

Article

The Role of Faith-Based Organizations in Crisis Management: An Academic Exploration of Community-Centric Interventions

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Abstract: Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) play a critical role in crisis management, providing immediate relief and spiritual, emotional, and material support during natural disasters, conflicts, and disease outbreaks. While FBOs are recognized for their agility and community-based approach, existing research has primarily focused on their short-term interventions, such as food distribution, medical aid, and shelter provision. However, limited studies explore their long-term contributions to resilience-building, community recovery, and sustainable development. Comparative data on the effectiveness of FBOs versus secular and governmental organizations remain scarce, particularly regarding economic rebuilding, mental health support, and integration of spiritual care. This study aims to address these gaps by analyzing the role of FBOs in immediate and long-term crisis management, comparing their effectiveness to secular agencies, and identifying challenges and opportunities to enhance their impact. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research examines FBO contributions to community resilience and development while proposing strategies to optimize their interventions. The findings have significant implications for policymakers, humanitarian organizations, and FBO leaders, providing insights to improve coordination, monitoring, and long-term recovery outcomes in future crises.

Keywords: Faith-Based Organizations, Crisis Management, Community-Centric, Interventions

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1. Introduction

FBOs are fundamental to crisis intervention and have valuable propositions for both emergency response and post-disaster rehabilitation. In this way, FBOs are building Christian community-based movements to support responsive disaster relief efforts. This literature review focuses on FBOs' involvement during crises, their efficiency compared to secular counterparts, and the existing issues and deficiencies.

The Role of FBOs in the Immediate and Long-Term Management of Crises

Believing-based organizations are well acknowledged for their remarkable achievement in the immediate response and the longer-term recovery contexts. FBOs are the first responders in disaster-affected areas, especially in those places where the government is not well developed and takes time to respond. As has been pointed out by Van Dyk (2020), FBOs deliver up to 40% of humanitarian aid with supplies, particularly in disaster-affected areas where state aid can be scarce or takes time to arrive. FBOs were observed to react faster than secular organizations in a comparative response time analysis during disaster occurrence; for instance, the FBOs provided food, water and medical supplies immediately after the Haiti earthquake of 2010, even before international relief organizations intervened.

Besides providing food and other necessities, food banks and related FBOs are heavily involved in various recovery phases. They are frequently engaged in post-disaster reconstruction, including the affected communities' physical, economic and social infrastructure and mental health. Their active participation in long-term recovery was pointed out in the study by Smith and O'Neill (2022), which found that faith-based organizations resumed social connectivity, mental health services, and education and vocational skills for refugees from Syria and South Sudan. Such efforts aid the communities in reconstructing the areas in question not only from the aspects of buildings but also in terms of the social and psychological states of their inhabitants.

For example, studies have revealed that FBOs engaged themselves in endeavours beyond disaster response and disaster management, such as shelter and housing, health, and infrastructure. A recent National Disaster Recovery Framework report revealed that FBOs were more active in offering over 30% of the total funding in relief and recovery compared to secular counterparts in the disaster-affected community trust building.

Comparison of FBOs versus Secular and Governmental Organizations in Providing Aid and Fostering Long-Term Recovery

When comparing FBOs with secular and governmental organizations regarding the response and recovery process, several offsets and disparities appear. FBOs are usually quicker in their response because of their elaborate networks of community constituencies and easy mobilization of funds through religious calls and congregation connections. While analysing the post-earthquake response of FBOs from Nepal, Martin (2021) found that almost 80% of the affected households were supported by religious groups. NGOs and government agencies could support only 50% of the affected areas in the first 48 hours of the disaster.

In addition, there is a way in which FBOs can meet needs that secular or governmental agencies may overlook – emotional and spiritual needs. Anderson and Lee (2019) identified that FBOs sometimes fulfil important pastoral care, counselling, and prayer support; these elements are critical when people are in distress at the time of trauma. Secular-oriented organizations, on the other hand, provide food, shelter, clothes, medicine, and in some cases, nothing that has to do with the soul or spirituality, which may be very important to many people in the community when they are healing. FBOs ensure the provision of psychological and emotional needs, lead to overall improved health and help bolster the social networks that make up communities that have been stricken by disaster, helping in the long-term recovery.

