
QUALITY OF STATE BUREAUCRACY AND STATE RESPONSE TO EMERGENCY IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and state response to emergency in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study was conducted in selected Local Government Areas of Anambra State that have experienced recurrent emergency situations, particularly flooding and other disaster-related incidents. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. One research question and one null hypothesis guided the study. The population comprised staff of emergency management agencies and relevant stakeholders involved in emergency response activities in Anambra State. A total of 68 respondents participated in the study, selected through simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled *Quality of State Bureaucracy and Emergency Response Questionnaire (QSBERQ)*. The instrument was validated by experts in Public Administration and Development Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, while its reliability was established using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Data were collected through direct administration of the questionnaire. The research question was analyzed using descriptive statistics, while the null hypothesis was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and state response to emergency in Anambra State. The ANOVA result ($p = 0.004$) indicated that bureaucratic quality significantly influences emergency response effectiveness. However, the descriptive results showed a mixed perception among respondents, with a large proportion remaining neutral, indicating that the influence of bureaucracy on emergency response is not uniform across institutions and situations, as administrative bottlenecks, coordination challenges, and institutional inefficiencies continue to affect performance.

Keywords: State bureaucracy, emergency response, bureaucratic quality, administrative efficiency

Introduction

The increasing occurrence of disasters across the world has heightened concerns about the effectiveness of emergency response systems and the capacity of governments and humanitarian agencies to provide timely assistance to affected populations. Disasters, whether natural or human-induced, often result in loss of lives, destruction of property, displacement of people, and disruption of socioeconomic activities. In Nigeria, the frequent occurrence of flooding, erosion, oil-related disasters, communal conflicts, and other emergencies has exposed significant challenges in disaster management and emergency response mechanisms. According to Onuoha (2009), the growing incidence of disasters in Nigeria continues to threaten human security and places enormous pressure on government institutions responsible for emergency management. Consequently, the effectiveness of emergency operations has become a critical issue in disaster management discourse.

Emergency response is largely dependent on the ability of relevant agencies to mobilize, coordinate, and distribute relief resources efficiently. The complexity of disaster situations often requires rapid decision-making, effective coordination among

stakeholders, and efficient deployment of resources under highly uncertain conditions. Tatham and Houghton (2011) described humanitarian logistics and disaster relief operations as a “wicked problem” because of the unpredictable and dynamic nature of disasters, the multiplicity of actors involved, and the challenges associated with coordinating relief efforts. These complexities make effective emergency response a difficult task, particularly in developing countries where institutional and logistical constraints are prevalent.

The concept of disaster relief supply chain management has therefore emerged as a critical component of modern emergency management. Disaster relief supply chain management involves the planning, procurement, transportation, warehousing, coordination, and distribution of relief materials and services to disaster victims. Unlike commercial supply chains that operate in relatively stable environments, humanitarian supply chains are characterized by urgency, uncertainty, and rapidly changing demand patterns (Van Wassenhove, 2006). As a result, disaster relief supply chains must possess a high degree of flexibility, agility, responsiveness, and resilience to effectively support emergency operations. Scholars have consistently emphasized the importance of effective supply chain management in humanitarian operations. Kovács and Spens (2007) noted that humanitarian logistics plays a central role in disaster response because it ensures that relief supplies reach affected populations at the right time and place. Similarly, Whybark et al. (2010) argued that disaster relief supply chain management has become increasingly important due to the growing frequency and complexity of disasters worldwide. Their study emphasized that effective coordination, information sharing, and logistics management are essential for successful emergency operations.

The increasing demand for efficient humanitarian assistance has stimulated extensive research into disaster response supply chains. Dash, Mishra and Mishra (2013) observed that emerging issues in disaster response supply chain management include inadequate coordination, poor information management, weak infrastructure, and resource constraints. These challenges often undermine the effectiveness of emergency interventions and delay the delivery of relief assistance to victims. Likewise, Balcik et al. (2010) identified coordination among humanitarian actors as one of the most significant challenges affecting disaster relief operations. According to the authors, effective collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organizations, donors, and community groups is necessary to enhance emergency response performance. In recent years, scholars have also highlighted the significance of agility and adaptability in humanitarian supply chains. Charles, Luras, and Van Wassenhove (2010) argued that supply chain agility enables organizations to respond quickly to changing disaster situations and uncertain demand conditions. Similarly, Oloruntoba and Gray (2006) emphasized that humanitarian aid operations require agile supply chain systems capable of responding rapidly to emergencies and minimizing human suffering. The ability to adapt to changing disaster environments has therefore become a critical determinant of emergency response effectiveness.

