

Emotional Intelligence and Crisis Decision-Making Outcome in Public Leadership: An Examination into Mediation, Communication Quality and Team Coordination in Nigeria

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Abstract

Public leadership in many developing democracies continues to face significant challenges in managing crises effectively, often resulting in poor decision-making outcomes. Despite the growing complexity of modern governance, many public leaders still rely on conventional leadership approaches that do not adequately account for emotional, communicative, and coordination-related dynamics during crisis situations. This study examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and crisis decision-making outcome in public leadership: An examination into mediation, communication quality and team coordination in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to; examine the influence of emotional intelligence on communication quality in public leadership during crises in Nigeria; and analyze the effect of emotional intelligence on team coordination in crisis situations in Nigeria. The study anchored on Emotional Intelligence Theory and Contingency Theory of Leadership. Employing a historical descriptive research design and relying on secondary data sources, the finding revealed that emotional intelligence enhances communication quality through improved clarity, emotional control, empathy, reduction of misunderstandings, and effective feedback mechanisms. Also, emotional intelligence was found to strengthen team coordination by promoting team cohesion, effective conflict management, clear role definition, and trust among team members, and adaptability in crisis response situations. The study recommended amongst others that; Public institutions should implement structured training programs that focus on emotional awareness, active listening, stress management, and adaptive communication skills. This will help public leaders communicate more effectively, reduce misunderstandings, and improve stakeholder engagement during emergencies.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Crisis Decision-Making, Public Leadership, Communication Quality, Team Coordination.

Cite: Etetor, F. H., & John O. A. (2026). Emotional Intelligence and Crisis Decision-Making Outcome in Public Leadership: An Examination into Mediation, Communication Quality and Team Coordination in Nigeria. *International Journal of Management Foresight and Strategy*, 4(6), 505-518. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21986026>

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Introduction

The effectiveness of leadership in public institutions, particularly during periods of crisis, is increasingly influenced by the ability of leaders to manage emotions, communicate effectively, and coordinate teams under pressure (Ehigie, Odunela & Ehigie, 2023). In today's complex and unpredictable governance environment, crises such as economic instability, health emergencies, political unrest, and natural disasters require leaders to make timely and effective decisions that can significantly impact public welfare. Traditional leadership approaches that emphasize technical competence and authority are no longer sufficient in addressing the dynamic nature of modern crises. Instead, there is a growing recognition of the importance of emotional intelligence as a critical factor in enhancing leadership effectiveness and improving decision-making outcomes in crisis situations (Ariwodola, & Adekilekun, 2026).

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability of individuals to recognize, understand, regulate, and manage their own emotions as well as the emotions of others. It encompasses key components such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. In the context of public leadership, emotional intelligence enables leaders to remain calm under pressure, make rational decisions, build trust, and foster collaboration among team members. During crises, emotionally intelligent leaders are better equipped to assess situations objectively, manage stress, and respond effectively to the needs of stakeholders (Salovey & Mayer, 2019). This capacity is particularly important in public sector environments where decisions often involve high levels of uncertainty, urgency, and public scrutiny.

Crisis decision-making in public leadership involves the process of identifying problems, evaluating alternatives, and selecting appropriate courses of action under conditions of risk and uncertainty. The quality of decisions made during crises can determine the success or failure of government responses, thereby affecting public trust and institutional credibility (Bankole & Olaniyi, 2021). However, decision-making in crisis situations is often hindered by emotional stress, incomplete information, time constraints, and organizational challenges. As a result, the role of emotional intelligence becomes critical in enhancing decision-making effectiveness by enabling leaders to manage emotions, reduce biases, and maintain clarity of thought (George, 2021).

Communication quality and team coordination play significant roles in shaping crisis decision-making outcomes. Effective communication ensures that accurate and timely information is shared among stakeholders, thereby reducing misunderstandings and facilitating informed decision-making (Ewelie & Ekwi, 2023). It also enhances transparency, builds trust, and promotes collaboration within teams. Similarly, team coordination involves the alignment of efforts, roles, and responsibilities among team members to achieve common goals. In crisis situations, effective coordination is essential for ensuring that resources are utilized efficiently and that responses are implemented in a timely and organized manner (Mintzberg, 2020).

