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Crisis life cycle, insights and models

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Abstract:

In this article, which is tagged with the life cycle of the crisis, the researcher deals with visions and models of the issue of the crisis within the institution and its stages, and the extent to which these stages are similar to the life stages of a living organism, and how to address the crisis and reduce its effects.

In this regard, we note that researchers' opinions differed regarding the stages of the crisis life cycle, perhaps the most important of which is centered on the four-stage model presented by "Gonzalez-Ferrero, & Pratt," focusing on a set of principles.

Based on that, we will try, through this article, to define the crisis and the life cycle of the crisis, focusing on the importance of communication in this field.

Keywords: Organization, communication, crisis, strategy, confrontation .

الملخص :

في هذا المقال الموسوم بدورة حياة الأزمة يتناول الباحث رؤى ونماذج لقضية الأزمة داخل المؤسسة ومراحلها ومدى تشابه هذه المراحل مع مراحل حياة الكائن الحي وكيفية مواجهة الأزمة وتقليل آثارها. وفي هذا الصدد نلاحظ أن آراء الباحثين اختلفت في ما يتعلق بمراحل دورة حياة الأزمة ، ولعل أهمها يتمحور حول نموذج المراحل الأربع الذي قدمه "Gonzalez-Ferrero، & Pratt" بالتركيز على مجموعة من المبادئ.

وانطلاقاً من ذلك ، سنحاول من خلال هذا المقال تحديد الأزمة ودورة حياة الأزمة ، مع التركيز على أهمية التواصل في هذا المجال .

الكلمات المفتاحية: التنظيم ، الاتصال ، الأزمات ، الإستراتيجية ، المواجهة.

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1.INTRODUCTION

The crisis constitutes an important part in the life of organizations, as they are exposed to it daily, with different degrees of severity.

It threatens its survival and continuity due to social and cultural development, economic fluctuations, as well as political changes in the world, in addition to the rapid technological developments and globalization of markets and the resulting change and development of the needs, desires and tastes of consumers.

Despite the multiplicity and difference of crises, each crisis is dealt with as a single case in itself, which has its own characteristics .It also affects organizations in their various technical, economic, legal, financial, commercial and social factors.

In addition, all organizations, regardless of their various forms and types, are subject to many crises.

For this reason, these organizations are required to plan for crises before they occur, and this is confirmed by Fink by saying, "When a person is in a position of authority, he must aspire and plan for the crisis as he looks forward to death, not out of weakness and fear, but out of the strength that comes to him in knowing and preparing for what might happen." facing him.

Recent literature in this field indicates that there is a great similarity between the biological model and the life cycle of the crisis, where the crisis passes in its growth and development stages similar to the stages of the organism, which begins with the stage of birth, then the stage of growth and maturity, until the stage of decline and death, Crisis life cycle can be used to express each stage of the life cycle. And if the organization is able to address the crisis before it escalates, it can reduce the dire risks that may pose a threat to its reputation, as well as its stability and continuity.

Therefore, we will try, through this research paper, to answer the following essential question: **What are the stages of the crisis in the institution and how is it addressed?**

In order to answer the problematic question, we will break it down into a number of questions as follows:

1. What is the definition of a crisis?
2. What are the types of crises?
3. What is the crisis life cycle?
4. What is the appropriate stage to face the crisis within the institution?
5. What are the most important theoretical models that dealt with the issue of the crisis life cycle?

2.Methods and Materials of the study :

The methodology used in this study is the use of methodological methods imposed by the importance of the study and its general objective, as it was imposed by the treatment, discussion and then analysis of the issue of the crisis life cycle in the institution, which calls for the necessity of choosing the appropriate research method and tools that the problem raises, namely:

The survey method, "which is considered one of the most prominent methodological methods in the field of media studies, which represents an organized scientific effort to obtain data and information about the phenomenon or a group of phenomena under study" (Samir Muhammad Hussein, 1995, pg. 132)

It is also useful from this methodological method in the study of the problem and its dismantling into its hierarchical elements, in order to reach useful connotations.

Based on this, the researcher resorted to the use of analysis and interpretation, to draw logical conclusions in order to answer the questions of the study.

Through this study, we wanted to know the dialectical relationship that links the crisis and the institution and its stages, which are very similar to the stages of the life of the organism and its manifestations in the social, political, cultural and economic reality in institutions.

