

The actions of toxic handlers in organizations through social media: the case of charitable associations in Algeria

أفعال معالجي المعاناة في المنظمات عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي: دراسة حالة الجمعيات الخيرية في الجزائر

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Abstract:

The objective of this article is to highlight the actions of charities in Algeria through their use of social media, in their role as toxic handlers. The latter are known for their ability to observe and alleviate suffering and pain in their colleagues in an organizational setting. This article concludes, through the analysis of the content of Facebook pages of a sample of charities in Algeria that the latter wants through this social media in particular, to raise awareness among local and national authorities concerning situations that require community intervention.

Keywords: Toxic handlers; Organizations; Social media; Resilience; Charities.

ملخص:

يهدف هذا المقال إلى إظهار أفعال معالجي المعاناة المتمثلين في الجمعيات الخيرية في الجزائر وذلك من خلال استخدامها لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. فهؤلاء المعالجون معروف عنهم ملاحظتهم وتخفيفهم للمعاناة والألم لدى زملائهم في الوسط التنظيمي. لقد توصل هذا البحث من خلال تحليل محتوى صفحات الفيسبوك لعينة من أربع جمعيات خيرية في الجزائر إلى أن هذه الأخيرة تعمل على تحسيس السلطات محلية كانت أو وطنية بشأن الوضعيات التي تتطلب التدخل من طرف الجماعة. كلمات مفتاحية: معالجي المعاناة، المنظمات، وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، المرونة التنظيمية، الجمعيات الخيرية.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Charities carry out actions within society for the poor, whose multiple needs vary from the occupation of substandard housing, to the lack of care, to the inability to afford the minimum required in conditions of survival; and finally, an inability to overcome many handicaps. Indeed, people subjected to such situations are led to feel suffering, pain, and thus the feeling of finding themselves on the margins of the community to which they feel they can no longer claim their full belonging, as other members would easily do. Thus, through their actions, charities help disadvantaged people to meet their needs, and thus contribute to their resilience.

The lack of resilience at the level of a part of the community – in this case the poor – could be the result of a vulnerability that has not been addressed in the desired way, risking the impact of the entire community, which would see the appearance of a series of failures (Teneau, G., 2017). Thinking of the community as an organization, toxic handlers could be described as those members who show compassion for people with a number of difficulties; through their actions, they act within it as a scarce resource capable of generating resilience (Pauter, C, 2017). Thus, the works carried out by these toxic handlers are likely to strengthen the organizational resilience of the community. In addition to their main concern of safeguarding the trust of donors, these associations aspire to greater efficiency; for them, it is the driving force behind their quest for the best way to build communication (Baudet, C., 2015).

The use of social media by a large number of associations has been noted: Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, and LinkedIn, to name but a few, are practical means of communication (Dolbeau-Bandin, C.; Lochon, A., & Krebs, V., 2017), and this in view of their ability to provide information to a larger audience (Mokrani, K., 2020).

In the case of Algeria, it is noted that a number of charities use social media, including YouTube, Google, and Facebook, are observed, the latter is the virtual social network that has been able to accumulate a large number of affiliates in record time (Biagini, C., 2012).

There are some 21 million users of these media in the country, which makes it a penetration of around 50%, with a clear preference for Facebook, which 90% of users access via their mobile phones (Mokrani, K., 2020).

It should be noted that there are 4303 solidarity and charitable associations in Algeria out of a grand total of 108940 all categories combined, they represent 3.95%.

It is easy to judge that it is the degree of performance in terms of communication and information via social media that has made it, in Algeria, a means of choice to carry out actions for the benefit of the poor, but this cannot be the only reason, since a number of factors must be considered that drive such a strategy.

In fact, there is a lack of treatment of the needs mentioned above, on the part of the public authorities, especially local authorities, which are satisfied with carrying out symbolic and punctual operations such as the Ramadhan basket, and the circumcisions of children belonging to disadvantaged families. The economic changes of recent years in Algeria have had negative effects on household incomes, with the corollary of a reduction in aid for the needy; added to this is the inadequacy of the actions of certain traditional actors in this field, such as mosques.

This state of affairs is likely to give more depth to the role of charities in Algeria, making technological means such as social media suitable tools for carrying out so-called toxic handler actions. In this case, it would be interesting to have an idea of the nature of the actions of toxic handlers, which charities carry out in Algeria through their use of social media.

This article is subdivided into two parts, the first deals with toxic handlers, their nature and their role in organisational resilience; the second part is dedicated to listing the actions carried out by four charities in Algeria via their Facebook pages.