Technology and information management have also been identified as important factors influencing disaster relief operations. Lee and Zbinden (2003) maintained that the integration of technology into humanitarian logistics enhances coordination, communication, and decision-making during emergency situations. Likewise, Tomasini and Van Wassenhove (2009a) stressed that information sharing and technological innovation improve preparedness, facilitate resource allocation, and support effective disaster response. The increasing adoption of information systems in humanitarian

operations reflects the growing recognition of technology as a strategic tool for enhancing emergency management outcomes.

Furthermore, disaster relief operations require effective partnerships among stakeholders. Maon, Lindgreen, and Vanhamme (2009) argued that cross-sector collaborations involving governments, private organizations, and humanitarian agencies contribute significantly to improving relief supply chain performance. In a similar vein, Christopher and Tatham (2011) observed that successful humanitarian logistics depends largely on the ability of stakeholders to coordinate their activities and share resources during emergencies. Such partnerships promote efficiency, reduce duplication of efforts, and enhance service delivery to affected communities. Despite these advancements, several challenges continue to affect disaster management in Nigeria. Sadiq (2012) observed that Nigeria's emergency management system faces numerous challenges, including inadequate funding, weak institutional capacity, poor coordination mechanisms, and insufficient preparedness measures. These shortcomings often lead to delayed response, inefficient resource utilization, and poor outcomes during disaster situations. Obeta (2014) similarly argued that disaster management institutions in Nigeria require improved preparedness strategies and stronger institutional frameworks to effectively address increasing disaster risks.

The significance of institutional structures and governance systems in emergency management has also attracted scholarly attention. UN/ISDR (2008) emphasized that national resilience and effective disaster response depend on strong institutions, coordinated governance structures, and clearly defined responsibilities among stakeholders. National frameworks such as the National Disaster Management Framework developed by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA, 2010) were established to strengthen disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts in Nigeria. However, the effectiveness of such frameworks largely depends on the quality of implementation and institutional coordination among relevant agencies. Moreover, the increasing frequency of flood disasters in Nigeria has further underscored the need for efficient emergency response systems. Reports by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) and the Anambra State Government (2013) revealed the devastating impacts of flooding on communities, infrastructure, and livelihoods. These disasters exposed weaknesses in emergency preparedness, logistics coordination, and relief distribution systems, thereby highlighting the need for continuous improvement in disaster management practices.

Given the critical role of emergency response in mitigating disaster impacts, it is important to examine the factors that influence the effectiveness of emergency operations. Effective disaster response requires not only the availability of relief resources but also strong institutional arrangements, efficient logistics systems, technological support, stakeholder collaboration, and responsive governance structures. Understanding these factors is essential for improving disaster preparedness, strengthening emergency management institutions, and enhancing the overall effectiveness of emergency operations. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and state response to emergencies, with particular reference to Anambra State, Nigeria. The study is expected to contribute to existing knowledge by providing empirical evidence on how bureaucratic quality influences emergency response effectiveness and by offering recommendations for strengthening institutional capacity and disaster management systems in Nigeria.

Adegbite, Bakare, Raji, and Raheem (2021) conducted a study on bureaucracy and policy implementation in democratic governance in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. The study

adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of 220 senior bureaucrats and members of civil society organizations in Nigeria. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the respondents, resulting in a sample size of 220. Data were collected using a structured instrument titled *Bureaucracy and Policy Implementation Questionnaire (BPIQ)*. The instrument was validated through face and content validation by experts in Public Administration, while its reliability was established using Cronbach Alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.83. Data were collected through questionnaire administration and in-depth interviews and analyzed using descriptive statistics and SPSS-based content analysis. The findings revealed that bureaucrats play a significant role in policy implementation despite not being policy makers, and that bureaucratic inefficiencies such as political interference and inadequate funding negatively affect governance outcomes.