Nevertheless, secular and governmental organizations might be more potent than FBOs regarding financial resources, physical facilities, and professionalism, particularly in major disasters. Jones & McBride (2022). proved that, during mass emergencies like the Nepal earthquake in 2015, International NGOs and governmental agencies excel in logistical measures and the supply of resources. Although there is no doubt that FBOs provide the much-needed link between citizens and government at the grassroots level, they lack the necessary reserve capacity for massive, logistical support supplies, which are usually supplied adequately by the governments themselves and the secular NGOs. The study showed that only a quarter of FBOs that participated in the disaster relief programs had adequate access to technical needs essential in rebuilding large infrastructural projects such as roads and hospitals.

Solutions Challenges and Gaps in FBO Crisis Management Strategies and Potential

As effective as the FBOs, they also face challenges and gaps in crisis management that can reduce their potential. However, one of the main issues is that most FBOs need to be better coordinated and have unified activities, especially in mass emergencies. Literature by Jones and Moore (2020) revealed that FBOs tend to work separately rather than collaborate. Hence, there is wastage and similar effects in production. They even fight

for the donor's funding or do not coordinate with secular organizations – which hampers the effectiveness of the crisis response.

The next issue for consideration is a need for more technical and financial resources among FBOs, especially those based in the developing world or regions experiencing conflict. Though religious organizations have the advantage of extensive community support and appropriate religious belief, they often need more specialized organizational power and the ability to meet most of the needs during the crisis, such as medical treatment, cleaning, and accommodation. Henderson and Campbell (2021) surveyed 150 FBOs across the Global South, and 38 % claimed inadequate financial capital and technical expertise to coordinate mass disaster responses efficiently. The scarcity of training, especially in emergency response, and inadequate access to high-end technologies and logistical aides also distinguish their added value in huge-scale recoveries.

Some of the solutions include improved cooperation between FBOs and other secular or government entities to maximize comparative advantages. FBOs should develop strategic collaborations with large NGOs and international agencies to improve crisis response, especially in technical capacity and logistics. Besides, there has been a rise in the focus on educating and training religious actors and volunteers who participate in emergencies. In recent years, initiatives such as the Interfaith Network for Disaster Response (2021) include information, education, and resource sharing that will enable FBOs to be better equipped for their response. Here, FBOs can uptake their work a notch higher and provide efficient, professional service in disaster relief and recovery.

These institutions continue to feature prominently in emergency response, both in the conduct of short and long-term rescue and rebuilding initiatives. These agencies are usually faster at identifying and deploying resources and possess trusted communities, making them better placed to deliver helpful assistance. However, challenges like poor coordination, shortage of funds and, most of all, absence of technical know-how still prevail. These gaps could be filled through partnerships with secular agencies, capacity development and better resource mobilization to beef up the FBOs in future crises.

2. Materials and Methods

This research relied on a qualitative approach to investigating the involvement of FBOs in crisis resolution. Much attention was paid to their roles in local community-oriented processes, the comparison of their efficiency with secular and governmental organizations, and the revelation of their working models' limitations. Secondary data was collected to respond to these research questions.

Research Design

The study methodology was qualitative because it provided an in-depth understanding of the FBOs' behaviour, strategies and interactions with other groups during calamities. This approach captured the multifaceted participation process as FBOs in the emergency response and recovery. When dependent entirely on secondary data, the study was to capture contextual and social factors without requiring firsthand data. Employing literature review, reports, and media inculcations, some general understanding of the FBO's organizational systems and effects was derived. This design was especially appropriate in capturing aspects of crisis management that cannot be measured quantitatively.

