

Influence of Teamwork on Humanitarian Aid Response in Arid and Semi-Arid Areas in Kenya

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Abstract

The study aimed to examine teamwork's influence on humanitarian aid responses in arid and semi-arid areas in Kenya. The study used a positivist approach and explanatory research design. The explanatory research design was deemed suitable for the study since the research aims to explain the causal relationship of the variables. The population was 5,996 and a sample size of 375 was obtained using the Yamane formula. The study used a stratified random technique to select the respondents. Structured questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect the data. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and presented in prose form. Moreover, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25 was used to organize the quantitative data. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and presented in tables and figures. The correlation analysis indicates a positive and significant association between teamwork explaining and humanitarian aid responses ($r = 0.452$, $p = 0.001$). The regression analysis indicates teamwork can explain 20.4% of the variations in humanitarian aid responses. The F-value of 85.626 with a p-value of $p = 0.000$ emphasizes the model's statistical significance, while the regression coefficients show a positive and significant influence ($\beta = 0.282$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that a unit increase in teamwork increases humanitarian aid responses by 0.282 units. These statistics underline the importance of teamwork in enhancing humanitarian efforts in the studied areas. The study concludes that humanitarian aid responses in Arid and Semi-Arid areas in Kenya are significantly influenced by teamwork. The study recommends that the NGOs' management in the humanitarian aid responses should focus on teamwork. Organizations should establish effective communication to enhance the sufficient flow of information from one department to another. The study also recommended that management focus on developing soft skills to increase the employees' ability to express and communicate. Management should organize more activities, such as inter-departmental meetings, to create quality bonding among superiors and subordinates. Proper training and development plans should be established to realize effective organizational communication.

Keywords: Teamwork, humanitarian aid response, arid and semi-arid areas, Kenya

Introduction

Humanitarian aid response encompasses delivering aid to those in need, often coordinated by national and international agencies after disasters (Sullivan, 2017). Despite their efforts, challenges like resource distribution complexities and involving multiple stakeholders persist, requiring extensive coordination (Bisri, 2019; Holzer, Kocher, Bendahan & Gillet, 2020). Emotional support plays a pivotal role, measured through motivation, trust, and empathy (Chaudhri et al., 2017). Motivation drives individuals to work diligently toward humanitarian goals (Sameer, 2015), while trust fosters practical partnerships (Kahungya, 2016). Empathy enables leaders to connect with team members, enhancing response efforts (Islam et al., 2020). Despite numerous NGOs in Kenya, challenges such as sustainable food production, misaligned partner expectations, and poor project performance persist (Nienke & Gert-Jan Stads, 2020; Mwangi & Anaya, 2020; Wanja, 2017). A significant portion of NGO projects are unsustainable, collapsing within a year after donor support ends (Jhuthi, 2015). Many NGOs struggle to complete projects on time, within budget, and achieve set objectives (Wanja, 2017). Additionally, humanitarian aid responses in arid and semi-arid areas of Kenya have been inadequate, marred by poor coordination and insufficient commitment, exacerbating the impact of droughts and floods (Sala, Otieno, Nzuma and Mureithi, 2020; Abdilatif, Onono & Mutua, 2018). This study addresses these challenges by exploring the influence of emotional support on humanitarian aid response in these regions.

Statement of the Problem

Humanitarian response among some of the NGOs in Kenya has not been adequate. In Kenya, NGOs received a total of Ksh 165.97 billion in 2018/19, an 8 percent increase from the previous year in 2017/2018. However, according to the Public Benefits Organizations Authority, the total expenditure was Ksh 132.1 billion, representing 79.59% usage. This indicated that there was inefficiency in the utilization of the funds. Moreover, despite having various NGOs in Kenya focused on humanitarian activities, there still exist gaps in addressing the challenges affecting the country, such as sustainable food production interventions (Nyambura, Rambo & Nyonje, 2019). Besides, it was reported by Sala, Otieno, Nzuma, and Mureithi (2020) that humanitarian aid response in the ASAL areas during a disaster has been very low with poor coordination, lack of goodwill, and unsatisfactory dedication. The Humanitarian aid response in some ASAL areas has been marred by misaligned community expectations and ineffective coordination (Mwangi & Anaya, 2020). A study conducted by Wanja (2017) indicated that humanitarian aid response within the ASAL areas has been inadequate due to a deficiency of teamwork and misalignment of interests. Thus, the current study examined the influence of emotional support on humanitarian aid response in arid and semi-arid areas in Kenya.