Similarly, Oruonye and Anikemuah (2021) investigated the challenges of emergency management and response in Nigeria, using the Federal Capital Territory Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as a case study. The study adopted a descriptive survey and case study research design. The population comprised emergency management personnel within FEMA, FCT, from which a sample size of 180 respondents was drawn using simple random and purposive sampling techniques. The researchers employed an instrument titled *Emergency Management Challenges Questionnaire (EMCQ)*, which was validated by experts in Geography and Disaster Management. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed using Cronbach Alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.81. Data were collected through questionnaire administration and secondary data sources and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. The study found that flooding and road accidents were the most common emergencies in the FCT, and that emergency response effectiveness was hindered by logistical constraints and poor inter-agency coordination. In another study, Shittu et al. (2021) examined the response capacity of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in addressing internally displaced persons (IDPs) in North-East Nigeria. The study adopted a qualitative and descriptive survey design. The population included emergency response officials and agencies involved in IDP management, from which 166 key informants were purposively selected. Data were collected using a *Key Informant Interview Guide (KIIG)*, which was validated by experts in disaster management and public health. Reliability was ensured through triangulation of multiple data sources. Data were collected through interviews and documentary analysis and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that NEMA's response capacity was constrained by insecurity and limited resources, while effective inter-agency collaboration significantly improved emergency response outcomes.

Furthermore, Oyebanji, Abba, and Akande (2021) carried out a study on building local capacity for emergency coordination through the establishment of public health emergency operations centres in Nigeria. The study adopted a mixed-method research design. The population consisted of public health emergency officers within the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), from which 200 respondents were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured instrument titled *Emergency Coordination Capacity Scale (ECCS)* alongside interviews. The instrument was validated by experts in public health and emergency management, while reliability was established using Cronbach Alpha with a coefficient of 0.84. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The study revealed that strong institutional coordination

enhances emergency preparedness and response speed, while weak communication systems significantly reduce the effectiveness of emergency operations.

A review of the empirical studies shows both similarities and differences in their methodological approaches and findings. All the studies adopted empirical research designs, primarily survey, case study, or mixed-method approaches, indicating a strong reliance on field-based data. In all cases, structured instruments such as questionnaires or interview guides were used for data collection, and expert validation was carried out to ensure content and face validity. The reliability of quantitative instruments was consistently established using Cronbach Alpha, with coefficients ranging from 0.81 to 0.84, indicating acceptable reliability levels. Similarly, most of the studies employed descriptive statistics for data analysis, while qualitative studies used thematic analysis. In terms of findings, there is a general agreement across the studies that bureaucratic efficiency, institutional coordination, and administrative capacity significantly influence emergency response effectiveness. However, differences exist in their geographical focus, as the studies were conducted in different regions of Nigeria, including the North-East, North-Central (FCT), and national-level institutions, with no specific focus on Anambra State. The studies also differ in methodological orientation, with some adopting purely quantitative approaches, others qualitative, and some employing mixed methods. Additionally, variations exist in sampling techniques and population categories, ranging from bureaucrats and emergency officials to institutional stakeholders. Despite these variations, the studies collectively highlight that weaknesses in bureaucratic structures such as poor coordination, inadequate resources, and communication gaps consistently undermine effective emergency response. However, a key gap identified is that none of the reviewed studies specifically examined the relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and emergency response in Anambra State, Nigeria. This creates a contextual and geographical gap that the present study seeks to address.

This study is anchored on the Weberian Bureaucratic Theory as proposed by Max Weber (1947) and later elaborated by Peter Blau (1955). Weber (1947) conceptualized bureaucracy as an ideal form of administrative organization characterized by a clear hierarchy of authority, division of labour, formal rules and procedures, impersonality in decision-making, and merit-based recruitment. According to him, such a structure is designed to promote efficiency, orderliness, accountability, and predictability in the administration of public affairs. In the same vein, Blau (1955) argued that while bureaucracy is essential for coordinating large and complex organizations, its effectiveness may be undermined when excessive adherence to rules and hierarchical procedures leads to rigidity, reduced flexibility, and delays in decision-making. The theory is directly relevant to the present study on the quality of state bureaucracy and state response to emergency in Anambra State, Nigeria. It provides a conceptual basis for understanding how bureaucratic structure and administrative processes influence the effectiveness of emergency response. In line with Weber's (1947) view, a well-functioning bureaucracy is expected to ensure swift coordination among emergency agencies, timely decision-making, and efficient allocation of resources during crises. This implies that where the bureaucratic system is properly structured and merit-driven, emergency response operations are likely to be more effective and organized.