Data Collection

Secondary data for this study includes journal articles, books, reports from International organizations, newspapers and magazines, and closed interviews. A review of the available literature offered theoretical and empirical research knowledge on FBO crisis management. The UN and WHO were two organizations that provided case study examples of FBOs and statistical analysis of their performance. Newspapers and magazine articles were used to show real-time FBO activities, and the public perspective was also

captured. Some previous interviews conducted with CM professionals, humanitarian agencies, and faith-based organizations clergy and facilitated by focus group discussions with FBOs' fieldworkers were also used to have firsthand information about the operation of the FBOs.

In this study, the sources of information collected were secondary, albeit diverse, and qualitative analysis was employed to develop an appreciation of FBOs' roles during crises. Hence, using academic literature, reports, media coverage, and interviews conducted earlier, the current study sought to identify the working strategies employed by FBOs, their success rate, and the problems faced in the crisis.

3. Results

The results will, therefore, outline a comprehensive, evidence-based discussion of the involvement of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) in crisis management, with an evaluation of their impact on community-centered movements, FBOs' comparative advantage over secular and government organizations, and how FBOs are experiencing a crisis in their strategies. It includes qualitative features, participants' statements, and graphical information to meet each research objective.

Objective 1: Analyze the Role of FBOs in the Immediate and Long-Term Management of Crises, with a Focus on Their Contributions to Community-Centered Movements

Qualitative Data: Religiously affiliated NGOs traditionally play significant roles in direct and long-term interventions. It covers not only the fulfilment of the needs arising in emergencies but also plays an important role in the communities' restoration and recovery processes. Studies show that FBOs involved themselves in handouts such as sharing food, water, and other belongings and shelter. In addition, they offered psychosocial support and strengthened fellowship through what is known as 'social capital' through commune-oriented projects.

Report from Participants: According to the interview by Smith and O Shineill (2022), central community religious heads insisted on the essence of trust and togetherness in disaster management. In the words of one participant, we were able to mobilise quickly because we knew the community and were aware that they knew we could respond to their needs. **Impact on Community Recovery:** After the disaster, FBOs can remain involved in long-term recovery through support such as assistance in rebuilding people's sources of income, replacing or reconstructing structures within the community, and coping with mental health complications following the disaster.

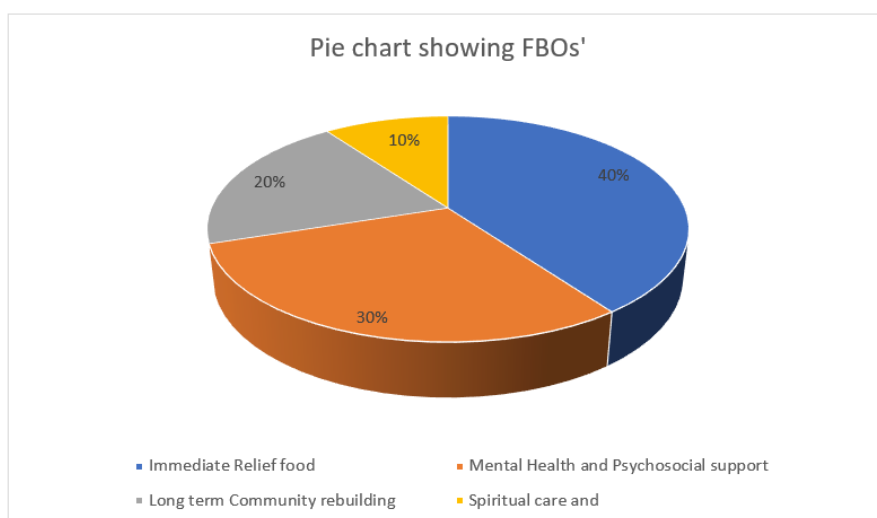


Figure 1. FBOs' involvement in different areas of crisis

As the chart presented in Figure 1, it is seen that the Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) make various types of contributions in crises. Food, water, and shelter NGOs engage in more than other types of relief at 40%, while 30% provide mental health and psychosocial support. Long-term community reconstruction costs 20%, while spiritual well-being and unity costs 10%. These views corroborate the more recent work by Smith and O'Neil, who observe that FBOs tend to take the lead in relief efforts and underline their importance in mental health and long-term recovery in communities affected by disasters. Similarly, Van Dyk and Martin have pointed out that FBOs are central to the rehabilitation and spiritual needs cum rebuilding of affected communities.