As for the tools used, the researcher presented the research contributions and theoretical models related to the concept of the crisis and its life cycle within the institution, in terms of concept, characteristics, features, types based on the questions of the study, using the observation tool, then scrutiny and analysis to extract the results.

3.Definition of a crisis:

Crisis is a general word known in the social community as a problem that raises its use in many areas and sharp discussions about defining a specific concept or a certain direction in public or private issues that may be political, economic, military or social.

A crisis is a transitional circumstance characterized by imbalance, and represents a turning point in the life of an individual, group, organization or society and often results in significant change.(Robert , 2019, p 68)

The analysis of the various crises indicates a great similarity with the biological model in the life cycle, where the human being goes through different stages of birth, growth and maturity, reaching the stage of decline and death.

When the signs of the crisis appear, the administration can intervene to address it before the crisis reaches the stage of growth and maturity, we say that good management avoided the crisis.

Whereas, when the administration neglects to address the crisis in its infancy, the conditions are ripe for the birth, growth and maturity of the crisis, which constitutes a major threat to the reputation of the organization.

If the organizations manage to address the problems before they turn into crises, they will avoid the massive coverage that the media may provide as a result of a lack of information, and this is what happened in Britain when in 1990 it faced a major crisis that caused panic among the masses and related to the “mad cow” crisis due to a lack of accurate information.

While the impact of the second wave when this disease appeared again in 1996, here experts presented the facts and then dealt with the crisis as follows:

Dealing with the issue seriously and without intimidation, quickly acting, making the public relevant to the facts of the topic. However, it must be noted that some crises cannot be avoided and contained in the bud.(Makkawi , 2005 ,p 103)

4.Types of crises:

Combs divides crises into two basic types: unintentional and premeditated. Unintended crises include:

- **Slips:** These are unintended actions that an external party seeks to turn into a crisis. This type of crisis is often characterized by ambiguity and uncertainty.
- **Accidents**: They occur as a result of human errors such as negligence and lack of interest in product quality or as a result of natural, fatal events.

As for intentional crises, they can be divided into two types:

- ✓ Abuses, which are crises resulting from deliberate actions by some officials in the organization through miscalculation or exceeding the limits of competences, which results in damages to the organization and its general public.
- ✓ Sabotage acts are intentional acts to sabotage the activities of the organization and its reputation among the public.

As for "Lerbinger", he categorizes crises into: (Gerald , 2017 , p41)

1- A fatal crisis such as floods, earthquakes and volcanoes

2- Technological crises arising from the risks of using modern technological means (information piracy)

3- Competition crises when the organization faces a group that attacks it and criticizes its actions

4- Terrorist/disruptive crises such as placing pollutants, toxins or aggressive acts

5- Profitability crises through the desire to expand and open markets at the expense of quality and workmanship

6- Deception crises when the organization deliberately deceives a specific party or a specific audience.

5.Crisis life cycle:

The crisis passes through its inception and completion cycle with several basic stages that show its chain of development from its inception as an accident until confronting it and starting to deal with it.

The crisis life cycle can be used to predict the expected results from the stages of its life and take advantage of that by intervening at the appropriate time to deal with it.

It should be noted that no matter how different the views of the researchers on the stages of the crisis are in the nomenclature, but there is no difference in content.

Crisis managers must look at the stages of the crisis with a high concentration in order to be able to meet the challenges and needs of the administration represented in different and vital dimensions at each stage.

Crisis phases mean dividing the crisis management function into separate sectors of a specific arrangement. Coombs divided the stages of the crisis into three stages according to the time basis: (Barton , 2019 , p79)

1. Pre-crisis stage:

You start by focusing on spotting early warnings and prevention by doing work preparation, analyzing the situation, gathering facts, and training staff.

2. Response stage:

At this stage, the crisis is dealt with and how to rebuild the reputation of the organization or the individual, as a result of the organization's exposure to damages that are known and attempted to deal with.

3. Post-crisis phase:

It prepares for the next crisis, and fulfills all the commitments made during the crisis stage, including providing follow-up information, and a radical change can occur at this stage after the crisis is over.