However, Blau's (1955) extension of the theory highlights a critical limitation, especially in emergency situations where time is crucial. Excessive bureaucratic procedures, rigid hierarchical approval processes, and strict adherence to rules may slow down response time and reduce the ability of government agencies to act quickly during

emergencies. In the context of Anambra State, this theoretical perspective helps to explain how bureaucratic inefficiencies such as delays in authorization, poor coordination among agencies, and procedural bottlenecks may negatively affect emergency response outcomes. Therefore, the Weberian Bureaucratic Theory provides a useful analytical framework for this study by explaining how both the strengths and limitations of bureaucracy influence the effectiveness of state response to emergencies in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Effective emergency response remains a fundamental requirement of public governance, particularly in contexts frequently affected by natural and human-induced disasters. In Anambra State, Nigeria, incidents such as flooding, fire outbreaks, building collapses, and other emergency situations continue to pose serious threats to human lives, property, and socioeconomic stability. The capacity of the state to respond swiftly and effectively to such emergencies is therefore critical to disaster mitigation and sustainable development. Ideally, a well-functioning state bureaucracy is expected to provide an efficient administrative framework that supports timely decision-making, effective coordination among agencies, adequate resource mobilization, and clear communication during emergencies. Such a system should ensure preparedness, rapid deployment of emergency services, and effective collaboration among relevant institutions, thereby reducing response time and minimizing the impact of disasters on affected populations.

However, in practice, the effectiveness of emergency response in many developing contexts, including Anambra State, is often constrained by weaknesses within the bureaucratic system. These challenges include administrative delays, rigid hierarchical procedures, poor inter-agency coordination, inadequate institutional capacity, weak communication channels, and inefficient allocation of resources. As a result, emergency responses are frequently delayed, poorly coordinated, and insufficient in addressing the needs of affected communities. In Anambra State, recurring emergency situations—particularly flooding and related disasters continue to reveal gaps in the efficiency of state response mechanisms. Despite the existence of emergency management institutions and policy frameworks, persistent operational inefficiencies raise concerns about the extent to which the quality of state bureaucracy influences emergency response effectiveness.

Although government efforts have been made to strengthen disaster management systems, there remains limited empirical clarity on how bureaucratic quality relates to the effectiveness of emergency response in Anambra State. This gap in knowledge makes it difficult to determine whether observed weaknesses in emergency management are primarily a function of structural bureaucratic inefficiencies or other contextual factors. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and state response to emergencies in Anambra State, Nigeria, with the aim of determining the extent to which bureaucratic quality influences emergency response effectiveness.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and state response to emergency in Anambra State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the quality of state bureaucracy and the relationship of such quality with state response to emergency.

Research Question

To guide the study, the following research question was formulated:

1. What is the relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and state response to emergency?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the quality of Anambra State bureaucracy and emergency response.

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which is considered appropriate for examining the relationship between variables as they exist in their natural setting without manipulation. The area of the study is Anambra State, Nigeria, with specific focus on selected Local Government Areas that have experienced recurrent emergency situations, particularly flooding and other disaster-related incidents. The population of the study comprised staff of emergency management agencies and relevant stakeholders involved in emergency response activities in Anambra State. A total of 68 respondents constituted the sample size, selected through the simple random sampling technique to ensure equal opportunity of participation. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Quality of State Bureaucracy and Emergency Response Questionnaire (QSBERQ), which was designed based on the objectives of the study. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by experts in the Institute of Development Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, to ensure its relevance, clarity, and adequacy in measuring the intended variables. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which confirmed its internal consistency. Data were collected through direct administration of the questionnaire to respondents in the selected Local Government Areas. The method of data analysis involved the use of descriptive statistics to answer the research question, while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule for the hypothesis testing was that the null hypothesis would be rejected if the p-value was less than 0.05 level of significance, and accepted if the p-value was greater than or equal to 0.05.

Results

Research Question One: What is the relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and state response to emergency?

Table 1: Level of Relationship between Quality of State Bureaucracy and Emergency Response

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	V. Strongly	1	1.5	1.5	1.5
	Agree				
	Strongly	23	33.8	33.8	35.3
	Agree				

Neutral	25	36.8	36.8	72.1
Disagree	15	22.1	22.1	94.1
V. Strongly	4	5.9	5.9	100.0
Disagree				
Total	68	100.0	100.0	

Date in the Table showed the level of relationship between quality of state bureaucracy and emergency response is presented in Table 4.34. From the table, 36.8% of the respondents were neutral, 33.8% strongly agree while disagree had 22.1% , very strongly disagree recorded 5.1%. the outcome statistically postulated that the relationship between state bureaucracy and emergency response which collaborated the outcome of the conduct of a descriptive case analysis of bureaucratic structure of Anambra state and how that over time have affected emergency preparedness and response.