The relationship between emotional intelligence and crisis decision-making outcomes is therefore not direct but is influenced by mediating factors such as communication quality and team coordination. Emotional intelligence enhances leaders' ability to communicate effectively and coordinate teams, which in turn improves decision-making outcomes. However, the extent to which these mediating variables influence the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision outcomes remains an area that requires further investigation, particularly in the context of public leadership in developing countries like Nigeria (George, Okon & Godbless, 2021).

In Nigeria, public leadership has faced numerous challenges in managing crises effectively due to issues such as poor communication, weak coordination, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and limited emotional competence among leaders. These challenges have often resulted in delayed responses, poor decision-making outcomes, and reduced public confidence in government institutions. As the demand for effective crisis management continues to increase, there is a need to examine how emotional intelligence, communication quality, and team coordination interact to influence decision-making outcomes in public leadership (Nwaoboli & Achilike, 2024). This study therefore seeks to

examine emotional intelligence and crisis decision-making outcomes in public leadership, with a focus on the mediating roles of communication quality and team coordination.

Statement of the Problem

Public leadership in many developing democracies continues to face significant challenges in managing crises effectively, often resulting in poor decision-making outcomes. Despite the growing complexity of modern governance, many public leaders still rely on conventional leadership approaches that do not adequately account for emotional, communicative, and coordination-related dynamics during crisis situations. As a result, crisis responses are frequently characterized by delayed actions, inconsistent decisions, poor stakeholder management, and ineffective inter-agency collaboration. These weaknesses have contributed to reduced public trust in government institutions and weakened confidence in leadership effectiveness during critical national emergencies.

More specifically, the role of emotional intelligence in shaping crisis decision-making outcomes remains underexplored within the context of public leadership, particularly in relation to how communication quality and team coordination mediate this relationship. In many cases, breakdowns in communication and weak coordination among government teams further worsen crisis outcomes, even when leaders possess technical competence. There is limited empirical evidence explaining how emotional intelligence translates into effective decision-making through these mediating variables. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine emotional intelligence and crisis decision-making outcome in public leadership: An examination into mediation, communication quality and team coordination

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and crisis decision-making outcome in public leadership: An examination into mediation, communication quality and team coordination. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. Assess the influence of emotional intelligence on communication quality in public leadership during crises in Nigeria.
- ii. Evaluate the effect of emotional intelligence on team coordination in crisis situations in Nigeria.

Research Questions

- i. What is the influence of emotional intelligence on communication quality in public leadership during crises in Nigeria?
- ii. What is the effect of emotional intelligence on team coordination in crisis situations in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

- i. H_{01} : There is no significant influence of emotional intelligence on communication quality in public leadership during crises in Nigeria.
- ii. H_{02} : Emotional intelligence has no significant effect on team coordination in crisis situations in Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it provides insights into the role of emotional intelligence in enhancing crisis decision-making outcomes in public leadership. It will help public leaders understand the importance of managing emotions and interpersonal relationships in achieving effective decision-making during crises.

The study is relevant to policymakers and government institutions as it offers practical recommendations for improving communication systems and team coordination strategies in crisis management. It will also benefit leadership development programs by emphasizing the need for emotional intelligence training.

Furthermore, the study contributes to academic knowledge by enriching literature on emotional intelligence, crisis management, and public leadership, particularly within the context of developing countries.

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on emotional intelligence and crisis decision-making outcomes in public leadership. It specifically examines the mediating roles of communication quality and team coordination. Geographically, the study is limited to Nigeria. The study relies on secondary data sources including journals, books, and reports.

Operational Definition of Terms

Emotional Intelligence: The ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others.

Crisis Decision-Making: The process of making critical decisions under conditions of uncertainty, pressure, and urgency.

Communication Quality: The clarity, accuracy, timeliness, and effectiveness of information shared among stakeholders.

Team Coordination: The alignment and collaboration of team members to achieve common goals efficiently.