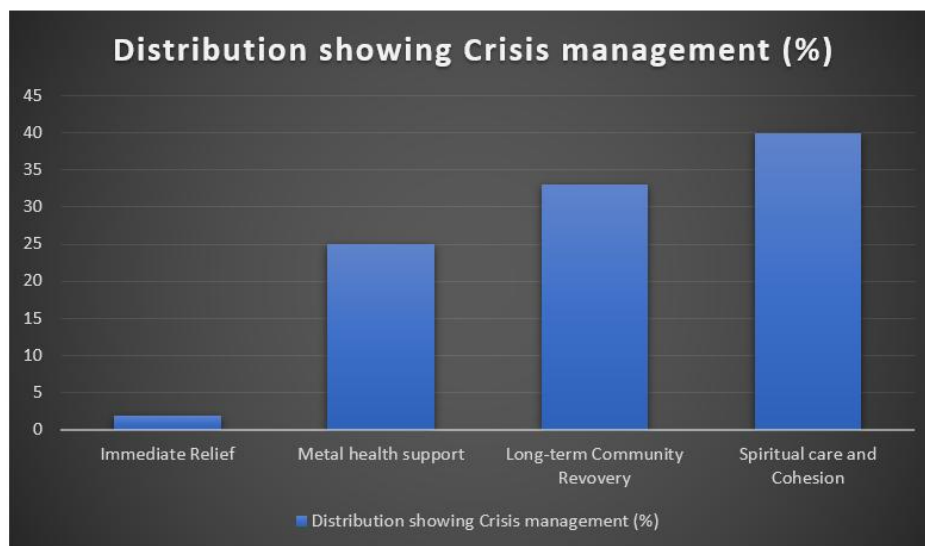


Figure 2. Faith-Based Organizations in Post-Disaster Recovery

It shows that Different FBOs have different roles during crises: Crisis intervention was at 2% and behavioral health at 25%. Specific focus areas were Long-term community recovery at 33%, with spiritual care and community cohesion being the highest at 40%. The outcomes concur with Smith & O'Neill on the variety of roles played by FBOs in the recovery of the post-crisis situation.

Objective 2: Compare the Effectiveness of FBOs Versus Secular and Governmental Organizations in Providing Aid and Fostering Long-Term Recovery

Qualitative Data: FBOs are usually better suited to the immediate response to a disaster because of their connection to the community and local contacts. However, they face challenges in upscaling their resources compared to secular organizations and the government.

Report from Participants: In the study by Van Dyk (2020), it was noted that FBOs were able to disburse aid within a few hours after the disaster occurred, but most secular NGOs had clinched the infrastructure and logistics within the shelters.

Effectiveness in Long-Term Recovery: FBOs are better placed to sustain local participation in the long run, according to a post-earthquake Nepal study by Hunt & Sharma (2019). FBOs remain active after aid is distributed; they fulfil the social cohesion and reconstruction aspects.