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the quality of Anambra State bureaucracy and State response to emergency.

ANOVA

Level of Rel. Btwn Quality of State Bureaucracy and Emergency Response	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.994	5	2.799	3.948	.004
Within Groups	43.948	62	.709		
Total	57.941	67			

Data in Table 2 showed the p-value is less than 0.05, therefore we conclude that there is significant relationship between the quality of Anambra State bureaucracy and State response to emergency.

Discussion of Finding

The findings of the study revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and state response to emergency in Anambra State, Nigeria. This is supported by the ANOVA result ($F = 3.948$, $p = 0.004$), which indicates that the relationship is significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, implying that the quality of bureaucracy significantly influences emergency response in Anambra State. However, the descriptive results in Table 4.34 present a mixed perception among respondents regarding the strength of this relationship. The table shows that 33.8% of respondents strongly agreed and 1.5% very strongly agreed that there is a relationship between bureaucracy and emergency response. On the other hand, 36.8% of respondents remained neutral, while 22.1% disagreed and 5.9% strongly disagreed. This indicates that although a considerable proportion of respondents acknowledge a relationship, a larger proportion of neutral responses suggests uncertainty or inconsistency in experiences with bureaucratic effectiveness in emergency response situations.

This mixed perception implies that while the statistical result confirms a significant relationship, the practical experience of respondents suggests that the influence of bureaucracy on emergency response may not be uniformly strong across all contexts. It

may vary depending on the specific emergency situation, institutional capacity, or agency involved. The findings are in consonance with the study of Adegbite et al. (2021) who posited that bureaucratic inefficiencies such as administrative bottlenecks and political interference can weaken governance outcomes, even where formal structures exist. This supports the mixed perception observed in the present study, where respondents did not overwhelmingly agree on the strength of the relationship. Similarly, Oruonye and Anikemuah (2021) found that emergency response in Nigeria is often hindered by poor coordination and logistical constraints, which may explain why a significant proportion of respondents in this study remained neutral or expressed disagreement.

Furthermore, Shittu et al. (2021) observed that inter-agency collaboration enhances emergency response effectiveness, while institutional weaknesses reduce performance. However, this aligned with the present finding that bureaucracy can either positively or negatively influence emergency response depending on how effectively it is managed. In the same vein, Oyebanji et al. (2021) emphasized that strong coordination systems improve response speed, whereas weak communication structures hinder effectiveness. Overall, the findings suggest that although there is a statistically significant relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and emergency response in Anambra State, the perception of this relationship among respondents is mixed, indicating variability in how bureaucracy influences emergency operations in practice.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to existing knowledge by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and emergency response in Anambra State, Nigeria. While previous studies have examined bureaucracy and emergency management in broader national or regional contexts, this study provides a context-specific analysis within Anambra State, thereby filling an important geographical and empirical gap. The study further expands understanding by showing that although there is a statistically significant relationship between bureaucracy and emergency response, the perception of this relationship among respondents is mixed, indicating variability in how bureaucratic structures influence emergency operations in practice. This nuanced finding adds depth to existing literature by demonstrating that bureaucratic influence is not uniformly experienced across all emergency situations. In addition, the study reinforces the Weberian bureaucratic perspective by showing that both efficiency and rigidity within bureaucratic systems can significantly shape emergency response outcomes, depending on how administrative processes are managed.

Conclusion

The study concluded that there is a significant relationship between the quality of state bureaucracy and state response to emergency in Anambra State, Nigeria. This conclusion is based on the ANOVA result, which confirmed that bureaucratic quality significantly influences emergency response effectiveness. However, the descriptive findings revealed a mixed perception among respondents, with a substantial proportion remaining neutral, indicating that the influence of bureaucracy on emergency response is not uniformly experienced across all contexts. It was therefore concluded that while an effective bureaucratic system enhances emergency preparedness, coordination, and response speed, weaknesses such as administrative bottlenecks, poor coordination, and procedural delays continue to limit the effectiveness of emergency response operations in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Anambra State Government should strengthen bureaucratic coordination structures by reducing administrative bottlenecks and improving inter-agency collaboration, because efficient coordination will enhance timely decision-making and improve emergency response effectiveness.
2. Emergency management agencies in Anambra State should invest in capacity building and communication systems for bureaucratic staff, because improved institutional capacity and effective communication will reduce delays and enhance the speed and efficiency of emergency response operations.

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