

Humanitarian operations and crisis/disaster management: A retrospective review of the literature and framework for development



Kyle H. Goldschmidt^a, Sameer Kumar^{b,*}

^a Department of Operations and Supply Chain Management, Opus College of Business University of St. Thomas, Mail #: TMH 443D, 1000 LaSalle Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55403-2005, USA

^b Global Communications and Technology Management, Department of Operations and Supply Chain Management, Opus College of Business, University of St. Thomas, Mail#: TMH 443, 1000 LaSalle Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55403-2005, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Humanitarian logistics
Humanitarian operations
Disaster management
Humanitarian organizations
Disaster policy

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to review the literature on humanitarian operations and crisis/disaster management in order to identify the current research and to provide direction for future research in this growing field. Articles from supply chain management, disaster management, and economics were reviewed, keywords were identified within a disaster management lifecycle framework, and a lexical analysis of the articles was conducted. The analysis reveals that previous research has primarily focused on humanitarian operations, with researchers adapting established supply chain methodologies to improve humanitarian disaster response. While this has benefited humanitarian organizations in their ability to respond to disasters with greater efficiency, it also clarifies that there has been little research done on humanitarian development, the overlooked part of humanitarian operations. This finding suggests the need for future research to focus on the role that humanitarian development plays in reducing future social and economic disaster losses.

1. Introduction

Humanitarian operations and crisis/disaster management (HOCM) has increasingly attracted the attention of researchers and practitioners, given the tragic loss of life and devastation associated with recent large-scale disasters. The global media coverage of these disasters has also brought increased scrutiny to the operations of both non-government organizations (NGOs) and governments in their humanitarian efforts. As a result, there has been an escalating interest on how to improve HOCM.

It especially became evident that there was a need for improving HOCM following the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami response efforts, where there was a general lack of logistical expertise, the supply chain infrastructure was old-fashioned and largely manual, and there was limited collaboration and coordination among NGOs [60]. Since then, humanitarian organizations have undergone a number of strategic and operational changes, applying concepts from logistics and supply chain management to improve their response to disasters. While this research has improved the efficiency of humanitarian disaster response, rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance remain overlooked both in research and practice.

Humanitarian need is likely to grow. The rising social and economic

losses resulting from natural disasters challenge the international humanitarian system to evaluate if the existing system is able to meet future challenges. There exists anecdotal evidence that the impact of natural disasters can be significantly reduced through investment in development activities that address the root causes of vulnerability. The Yokohama Strategy [65] has reasoned for a greater focus on “a culture of prevention to reduce physical, social, economic and environmental vulnerability and hazard impacts through the enhancement of national and particularly local capabilities.” The humanitarian community remains a culture of response though, resulting in an unbalanced mix of response and development activity. The appropriate allocation of humanitarian response and development activity that most effectively reduces the social and economic costs of disasters remains elusive. Determining the appropriate balance of humanitarian response and development activity is far beyond the scope of any single study, thus, this paper aims to serve as an attempt to highlight the need for a greater focus on development activities.

To accomplish this, we develop a framework for categorizing humanitarian research by deconstructing the lifecycle of disaster management. This framework serves as the foundation for a lexical analysis of the literature. Classification of the research according to the lifecycle management framework allows for a thorough review of the

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: kyle.goldschmidt@stthomas.edu (K.H. Goldschmidt), sameerkumar724@gmail.com (S. Kumar).

research to date and assist with the identification of areas for future research. Three areas to enhance HOCM research are identified and discussed: integrating hazard events and elements at risk, investment in humanitarian development, and defining and measuring success. Future research in these areas has the potential to improve HOCM by reducing the impact of disasters, decreasing the associated social costs, and easing the stress put on the humanitarian system.

The paper is organized into the following sections: disaster management lifecycle, research methodology, overview of the literature, opportunities for future research and concluding remarks.

2. Disaster management lifecycle

The disaster management cycle as proposed by Carter [13] established the critical activities that occur throughout the lifecycle of a disaster. This framework has since been adopted and modified [38,61] to include two phases, relief and development, and four activities, preparedness, response, rehabilitation, and mitigation, with the relief phase including response and rehabilitation activities, and the development phase including preparedness and mitigation activities. Each of the phases and activities in the disaster management cycle will be examined in further detail.