2. Study problem and methodology

This study attempted to answer the following question: **what is the nature of the actions of toxic handlers undertaken by charities in Algeria, through their use of social media?**

As a hypothesis, this work is based on the idea that the characteristic of toxic handlers, applied to charities in Algeria, is dependent on related symbols that would permeate the content of their pages, particularly on Facebook. It seemed practical to us to carry out a qualitative analysis of the content of Facebook pages run by four Algerian charities; their choice is made randomly in the main regions of the country, namely: Algiers, the East region, the West, and the South. Even if the choice of charities covered by this study is made randomly, certain criteria had to be met to do so. At the top of these we find the nature of the actions that are summarized in the aid of the needy; secondly, we have the local character of the association chosen, and finally we have a Facebook page. The actions put on the said page and covering one month of the year 2021 are taken into account.

Qualitative data such as words, sentences, photos, or videos, have undergone a closed-type encoding, as part of a semantic analysis (Andréani & Conchon, n.d.), before proceeding to their lexical analysis.

3. Theoretical framework of toxic handlers and organizational resilience

3.1 Toxic handlers as a concept

The concept of toxic handler was first used by Peter Frost and Sandra Robinson in an article published in the prestigious Harvard Business Review in 1999; in fact, it refers to people who not only have the ability to listen to the people around them, but above all to feel empathy for them (Pauter, C., 2017).

They intervene in any organizational environment that contains toxicity generated by the actions of leaders, a state inducing painful effects and a number of so-called negative emotions including anger, fear, or anxiety (Teneau, G., 2017).

Despite the fact that this is a fairly recent concept, it should be noted that toxic handlers have always existed and have accompanied organizations (Frost, P.J., & Robinson, S.L., 1999); these have continued to be a constant source of pain, leading Frost (2003) to say that even the best leadership "may generate negative employee emotions when the organisation is engaged in dramatic change efforts (e.g., in response to intense competition, mergers, economic downturns, or other pressures".

Being the source of toxicity is not the prerogative of organisations alone; there are, in fact, situations outside the organisational environment that are the cause of negative emotions, such as illnesses or terrorist acts (Kulik, C.T., & al., 2009). It is therefore as scarce resources that people are apprehended whose actions consist of capturing the suffering of those around them, and absorbing its negative effects (Teneau, G., 2017).

3.2 The three types of toxic handlers

Three types of toxic handlers are identified, so for the first of them it is pointed out that he has a propensity to feel sympathy for others, he is also armed with this ability to understand in an emotional way what happens to the other in terms of setbacks or misfortunes; It is on this occasion that all forms of emotions are manifested such as sincerity, coherence or honesty. We are in front of trustworthy bearers.

The second type, which cannot distance itself from the state of what the people around it endures and feel as suffering, is also held by emotions; but it is empathy that he feels towards others (Teneau, G., 2011), and this is how he carries their suffering.

With the third type we leave the world of emotion for that of action, where everything possible is done in order to put an end to the sufferings of others; it is compassion that comes into play; with it we go beyond the stage of emotions for that of action.

3.3 What resilience is for an organization

Resilience usually refers to the psychological state that an individual manages to achieve after a certain number of efforts; this is achievable when a bond is created with a person whose merit lies in triggering the said state; in second place, the meaning that the person gives to his or her journey and also to the outcome of his or her efforts (Lecompte, J., 2010).

We are talking about a term that does not apply specifically only to psychology; it covers a multitude of disciplines, such as, for example, physics, where the ability of materials to return to their initial state following the

absorption of an effort is evoked; this is also the case in a field such as biology, where we find the power of certain organisms to safeguard their nature despite a host of modifications.

Applied to organizations, resilience refers to the ability to anticipate any critical situation in order to quickly recover a state of stability, by initiating a process to do so. (Baitan, M., 2018). Weick was the first to address organizational resilience in a 1993 paper; a little later he conceived the concept (2003) as: "the ability of a group to avoid organizational shocks by building systems of continuous actions and interactions intended to preserve the expectations of different individuals in relation to each other".

A certain number of prerequisites are required for the organization that is about to carry out a resilience process, which must be based on what it has in terms of scarce resources (Teneau, G., 2017). There are also situations that require innovative solutions, in which case we are faced with a renewal operation (Bauweraerts & Colot, 2014).

3.4 Forms of actions of toxic handlers

The actions carried out by toxic handlers are considered to be specific and varied (Kulik, C.T., & al., 2009); the various tasks they willingly perform are described as complex (Teneau, G., 2011). To tell the truth, the skills with which toxic handlers are equipped derive their complexity from the fact that they operate on a register linked to emotions; this is why they constantly surf between the need to absorb or reduce the suffering of their colleagues, to show compassion, and to succeed in generating trust in those around them.