Research Question

How does teamwork influence humanitarian aid responses in Arid and Semi-Arid areas in Kenya?

Hypothesis

H₀: Teamwork has no significant influence on humanitarian aid responses in Arid and Semi-Arid areas in Kenya

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

The theory deemed relevant to inform the study was shared leadership theory. Shared leadership theory, initially developed by Mary Parker in 1924 and later expanded upon by Gibb in 1954, emphasizes leadership as a group quality, with a set of functions carried out by the group. Rush, Thomas, and Lord (1977) further underscored its significance in influencing organizational success. Pearce and Sims (2000) described shared leadership as a collaborative effort, promoting efficiency through teamwork and cooperation, driven by inclusive leaders who foster excellent relationships and diversity within the organization (Gittell & Suchmann, 2013). This theory highlights the alignment of processes and goals when individuals openly work together, ultimately leading to higher organizational performance (Crowston & Osborn, 2018). In humanitarian contexts, inclusive leadership harnesses diverse perspectives, enhancing aid responses (Stanikzai, 2017) and fostering collaboration to achieve common business purposes (Mohd et al., 2018), thereby improving humanitarian outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1

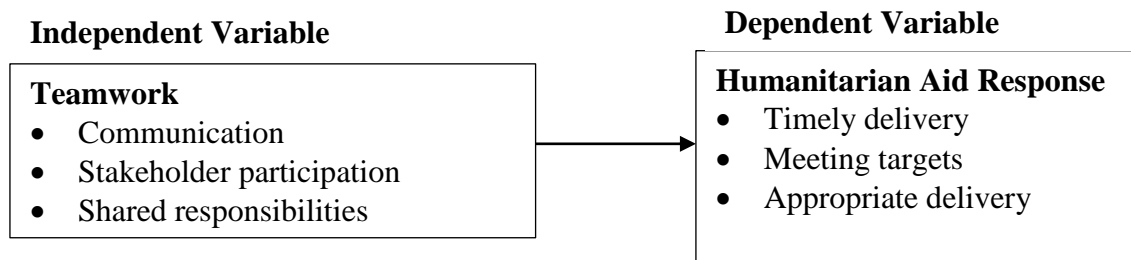


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

This study employed a positivist research philosophy, focusing on testing hypotheses derived from existing theories through empirical measurement of social realities. The research utilized an explanatory design to explore causal relationships among variables within 20 NGOs specializing in humanitarian activities. The target population included 274 top-level managers, 704 middle-level supervisors, and 5,018 support staff, totaling 5,996 respondents. Data sources encompassed the NGOs Board of Kenya and organization websites. Stratified random sampling was chosen due to the population's heterogeneity, resulting in a sample size of 375 determined by the Yamane formula. Data collection involved structured questionnaires and interviews, with qualitative data analyzed through content analysis and quantitative data processed using SPSS Version 25 for descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results and Findings

Response Rate

The study encompassed a sample size of 375 individuals across various management levels: top-level, middle-level (supervisors), and lower-level (support staff). Of these, 354 participants provided responses through questionnaires (39 from supervisors and 297 from support staff) and interviews with 18 out of 21 top-level managers. Three managers were unavailable due to leave. The overall response rate for managers, supervisors, and support staff was 94.40%. Specifically, top-level management achieved an 85.71% response rate, middle-level management (supervisors/employees) achieved 90.70%, and lower-level management (support staff/employees) achieved 95.50%. These response rates exceed the recommended threshold of 70% for adequate analysis and recommendations, as stipulated by scholars such as Hendra and Hill (2019). Consequently, this study's data collected across all management levels (top, middle, and lower), with response rates exceeding 80%, is deemed suitable for analysis and drawing inferences.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to describe the basic features of the data in a study. They provide simple summaries of the sample and the measures. The descriptive statistics are presented based on percentages, mean, and standard deviation. A Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) was used. The findings in Table 1 depict that most respondents agreed with the developed questions on teamwork. The study results indicate that most of the supervisors and support staff agreed that working in teams enables employees to share knowledge and work more efficiently hence high humanitarian aid responses as the mean score was 4.09 and was supported by a low standard deviation of 0.88. The standard deviation is considered low if it is less than half of the mean score. Further, most respondents agreed that the organization leadership portrays proper communication skills, which increases the performance of the employees in the organization, as the mean score was 3.84 with a standard deviation of 1.12.

