewees' actual marketing awareness and understanding, one of the main findings was that the concepts of marketing and fundraising were strongly referred to business and thus were stated as not being consistent with the organisation's mission. The mission is mainly centred on the Christian belief that "God provides" and therefore no active fundraising management is necessary and desired. Despite the organization's ethos of "not asking for money" the study reveals that the organisation's achievements very much based on significant financial resources coming in through marketing and fundraising activities regularly set by the management. This contradiction together with the informal structures in the organization's more or less organised working environment raised dissatisfaction and uncertainty among the volunteers who were identified as the NGO's main "funding source" and the most important "marketing tool". Within the group of managers, there were attempts of awareness of these issues but no capabilities to start up the strategic shift towards market orientation were located. A remarkable number of perspectives regarding the issue of improved resource provision and marketing institutionalization

existed across the stakeholders. Consequently, a more systematic approach to the relevancy of strategic marketing planning and regular marketing activities within the organization's managerial decisions has been recognised as urgently needed.. Considering the study's findings, a conceptual fundraising model which includes strategic marketing options and selected recommendations for internal marketing activities for the orphanage's specific marketing situation has been suggested. The model allows for both, a systematic and theoretically based discussion of appropriate strategic marketing options and marketing activities, particularly of the fundraising activities, as well as the support of appropriate internal marketing activities to increase marketing awareness and convince personnel about the necessity of marketing thinking in the organization's future.