The schematization of the different actions of toxic handlers will have the merit of subdividing them into three forms; in the first, it will be a question of their constant listening not only to their colleagues at work but also to managers; They are often a cause for concern on the eve of a redundancy operation. In this action of listening, they are offered the opportunity to display their ability to show compassion towards their interlocutors; but not only that, their role as custodians of the secrets of employees and members of management, is a rich source of information for them. The second form is related to the actions they perform on messages, especially those from managers to employees. Management staff are indeed inclined to issue their directives only accompanied by requirements

relating to their conception of what the objectives of the organisation they are responsible for supervising should be. In this case, toxic handlers do a job of watering down the said messages, stripping them of the bosses' requirements and leaving only the directives.

In the third and last form we find a franker intervention of the toxic handlers; this is manifested in what they offer in terms of advice for the benefit of employees with the aim of cleaning up their relations with management staff. To do this, they can go so far as to provoke brainstorming in order to arrive at solutions. To be even more practical, they are often working to provide one of the employees with a workstation commensurate with his or her abilities, without him or her being kept informed.

4. Empirical study of four charities in Algeria

4.1. Presentation of the charities studied

This study is based on the three forms of actions listed above that toxic handlers use; it is about their constant listening to the suffering in their surroundings, their actions on messages from people who are in need, and their interventions to solve problems.

The four Algerian associations chosen are the "Piety and Benevolence Association" in the commune of Kouba in Algiers; on its Facebook page it is stated that its aim is to help people in need, its actions are mainly focused on helping widows, and needy families with a child suffering from cancer.

The association "Djoussour El kheir" literally: "the bridges of the good", active in the wilaya of Skikda; in the list of goals stated on its Facebook page is mentioned the care of indigent and limited income categories. To carry out charitable actions such as the collection of warm clothes and food for the benefit of families in need, the association collects clothes, foodstuffs and even sums of money.

"Ness El Khir" is a charity that is active in the wilaya of Oran; Its members set themselves the mission of working voluntarily in humanitarian actions. Through its Facebook page we can see that this association works mainly to relay

messages to donate blood and platelets for the benefit of hospitalized children; As an accessory, appeals are posted to help needy people in the preparation of their weddings.

The fourth and last association is "Chabab El Ihsan" in the commune of Tolga, wilaya of Biskra; his Facebook page brings together, among other actions, blood collection operations for the benefit of patients on the eve of undergoing surgery, and the distribution of meals for the benefit of homeless people, and other workers from outside the city.

4.2 Analysis of the results

The associations selected in the present research have all animated their Facebook pages, with disparities, however, since it is tempting to note that there are among them those that activate more than others when taking into account the number of actions reported on Facebook during a month, as shown in Table N°1.

Table N°1. Total of actions by month and by association

Associations	Months	Number of actions	Total
Piété et bienfaisance	February	23	23
Djoussour El Khir	January	13	13
Ness El khir	February	17	17
Chabab El khir	February	10	10

Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of the data collected.

As regards the nature of the actions noted, the first observation that must be made on this subject refers to two forms. The first is the publication of messages with the aim of encouraging help for those with urgent needs, particularly health. Secondly, the associations have posted on their pages reports of their interventions to solve problems.

It is also noted that the proportion of messages is higher than the reports of interventions. Table N°2 provides the details. The superiority of the number of messages is in our opinion a normal thing since a charity that depends on the

collection of donations from benefactors, is not able on its own to intervene to resolve situations of great distress that continue to grow, this therefore encourages him to deal only with the most urgent, and to be satisfied with relaying the calls for help of the needy.

Table N°2. Number of messages and reports of interventions

Associations	Messages	Intervention reports	Total
Piété et bienfaisance	16	07	23
Djoussour El Khir	11	02	13
Ness El khir	12	05	17
Chabab El khir	07	03	10

Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of the data collected.

By analysing the messages as well as the reports of the interventions put online by the four charities, it appears that the most urgent in view of its volume, which we have deemed important, is what relates to the health component, in particular the blood collection for the benefit of hospitalised people with cancer, and especially in paediatrics; then come the donations of medicines and medical equipment. The Reading messages published on Facebook in the form of posts, and watching the videos calling for blood donation for the benefit of hospitalised people in critical situations demonstrate this primacy. The same goes for the online reports of the interventions and other operations carried out by the associations for the blood collection. Table N° 3 illustrates in terms of percentages the high ratios of appeals for blood donation launched by each of the charities studied, in the form of posts or videos; this is in addition to the operations they have organised for the collection of this vital material. Then come the appeals for donations of medicines and even trousseaux for wedding celebrations, and the distribution of foodstuffs for the benefit of families and people living in precarious conditions.

Table N°3. Details of the charities' operations

Associations	Blood donations	Medicines donations	Food donations	Total
Piété et bienfaisance	43.47	21.73	8.69	73.89
Djoussour El Khir	-	-	53.84	53.84
Ness El khir	52.94	23.52	-	76.46
Chabab El khir	60.00	-	20.00	80.00

Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of the data collected.