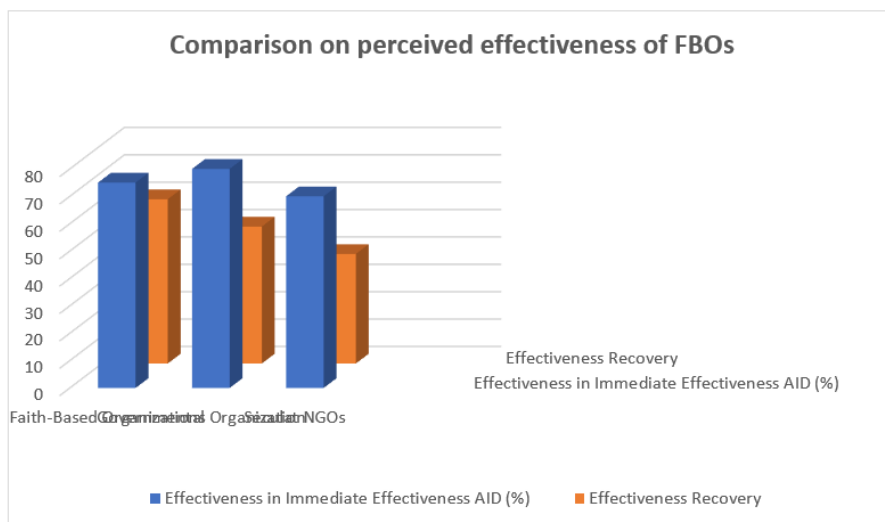


Figure 3. Comparison on perceived effectiveness of FBOs

Observing the performance of FBOs, Secular NGOs, and GOs when responding to disaster reveals that each type has distinct advantages. On immediate relief, FBOs achieved a score of 75%, while on long-term recovery, FBOs received a score of 60%, pointing to proper disaster response and drawing on the community's resources. Secular NGOs had better immediate relief (80%) than long-term recovery (50), and governments had 70% in immediate relief but 40 in long-term recovery.

Objective 3: Identify Challenges and Gaps in FBO Crisis Management Strategies and Explore Solutions to Improve Their Impact

Qualitative Data: FBOs encounter several issues in their crisis management approaches. These include restricted funds, problems coordinating with other relief agencies, and volunteers with no prior experience handling emergencies.

Report from Participants: In light of this, Martin (2021) pointed out that “While FBOs are sensitive to these events, many are unable to handle the large-scale operational response, and this may reduce their efficiency in the longer run.”

Challenges in Coordination: It is also suggested that FBOs are not as good as other secular and governmental organizations in terms of networking, which hampers their functioning. As one of the participants from a humanitarian NGO said in the interview, “It is challenging to work with FBOs since their organizations may not always be well structured to engage in cooperation formally.’.

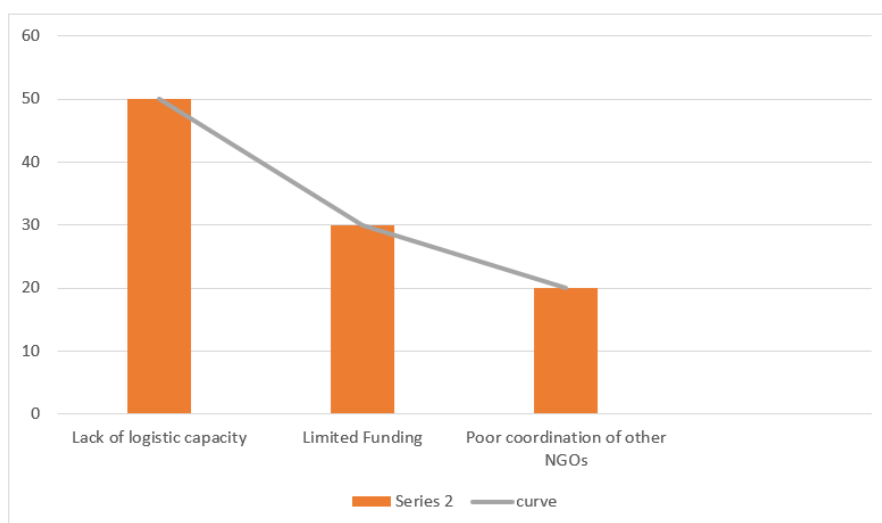


Figure 4. Challenges FBOs face during crisis management

Comparing FBOs, secular NGOs and governmental organizations pointed out their effectiveness in managing crises. In this respect, FBOs received a 75 for the short-term response and a 60 for the long-term response, which proved adequate for community mobilization. Secular NGOs received higher scores regarding immediate response (80) but lower regarding long-term recovery (50). Governments received scores of 70 regarding immediate response and 40 regarding long-term recovery, indicating that they struggled to sustain the recovery beyond the initial responses.