2.1. Preparedness

Preparedness includes any “activities and measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of hazards, including the issuance of timely and effective early warnings and the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations” [64]. Even though these activities are primarily the responsibility of individual countries and local communities, international efforts to promote disaster preparedness has increased. Preparedness activities attempt to reduce the risk and vulnerability of communities to disasters and therefore include a number of activities addressing social, economic, physical, and environmental factors.

2.2. Response

In the event of a disaster, individuals and infrastructures are put at immediate risk. Response efforts employ resources, implementing emergency procedures so as to preserve life, property, the environment, as well as the social, economic, and political structure of the affected community [2]. The initial response efforts include the first 72 h after the onset of the disaster, which are crucial to save as many lives as possible. Immediately following the initial response is the sustained response period, the 90–100 days immediately following the initial response.

Response activities focus primarily on life saving measures and efforts to ease the suffering of impacted communities. These activities often require the coordinated efforts of governments, local commu-

nities, international humanitarian organizations, and in the most extreme circumstances, the military. While coordination, cooperation, and information sharing have become critical aspects of humanitarian response, they are often difficult to achieve as many of the stakeholders are competing for the same donations, resources, and media attention.

2.3. Rehabilitation

Following the response effort, rehabilitation involves the actions taken in the long term after the immediate impact of the disaster has passed: stabilizing the community and restoring some semblance of normalcy [2]. During this activity, humanitarian organizations begin to aid victims in recovery, assisting in returning those affected to a “normal life” as well as working to mitigate future disasters.

Rehabilitation activities offer an opportunity to not only rebuild, but also to build better, addressing long-term effects of a disaster on a region and improving the resilience of communities so as to reduce the impact of future disasters. It is crucial that humanitarian organizations not ignore this important phase of the cycle, but rather focus on the rehabilitation phase for which continuity planning is needed [31]. Unfortunately for many disaster-struck areas, the long-term reconstruction of communities impacted by disasters is often the most underfunded and neglected phase in most humanitarian operations.

Finally, it is important for humanitarian organizations to document the lessons learned from each disaster to drive continual improvement and to prevent repeated mistakes in future operations.

2.4. Mitigation

Mitigation is the application of measures that will either prevent the onset of a disaster or reduce the impacts should one occur [2]. The random nature of natural disasters makes mitigation for such events difficult. Natural disasters that are cyclical in nature, such as droughts and flooding, or natural disasters common to a specific geography like earthquakes and tsunamis around the Pacific Rim, provide opportunities for proactive planning against such events through mitigation.

3. Research methodology

A literature review was conducted on humanitarian and development topics to be aware of the existing research and develop a framework for future research endeavors. A three step methodology was developed for journal article collection and lexical analysis.

1. A literature search of academic, peer reviewed publications was conducted using the Boolean search (TITLE(humanitarian) OR TITLE(disaster)) AND (TITLE(logistics) OR TITLE(relief) OR TITLE(supply chains) OR TITLE(chain) OR TITLE(distribution) OR TITLE(operations) OR TITLE(management)) was compiled from within the Business Source Premier, Emerald Insight, Scopus, and

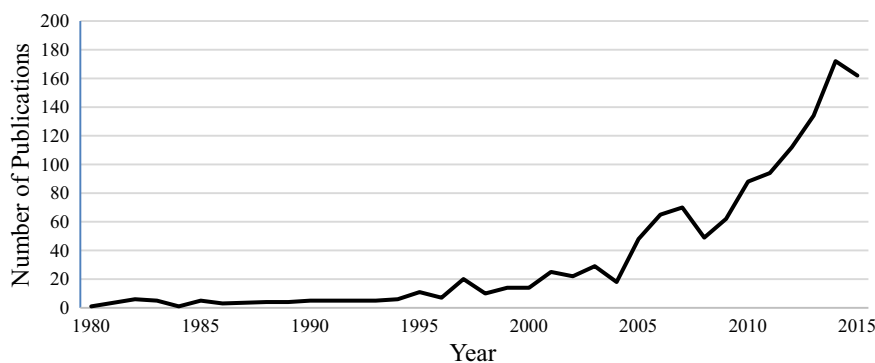


Fig. 1. Number of Publications by Year.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5116141>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5116141>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)