The division of "Yanmitrov", which consists of five stages and was adopted by many researchers as follows:

1. Feeling the possibility of a crisis - discovering warning signals: Almost all crises leave a trail of early warning signs, and if the administration manages to catch these signals, then many crises can limit their appearance before they occur, and this is the best way to manage the crisis.
2. Preparedness and prevention: the goal is to pool efforts to reduce the continuation of the crisis in its early stages and to manage it effectively.
3. Containing the crisis: containing the impact of the spread more.
4. Restore balance and activity: The main goal is to restore the normal situation of the organization as soon as possible so as not to lose customers.
5. Learning and Evaluation: The process by which it reflects what has been accomplished so that the organization can manage the next crisis the moment it occurs.

In another classification, Fink divided the stages of the crisis into four stages: (Burke ,2011, p 51)

1. Alarm stage:

It is a warning stage, sometimes referred to as the pre-crisis stage, and is characterized by debilitating characteristics

It helps to make the sense of the crisis more powerful, and here the warning can be remedied before reaching the crisis stage.

2. Aggravation stage:

This stage represents the point of no return, when the warning ends and the crisis stage is reached.

The importance of advance planning and preparation for the crisis is highlighted here, as this planning provides sufficient time to confront the crisis, deal with it and limit its impact.

3. Chronic phase:

At this stage, the causes of the crisis are ascertained, the damage is assessed, and responsibility is determined. This stage is also a reassessment and appropriate measures are taken. The organization may go through this stage in a state of financial turmoil, reorganization, or even bankruptcy.

4. Solution stage:

At this stage, the factors causing the crisis begin to fade, and the organization returns to the stage of natural balance before the crisis. Therefore, this stage represents the last stages of the crisis that it reaches after the escalation of its framework.

Determining the type of crisis, the extent of the damage and the consequences it caused:

- The first step in dealing with a crisis is to know its nature and determine the extent of the damage it has caused; When you can reach the main cause that led to the outbreak of this disaster, you can then think about the data that you are dealing with and gather the correct information about it, and you will be able to discover the mechanism of eradicating this danger from its roots.
- If the company's crisis is related to a functional crisis, for example, then you will know that the process of managing and controlling the quality of your human element faces a weakness, this weakness is not limited to its impact on the department or its department only, but the damage is exacerbated in a way that makes it affect the image of the brand as a whole, so A new system must be designed that monitors the human elements and the quality of the tasks assigned to them and how they perform these tasks, so as to prevent any semi-corruption or negligence in the matter.
- Develop a plan for the mechanism of action and contain the results After identifying the crisis and acknowledging its existence and dealing with it impartially, so that it is not overlooked due to the involvement of individuals in it, an organized plan is then developed to deal with it and contain the extent of its damage, so that the question here is what do we do? Instead of who is responsible for that?

- The company's plan should include dealing with all its results professionally. If the crisis leads to an increase in the institution's debts, or the loss of qualified employees, or damage to the brand's image, for example, the company should not focus all its attention on one result and ignore other damages, but rather the plan should include dealing With all the damages resulting from the crisis, so that dealing with one result does not harm others.

- Develop more than one scenario and analyze the consequences of each of them When dealing with crises, there is usually more than one appropriate scenario to treat the matter, but these scenarios are not all viable, for example, a problem may need a huge financial source to spend on advertising and improving the image, which is not appropriate in this period.

Some crises may need to have a kind of managerial mentality or technical skills that are not available in the current employees, and at the same time an employee from outside will not be satisfied with dealing with the institution at this time, or the institution may not allow the intervention of an external element from the basis of the sensitivity of information in this Period. All these facts may make an ideal scenario for treating the crisis a lost card that cannot be relied upon in any way.

Therefore, when companies exploit crises for their benefit or think of logical solutions to them, the first thing they do is to develop more than one analytical scenario for them, and choose the most appropriate to suit both their budget and social image, as well as the skills and experiences they possess and the impact of this on their market share.

We note that there is a strong similarity between Mitrov's division in 1994 and Fink's division in 1986. The stage of early warning detection can reflect part of the warning stage, and the difference lies in the degree to which the Mitrov model reflects the focus on warning detection and prevention. And preparing for it, while Fink's model focused on the crises that can be prevented at this stage.