The high proportion of appeals for blood donation contained in the messages posted by associations on Facebook, added to their reports on the operations carried out for its collection, reveals the distress that the families and loved ones of cancer patients, especially those at a young age, must feel. Indeed, the heavy and expensive treatments required by such a disease aggravate the economic and social precariousness of families, especially those living far from urban centers where hospitals are equipped with specialized services. They are called upon to incur multiple expenses for housing, transportation, and other medical tests.

This observation is also an indication of the heavy weight that the health sector represents in terms of management, and as a budget-consuming item of expenditure for the State. Free health care seems almost a chimera inherited from the socialist era since poor families turn to charitable associations to ask for help in money, medicine, and blood donations.

The publications posted by the associations on their Facebook pages and which contain messages and reports of their interventions in order to provide solutions to the problems and difficulties experienced by people in need, are made using a certain number of words whose vocation is to support the said actions. In this sense, the slogans contained at the top of the Facebook pages of the associations studied, and which have the function of presenting them using short sentences, contain words that reflect the self-sacrifice shown to achieve the happiness of others.

The word "El Khir"

Three of the four associations subject to this study have in their name the qualifier "El Khir" which could be translated as "the good"; this is a harbinger of the compassionate and humanistic character of their members, as it also shows the beneficent nature of their actions.

Bringing "El Khir" to any person, or group of people, affected by the toxicity of the organized environment that is the community, because of a health problem or simply material poverty, these are the actions of toxic handlers.

The word "Warriors"

"Warriors" is the adjective used to describe in turn the volunteers active within the association, people with cancer, as well as donors.

The main characteristic of a war is that it is not only an exceptional state, but also a dangerous situation for any protagonist who is involved in it.

This use therefore denotes the extent of the actions necessary to overcome the precariousness of families and the people helped; it is also a term that is used with the intention of evoking the possibility of victory, because wars must be won.

The words "Volunteers of tomorrow" and "Heroes of all time"

These are words whose main idea is that the children of today are trained to volunteer and help the needy, to become the volunteers of tomorrow, and heroes of all times.

4.3 Discussion of the results

The four charities whose actions via their Facebook pages have been studied above, try to lighten the burden carried by needy individuals and families who continue to sink into economic and social precariousness due to disadvantageous living conditions or diseases requiring specialized and heavy care.

Thus, the use of social media to carry out actions in order to provide solutions to the situations that arise for them, make studied charities toxic handlers; this is because the choice of these technological means denotes their

listening to the problems of the poorest and weakest members of the community, since it highlights their constant concern to reach the greatest number of potential benefactors.

The other choice made by these associations, the nature of which indicates their status as toxic handlers, is related to the words used in the publication of messages and reports of their interventions; indeed, using the term "El Khir" in their names is likely to give the full measure of their role as bearers of suffering.

Symbolising the courage of children with cancer, the work of volunteers, and the efforts of benefactors, through the use of the word "warriors" is a testimony of compassion to absorb and reduce the suffering of others, and above all to arouse their resilience.

5. CONCLUSION

In the course of this research, we have endeavored to highlight the work accomplished by a category of individuals in society, which consists of listening to the ills and sufferings of others, trying to understand them, before ensuring that we reduce what they generate in terms of pain; these individuals are referred to as "toxic handlers".

Toxic handlers have been spotted by the specialized literature in companies since the end of the last century; this place has the reputation of concealing toxicity induced by the various eddies and changes experienced by any organized environment. This generates pain, anger, and many negative emotions.

Organizations that go through areas of depression end up finding moments of stability and a return to normality; they are showing resilience in part thanks to the actions of toxic handlers.

By considering the community as an organized environment, we are led to recognize in some of its components the quality of toxic handlers; this is the case for charitable associations, whose help to the poor is generally accompanied by listening to and bearing the suffering of the most vulnerable; as a result, they are put on the path to resilience.

What is noticed in the study of the four charities in Algeria is their propensity to use social media in the accomplishment of most of their works.

Facebook remains the most prominent application for carrying out the two forms of action that are the repercussions of the various messages emanating from the people in distress, as well as families in precarious situations due to the costs induced by the disease; and secondly, the interventions undertaken to solve the most urgent problems, particularly those of health.

The messages posted on the Facebook pages of charities testify to the toxic handler nature of the latter, in particular by the use of certain words symbolizing both listening to the sufferings of others, and carrying their pain; which will eventually create the resilience of individuals in distress, and subsequently that of the entire community.

But charitable associations alone cannot carry and remedy the toxicity generated by the hazards of community life; it is therefore important that the public authorities make the following additional efforts:

- Work to increase the number of charitable associations by facilitating the delivery of accreditations, the provision of computer equipment, and other assistance in premises.

- Continue to improve Internet speed in the country, especially in remote areas, where it is noted that access to this technology is difficult.

- Create the charity of the year award, so that the one who has carried out the most outstanding actions during a year is awarded; the merit of this would be to encourage these community toxic handlers.

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