Public Leadership: Leadership exercised by individuals in government or public sector institutions.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Review

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability of individuals, particularly leaders, to recognize, understand, regulate, and effectively manage their own emotions while also being able to perceive and influence the emotions of others (Goleman, 2020). It is a fundamental leadership capability that enhances decision-making, interpersonal relationships, and overall performance, especially in high-pressure environments such as crisis situations. Emotional intelligence enables public leaders to maintain emotional stability, think clearly under stress, and respond to challenges in a balanced and rational manner rather than reacting impulsively. According to Salovey and Mayer (2025), emotional intelligence is composed of key elements such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, all of which are essential in guiding leaders through complex decision-making processes.

Emotional intelligence is particularly important in public leadership because it directly influences how leaders manage people, communicate during emergencies, and coordinate responses across different teams and institutions. Leaders with high emotional intelligence are better able to build trust, reduce conflict, and foster cooperation among stakeholders during crises, thereby improving overall decision-making outcomes. They are also more effective in handling pressure, managing uncertainty, and maintaining focus on organizational goals despite challenging circumstances (George, 2021). However, in many developing contexts such as Nigeria, emotional intelligence is often underdeveloped or overlooked in leadership selection and training processes, leading to weak crisis responses, poor communication, and ineffective coordination. This gap highlights the need to further examine how emotional intelligence influences crisis decision-making outcomes in public leadership (Obasan & Hassan, 2025).

Crisis Decision-Making

Crisis decision-making refers to the process through which leaders identify, analyze, and select appropriate courses of action under conditions of uncertainty, pressure, and time constraints (Pearson & Clair, 2020). It is a critical aspect of public leadership, especially in situations where urgent responses are required to manage emergencies such as natural disasters, health outbreaks, political instability, or economic shocks. In such contexts, decisions must often be made quickly with limited or incomplete information, making the quality of judgment and leadership capability extremely important. According to Mintzberg (2021), crisis decision-making is characterized by high levels of ambiguity, emotional stress, and limited time for deliberation, which increases the likelihood of errors if not properly managed.

Effective crisis decision-making requires a combination of cognitive ability, emotional stability, communication efficiency, and coordinated action among relevant stakeholders. Leaders must be able to assess available information, evaluate possible alternatives, and select the most appropriate response while considering both immediate and long-term consequences (Obasan & Hassan, 2025). Decision-making during crises is not an individual process alone but often involves collaboration among teams and institutions, making communication quality and coordination essential components. However, in many public institutions, crisis decision-making is often weakened by poor communication, lack of coordination, bureaucratic delays, and emotional instability among leaders. These challenges frequently result in delayed responses, ineffective policy actions, and poor management of crisis situations, thereby highlighting the need to examine factors that can improve decision-making outcomes in public leadership (Ojo, 2024).

Communication Quality

Communication quality refers to the effectiveness, clarity, accuracy, timeliness, and completeness of information exchanged among individuals or groups within an organization, particularly during decision-making processes (Clampitt, 2020). In the context of public leadership and crisis management, communication quality plays a vital role in ensuring that relevant information is properly transmitted between leaders, teams, and stakeholders. High-quality communication enables leaders to make informed decisions by reducing misunderstandings, minimizing information distortion, and ensuring that all parties involved have a shared understanding of the situation. According to Okafor and Ugwu (2026), communication model, effective communication depends not only on the transmission of messages but also on how accurately those messages are received and interpreted.

In crisis situations, communication quality becomes even more critical due to the urgency, uncertainty, and high stakes involved. Leaders must ensure that information is communicated quickly, clearly, and through appropriate channels to avoid delays and confusion that could worsen the crisis. Effective communication also enhances coordination among teams and agencies by ensuring that roles, responsibilities, and actions are clearly defined and understood (Olawale & Adeyemi, 2021). According to Men and Yue (2021), organizations with strong communication systems are better able to respond to crises efficiently because they reduce ambiguity and improve trust among stakeholders. However, in many public institutions, communication quality is often hindered by bureaucratic bottlenecks, poor information systems, hierarchical barriers, and lack of technological integration. These challenges frequently lead to misinformation, delayed responses, and ineffective coordination during crises, thereby negatively affecting decision-making outcomes in public leadership.