The study showed that most respondents agreed that employee communication is a major determinant of humanitarian aid responses due to high employee satisfaction since the mean score was 3.90 with a standard deviation of 1.26. Moreover, it was found that most respondents agreed that communication between the departments in the organization is effective for everyone because the mean score was 4.13 with a standard deviation of 0.91. The study indicated that most respondents agreed that the organization practices high involvement of other stakeholders in the supervision of the projects and this is key in increasing the humanitarian aid responses as the mean score was 4.01 with a standard deviation of 1.20. The study exhibited that most respondents agreed that employees in the organization are empowered to make some of the decisions since the mean score was 3.99 with a standard deviation of 1.07.

In addition, the majority of the respondents agreed that team members are regularly consulted before making any changes in the leadership board and this reduces resistance; hence high

humanitarian aid responses as the mean score of the survey question was 4.03 with a standard deviation of 0.97. The study found that most respondents agreed that stakeholders are choosing their representatives to present their interest in the board and this improves their commitments because the mean score was 4.01 with a standard deviation of 1.19. The study showed that most respondents agreed that duties and responsibilities in the organization are shared equally without any form of favoritism, with a mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.89. Besides, the study found that most respondents agreed that employees are empowered and feel comfortable holding one another accountable for the organization's goals, as the mean score was 4.04 with a standard deviation of 1.11. The respondents' agreement emphasizes a culture that fosters collaboration, efficiency, innovation, and high humanitarian aid responses.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Teamwork

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Working in teams enables employees to share knowledge and work more efficiently hence high Humanitarian aid responses	1.50%	5.70%	8.30%	51.20%	33.30%	4.09	0.88
The organization leadership portrays proper communication skills which increases the performance of the employees in the organization	5.70%	10.10%	6.80%	49.10%	28.30%	3.84	1.12
Employee communication is a major determinant of humanitarian aid responses due to high employee satisfaction	3.30%	19.90%	5.40%	25.90%	45.50%	3.90	1.26
The communication between the departments in the organization is effective for everyone	0.90%	7.70%	7.40%	45.80%	38.10%	4.13	0.91
The organization practices high involvement of other stakeholders in the supervision of the projects and this is key in increasing the Humanitarian aid responses	6.50%	8.60%	6.00%	34.50%	44.30%	4.01	1.20
The employees in the organization are empowered to make some of the decisions affecting them	2.70%	11.00%	8.30%	41.10%	36.90%	3.99	1.07
Team members are regularly consulted before making any	5.70%	3.30%	1.80%	60.70%	28.60%	4.03	0.97

changes in the leadership board and this reduces resistance, hence high Humanitarian aid responses	6.50%	8.30%	6.50%	35.10%	43.50%	4.01	1.19
Stakeholders are choosing their representatives to present their interest in the board and this improves their commitments	1.50%	7.70%	7.70%	55.40%	27.70%	4.00	0.89
The duties and responsibilities in the organization are shared equally without any form of favoritism	2.40%	13.10%	6.00%	35.40%	43.20%	4.04	1.11
Employees are empowered and feel comfortable holding one another accountable to the organization's goals	1.20%	18.80%	4.50%	32.70%	42.90%	3.97	1.16
The promotion of the shared responsibilities has increased the innovation level of the employees.	2.70%	5.70%	9.20%	48.80%	33.60%	4.05	0.95
There is extensive involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process, which increases Humanitarian aid responses						4.01	1.06
Average							

Correlation Analysis

The study results of the correlation analysis in Table 2 indicate that a positive and significant association exists between teamwork and humanitarian aid responses ($r=.452$, $p=.001$). Thus, an increase in teamwork will also increase the humanitarian aid responses.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis of Teamwork and Humanitarian Aid Responses

		Humanitarian aid responses	Teamwork
Humanitarian aid responses	Pearson Correlation	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Teamwork	Pearson Correlation	.452*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	

Regression Analysis

The results presented in Table 3 established that teamwork is satisfactory in influencing humanitarian aid responses. The coefficient of determination, also known as the R square, was

0.204 (20.4%). This implied that teamwork could explain 20.4% of the variations in the humanitarian aid responses in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid areas.