Mitrov has clarified each of these stages effectively and practically. There is also a correlation between the stage of restoring balance, activity and the chronic stage, both of which determine the need for reprogramming operations. Mitrov's model focuses on how the crisis team restores activity and balance of the organization, while focusing Fink's model states that organizations recover at varying speeds.

And both the learning stage or the solution stage are a solution to the crisis. The learning stage, according to the Mitrov model, focuses on crisis management as well as describing the crisis. For him, the last stage is a continuation of the stage of restoring balance and activity. Communication and follow-up with stakeholders moves from the stage of recovery to the stage of learning. And evaluation, Fink's model, shows that the solution phase occurs when the impact of the crisis ends.

The main difference between these two models lies in comparing the last stage. The Mitrov model suggested what crisis managers should do at each stage, and focused on the progress of the efforts and activity of crisis managers, while Fink's model adopted the descriptive approach and the number of characteristics of each stage and focused on the development of the crisis. (Bernstein , 2018 , p 134)

Naturally, Fink and Mitrov's model is compatible with Coombs' 2007 model. The pre-crisis stage includes all the concepts of pre-crisis preparedness, detection of warnings, prevention, preparedness and the warning stage.

The crisis stage includes the actions that must be taken in the event of the crisis. The stage of containing damage, restoring activity, the stage of crisis and the chronic stage are included in this stage. As for the post-crisis phase, it reflects the period after the crisis, and both the learning and assessment phases are included in that phase.

It is possible to compare the three models through the following table: (Al-Naji , 2012 ,p 49)

Table No. (1): A comparison between the different stages of crises according to the model of Mitrov, Fink and Coombs

COOMBS 2007	**MITROFF 1994**	**FINK 1986**
Pre-crisis stage	Discover alerts	Prepare and prevent
	Alarm stage	
Crisis stage	containment Restore	crisis stage
	balance and activity	chronic phase
Post-crisis phase	Learning and Assessment	solution stage

Crisis can just as easily arise from a single devastating event, as it can from a series of unattended critical events. But either way it happens, crisis can present a serious threat to a business's core objectives, reputation – even its viability. What's more, crisis, once underway, doesn't just burn bright, then suddenly extinguish. That's because crisis is by definition multilayered and multidimensional. In order to properly prepare for, manage, and recover from crisis, companies need a strong crisis management function, one that anticipates crisis. So what's the key – continuously improving your crisis management planning and preparedness through a crisis lifecycle management approach. Let's dive in.

A concept familiar to marketers from the product lifecycle, the crisis management lifecycle starts with a few basic stages. The idea being that if you correctly identify each stage, you'll be better equipped to make decisions appropriate to that stage, with the end goal of recovering efficiently from crisis.

The basic stages of crisis are as follows: (Robinson , 2021 ,p 97)

1. Pre-crisis. As the name implies, the focus at this point is on prevention and preparation, in other words, reducing the known risks that can lead to crisis.

2. Response. Now, you're in the thick of it. This stage deals with the actual response to a real, live crisis.

3. Post-crisis. All great crises must come to an end. But that doesn't mean they won't reoccur, especially if companies don't undertake this final, post-crisis stage. During this phase, companies will take the opportunity to look back and reflect. They create a post-mortem to see what went wrong, which helps them think of ways to better prepare for the next crisis. It's also when companies begin fulfilling the commitments they made while the crisis was still raging.

Understanding that beginning, middle, and end-framework to the crisis management lifecycle is just a start though. A crucial start, but a start all the same. That's because the stages of crisis don't break down that neatly. Advanced crisis management techniques rely on a more strategic, cyclical lifecycle approach. I'll lay out one formulation of the crisis management lifecycle here: (Johansen , 2016 ,p 101)

- During the first, build up stage, you'll see hints of a potential crisis brewing, often on social media. At this point, you should be looking for certain repeat messages that foreshadow crisis.

- By the impact stage, that earlier trigger has now morphed into a full crisis. You should expect to get the most media scrutiny at this point. But it's not over yet…

- Because during the chronic crisis stage, the media usually shifts the script from what's happening to who's to blame. Meanwhile, a crisis-sieged company is still suffering through the effects of impact, which can be as significant as physical restoration.

- Eventually, you'll get to the resolution stage when the crisis-hit company is up, running, and (hopefully) out of the media glare. But if this stage doesn't include deep analysis and investigation, that company is basically just biding its time, waiting for the next crisis to strike.