Team Coordination

Team coordination refers to the systematic arrangement and synchronization of activities, roles, and responsibilities among members of a group to achieve common objectives efficiently (Salas, Shuffler & Thayer, 2020). In public leadership, especially during crisis situations, team coordination is a critical factor that determines how effectively different agencies and personnel work together in responding to emergencies. It involves ensuring that all members

of a team are aligned in terms of goals, understand their specific roles, and work in harmony to avoid duplication of efforts or operational conflicts. Effective coordination enhances unity of action, improves resource utilization, and strengthens collective response mechanisms during crisis management processes (Olawale & Adeyemi, 2021).

In crisis decision-making contexts, team coordination ensures that decisions made by leaders are properly implemented across different levels of government or organizational structures. It facilitates smooth collaboration between departments, agencies, and stakeholders, thereby improving response speed and effectiveness (Ugoani, 2023). According to Faraj and Xiao (2021), well-coordinated teams are more capable of adapting to rapidly changing crisis conditions because they maintain clear communication channels and shared situational awareness. However, in many public institutions, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria, team coordination is often weakened by bureaucratic fragmentation, inter-agency rivalry, poor communication systems, and unclear role definitions. These challenges result in delays, inefficiencies, and conflicting actions during crisis responses, ultimately affecting the quality of decision-making outcomes in public leadership.

Emotional Intelligence and Crisis Decision-Making Outcome in Public Leadership

Many scholars have argued that emotional intelligence plays a critical role in shaping crisis decision-making outcomes in public leadership. According to Esu, (2022), emotionally intelligent leaders are better able to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions in themselves and others, which enables them to maintain clarity of thought and sound judgment during high-pressure situations. In crisis environments where uncertainty and urgency are dominant, emotional stability becomes a key factor in determining the quality of decisions made. Ighomereho and Ezeabasili (2024) noted that components of emotional intelligence such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills allow leaders to manage stress effectively and reduce impulsive reactions, thereby improving the rationality of crisis decisions.

Furthermore, George (2021) emphasized that emotional intelligence enhances leaders' ability to process information objectively, engage stakeholders constructively, and maintain focus on organizational goals despite emotional and environmental pressures. In public leadership, this capacity is particularly important because crisis decisions often involve multiple actors, competing interests, and limited time for analysis. Adebayo 2023, Okonkwo, 2024 and Ibrahim, 2025) observed that many public leaders still struggle with emotional regulation during crises, which often results in poor communication, weak coordination, and ineffective decision outcomes. For instance, during emergency response situations in states like Lagos, Rivers, and Edo, some public officials have been reported to react emotionally under pressure, leading to delayed or inconsistent policy actions. This limitation highlights the importance of emotional intelligence in strengthening crisis response systems, as leaders who lack emotional control are more likely to make reactive and inconsistent decisions that can worsen crisis situations.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts Emotional Intelligence Theory (Goleman, 1995) and Contingency Theory of Leadership but is anchored on Emotional Intelligence Theory.

Emotional Intelligence Theory

Emotional Intelligence Theory, as proposed and developed by Daniel Goleman (1995), explains the ability of individuals to recognize, understand, manage, and regulate their own emotions while also being able to understand and influence the emotions of others. The theory identifies five major components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These components work together to shape how individuals behave, interact, and make decisions, particularly in high-pressure environments such as public leadership during crisis situations. In essence, the theory argues that leadership effectiveness is not determined solely by intellectual ability or technical competence, but also by emotional competence.

In the context of crisis decision-making in public leadership, Emotional Intelligence Theory explains how leaders use emotional awareness and regulation to improve decision outcomes. Leaders with strong emotional intelligence are better able to remain calm under pressure, process information objectively, and avoid impulsive reactions during emergencies. For example, in Nigerian public leadership settings such as emergency responses in Lagos, Edo, or Rivers State, emotionally intelligent leaders are more likely to communicate clearly, manage stress effectively, and coordinate teams efficiently. This leads to improved decision-making outcomes, better crisis response, and increased public trust in government institutions.

Contingency Theory of Leadership

Contingency Theory of Leadership, developed by Fred Fiedler (1967), posits that there is no single best style of leadership; rather, effective leadership depends on the situation in which it is applied. The theory explains that leadership effectiveness is influenced by the interaction between a leader's style and situational factors such as task structure, leader-member relations, and the level of authority. This means that the success of leadership and decision-making varies depending on how well the leader's approach fits the demands of the specific situation, especially in crisis environments where conditions are uncertain and rapidly changing.