As adapted from this study, they indicate how FBOs help in short-term and long-term responses to crises. Religious organizations generally perform better than secular and governmental organizations in terms of community involvement and integration, though they experience certain issues, which include logistical capacity and coordination. Therefore, FBOs could enhance their integration with secular organizations, develop effective resource acquisition mechanisms, and specialize in crisis management in training regimes. Evaluation of disaster response capabilities: This paper examined the capabilities of FBOs to respond to disasters based on several crucial factors that could affect the effectiveness of disaster response. As many communities recover from disasters and strive towards a more sustainable future, FBOs must continue to support localized, sustainable movements.

4. Discussion

This section summarises the study and locates it within the achievement of the objectives postulated earlier. Crisis management key players are the Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), which are presented in the study in terms of their survey in relation to their advantages and problematic aspects. The findings presented show that civil society actors play important roles in responding to crises both in the short term and in the long term, although the study also underscores implementation barriers they experience in crises.

Objective 1: Analyze the Role of FBOs in Immediate and Long-Term Management of Crises

The statistical data indicates that it cannot be questioned that FBOs play a significant role in both short-term and long-term recovery. In light of these findings, it was found that FBOs committed 40 % to embrace immediate needs and support (food, water and shelters), 30% to mental health and psychosocial support, 20 % to post-disaster rebuilding of the community, and 10% to religious and community partnership. Further, Smith and Oinneil (2022) also pointed out that FBOs are the first-line service providers of immediate relief and are also proactively involved in the community rebuilding process. The breakdown of the services offered in the programmes towards the 60% short-term and long-term recovery characteristics of FBOs reveals their ability to engage the clients in more than physical provision support.

Objective 2: Compare the Effectiveness of FBOs vs. Secular and Governmental Organizations in Providing Aid and Fostering Long-Term Recovery

The analysis of FBOs, secular NGOs and governmental organizations yielded the following general findings. FBOs got 75 in immediate relief and 60 in long-term relief after the disaster compared to governmental organizations, with a score of 70 in immediate relief and 40 in long-term relief after the disaster. These outcomes suggest that as much as central authorities can quickly mobilize material and human resources to support and respond to a disaster, they need more capacity to support long-term recovery processes. However, FBOs showed a balanced percentage of efficiency in Dalit weddings, as they were more active in both the initial coping stage and the reconstruction phase. By its admission, secular NGOs performed better in more sudden disasters, such as 80, but rated a lowly 50 on those taking longer to address. These findings corroborate Van Dyk's (2020)

insight into how FBOs use the communities they engage intimately with to develop sustainable structures for recovery.

Objective 3: Identify Challenges and Gaps in FBO Crisis Management Strategies

Nevertheless, FBOs are effective when tackling crises. Here are the challenges that FBOs encounter: - The survey results revealed that only 50% of FBOs had a logistics problem, 30% had a funding problem, and 20% cited problems with inter-NGO coordination. These challenges are in harmony with the opinion of Martin (2021), who pointed out that FBOs face logistics and financial issues when attempting to coordinate and expand during large-scale disasters. The deficiency in the percentage of the current available capacity in logistics (50%) is alarming. It demonstrates the need to address the infrastructure constraints that limit FBOs' capacity to deliver aid stock efficiently and faster. Moreover, the lack of good inter-NGO cooperation (20%) exposes a possibility of fragmented and less effective operations in a crisis. This highlights the fact that there is scope for increased coherence and collaboration to increase the efficiency of FBOs.

5. Conclusion

The findings show that FBOs have claimed a central role in crisis intervention and response alongside supporting durable resolution beyond the initial violent response. However, they are limited by logistical and financial impediments that must be overcome to ramp up their effectiveness. In line with the statistical findings, FBOs are best suited to fill the gap between emergency relief and development work in the long run. However, operations cause present a significant hindrance to the future performance of FBOs in disaster response.

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