7.Results and discussion :

The study reached a number of results, which are as follows:

- The art of crisis management is known as a type of management science, in which consideration is given to the past, present and future, so that the company comes out of its vision of the subject, and performs an objective evaluation of each of the reasons that led to the occurrence of the crisis in the first place and what elements helped to Exacerbation of it, the mechanism of dealing with the crisis at the present time and how to reduce its catastrophic results, how to avoid the occurrence of the crisis in the future and predicting others, as well as redrawing the corporate image.
- The art of crisis management, especially administrative ones, can be defined as the processes that companies resort to to reduce the damage caused by a sudden occurrence or a desire to remedy a defect or negligence that has catastrophic results at work.
- The crisis management process does not go smoothly, but is preceded by a group of complex stages in which all human and technical elements overlap as an essential part,
- It passes in the form of a progressively rising curve with the hottest of events, and quickly recedes with the use of effective solutions in a professional manner
- Exposure to a crisis, no matter how strong, is not the end of the story. Rather, crises can be exploited for the benefit of companies in a professional manner if the crisis is managed intelligently.
- When dealing with crises, there is usually more than one appropriate scenario to treat the matter, but these scenarios are not all viable, for example, a problem may need a huge financial source to spend on advertising and improving the image, which is not appropriate in this period.
- Some crises may need to have a kind of managerial mentality or technical skills that are not available in the current employees, and at the same time an employee from outside will not be satisfied with dealing with the institution at this time, or the institution may not allow the intervention of an external element from the basis of the sensitivity of information in this Period. All these facts may make an ideal scenario for treating the crisis a lost card that cannot be relied upon in any way.
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- It's important to include employees in all phases of dealing with a crisis, but do it smartly, you don't want to create panic and instability among them, or convey to your employees a feeling of prior defeat or frustration. Rather, share what you have about the matter, and ask them for suggestions to solve the crisis, and do not deal with them as the main cause or problem, but rather they are an important and influential part of the treatment.
- When you integrate employees into the process of dealing with the crisis early, then the employee will have a higher sense of responsibility towards the company, and he will want to do everything he can to save his livelihood.
- The Public Relations Department is the super hero in this particular period, due to its great influence in directing the public's behavior towards dealing with the crisis positively, and erasing the effects of any damage that may have been inflicted on the institution in the media.
- Here, the Public Relations Department deals directly with the public of different nature (competitors, target customers, general public, suppliers, companies, official bodies) and works to organize the response method so that it puts the institution in a stronger field again on the one hand, and on the other hand reassures all those who deal with it The crisis is handled professionally.

8. CONCLUSION

Despite the multiplicity of visions and models that tried to put the crisis in specific stages, they share the idea of its danger to different organizations, and therefore it is necessary to deal with it and manage it through careful strategic planning that fits with the various stages of the crisis life cycle.

It must also be noted that one of the most important components of effective crisis management is frankness and openness, as it is fruitful in its impact on the mental image of the organization, both at the level of its internal and external audience.

Crises are nothing but experiences that can be learned from, and no matter how difficult these lessons are to understand or their cost is high in terms of material and moral terms, they represent a free gift that helps companies stand steadfastly and strongly in the target market, so when your organization is exposed to a strong crisis, all you have to do is take advantage and develop proactive plans to prevent its recurrence.

It is not only about preventing it, but also creating scenarios of what might happen if it gets out of control, so that the company here can exploit the crises to its advantage and not be affected by this kind of damage again.

As recommendations of this study, crises must be dealt with in a proactive manner through:

- Drawing up scenarios in advance of how to treat the crisis when it occurs and what is the best way to avoid it in the first place.
- Conducting workshops for employees so that they can monitor performance and quality in a professional manner that prevents any error from occurring.
- The presence of standard indicators through which to notice any defect as soon as it occurs to prevent the deterioration of its results later on.

- The existence of a strict and organized system so that there is no intentional or unintended interference that would affect the entire production process.

- Develop plans for business continuity even at the time of crises, so that the production process is not negatively affected by the crisis in a way that cannot be dealt with after its end.
- Keeping abreast of continuous market changes, whether technologically, administratively or technically, so that the institution is not exposed in the future to sudden crises that it cannot deal with.

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