Table 3. Model Fitness of Collaboration of Teamwork and Humanitarian Aid Responses

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.452a	0.204	0.202	0.27483

a Predictor: (Constant), Teamwork

The F-value was found to be 85.626 with a significance value of .000 which indicates that this model is statistically significant. It means that the relationship between teamwork and humanitarian aid responses is very unlikely to be due to random chance. Therefore, the high F-statistic supports the hypothesis that teamwork significantly impacts humanitarian aid responses in the studied areas.

Table 4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Teamwork and Humanitarian aid responses

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.468	1	6.468	85.626	.000b
	Residual	25.228	334	0.076		
	Total	31.695	335			

a Dependent Variable: Humanitarian aid responses

b Predictors (Constant), Teamwork

The t-statistic in Table 5 is used to evaluate the individual contribution of the variable teamwork to the prediction of humanitarian aid responses. The t-value for teamwork is 9.253, a statistically significant value that shows how many standard errors the coefficient for teamwork is from zero. Teamwork is positively and significantly related to humanitarian aid responses in the Arid and Semi-Arid areas in Kenya ($\beta=0.282$, $p=0.000$). The P value was found to be less than 0.05, thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, teamwork significantly influences humanitarian aid responses in Arid and Semi-Arid areas in Kenya. The model was;

$$Y = 3.053 + 0.282X$$

Where: - Y= Humanitarian aid responses; X= Teamwork

Table 5. Regression Coefficients of Teamwork and Humanitarian Aid Responses

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.053	0.121		25.138	0.000
	Teamwork	0.282	0.03	0.452	9.253	0.000

a Dependent Variable: Humanitarian aid responses

Discussion of the Findings

The descriptive statistics revealed the average mean score of the survey statements/questions under teamwork was 4.01, with a standard deviation of 1.06. This indicated that most respondents agreed with the survey statements/questions developed under teamwork. The correlation results indicated a positive and significant association between teamwork and humanitarian aid responses. The study showed that teamwork could explain 20.4% of the variations in the humanitarian aid responses in the Arid and Semi-Arid areas in Kenya. The study revealed that teamwork is positively and significantly related to humanitarian aid responses in the Arid and Semi-Arid areas in Kenya ($\beta=0.282$, $p=0.000$). The influence of teamwork on humanitarian aid responses is a multifaceted and intricate interplay that significantly shapes the effectiveness of relief efforts, particularly in Arid and Semi-Arid areas in Kenya. Effective communication, a pivotal component of teamwork, serves as a linchpin in enhancing humanitarian aid responses.

Conclusion

It is concluded that a unitary increase in teamwork would increase the humanitarian aid responses in the Arid and Semi-Arid areas in Kenya by 0.282 units when other factors are held constant. The P value was less than 0.05; thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, teamwork has a significant influence on humanitarian aid responses in Kenya. Teamwork involves sharing information and ideas concerning a particular aspect, increasing humanitarian aid responses. Teamwork facilitates relationships between people and establishes an environment beneficial to the organization's internal development. The importance of teamwork is that it helps complex decision-making meet objectives by identifying a quality solution.

Recommendations

The study established that teamwork significantly influences humanitarian aid responses in Arid and Semi-Arid areas in Kenya. Thus, it is recommended that the management of the NGOs involved in the humanitarian aid responses should focus on teamwork. Organizations should establish effective communication to enhance the sufficient flow of information from one department to another. The study also recommended that management focus on developing soft skills to increase the employees' ability to express and communicate. Management should organize more activities, such as inter-departmental meetings, to create quality bonding among

superiors and subordinates. Proper training and development plans should be established to realize effective organizational communication. The study suggests that another study be conducted to examine factors other than shared leadership practices that could influence the humanitarian aid responses in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid areas. A study can examine the effect of leadership styles and employee competency on performance. Likewise, the study was only conducted in NGOs; thus, another study can be conducted in other public and private sectors.

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