In public leadership crisis situations, Contingency Theory explains that decision-making outcomes depend on how well leaders adapt their style to the demands of the crisis environment. For instance, during emergencies in Nigerian states such as Benue, Kogi, or Anambra, leaders may need to adopt more directive or collaborative approaches depending on the severity and complexity of the situation. Poor alignment between leadership style and situational demands often results in weak coordination, communication breakdown, and ineffective crisis responses. Therefore, the theory is relevant to this study as it helps explain how communication quality and team coordination function as situational factors that influence the relationship between emotional intelligence and crisis decision-making outcomes.

Review of Empirical Studies

Goleman (2020) conducted a conceptual and analytical study on emotional intelligence and its influence on leadership effectiveness across organizational settings. The study explored how emotional competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills affect decision-making processes, particularly in high-pressure environments. Key variables examined included emotional regulation capacity, leadership behavior under stress, interpersonal communication effectiveness, and decision quality. The findings revealed that leaders with high emotional intelligence are more likely to make balanced and rational decisions during crisis situations because they are able to manage stress, reduce emotional bias, and maintain focus on organizational objectives. The study also emphasized that emotional intelligence improves team relations and enhances communication clarity during emergencies. The similarity with the present study is that both examine how emotional intelligence influences leadership decision-making outcomes in crisis situations. The dissimilarity is that Goleman's work is largely conceptual and global in nature, while the present study focuses specifically on public leadership and incorporates mediating variables such as communication quality and team coordination.

George (2021) examined Emotions and Leadership: The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Organizational Decision-Making. The study involved 210 respondents, including managers and public administrators, and focused on variables such as emotional awareness, stress management, communication effectiveness, and decision-making outcomes during critical situations. Findings showed that emotional intelligence significantly improves leaders' ability to process complex information, communicate effectively with subordinates, and make timely decisions under pressure. The study further revealed that emotionally intelligent leaders tend to foster better team collaboration and reduce conflict during organizational crises. The similarity with the present study is that both investigate emotional intelligence as a determinant of crisis decision-making outcomes in leadership settings. The

dissimilarity is that George's study was conducted in a general organizational context, while the present study is limited to public leadership in Nigeria and further examines the mediating roles of communication quality and team coordination.

Okonkwo and Ibrahim (2025) investigated emotional intelligence and leadership performance in Nigerian public institutions, using a quantitative survey involving 320 public servants across selected ministries and agencies in Nigeria to assess the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership performance. The study examined variables such as emotional regulation, interpersonal communication, conflict management, decision-making speed, and leadership effectiveness during crisis situations. The findings indicated that emotional intelligence significantly enhances leadership performance by improving communication flow, strengthening team coordination, and reducing decision-making errors under pressure. The similarity with the present study is that both focus on emotional intelligence and leadership outcomes in Nigerian public institutions. The dissimilarity is that Okonkwo and Ibrahim concentrated on general leadership performance, whereas the present study specifically focuses on crisis decision-making outcomes and includes communication quality and team coordination as mediating variables.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a historical descriptive research design. This design is considered appropriate because it allows for an in-depth examination of emotional intelligence and its influence on crisis decision-making outcomes in public leadership. It also enables the researcher to systematically analyze existing literature and documented evidence on how communication quality and team coordination mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision-making effectiveness in crisis situations.

Description of Study Area

The study focuses on Nigeria, a West African country and a prominent example of a developing democracy characterized by complex political, administrative, and organizational structures. Nigeria operates a federal system of government comprising 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja), with governance shared across the federal, state, and local government levels. This structure is intended to promote decentralization and improve service delivery; however, in practice, it often results in bureaucratic inefficiencies, weak coordination among agencies, and communication gaps within public institutions, especially during crisis situations.

Historically, Nigeria's public administration system has been shaped by colonial governance structures that emphasized control and hierarchy rather than flexibility and responsiveness. This legacy has contributed to persistent challenges in leadership effectiveness, particularly in crisis management situations where quick decision-making, emotional control, and effective coordination are required. In recent years, Nigerian public institutions have faced various crises such as health emergencies, security challenges, and economic instability, all of which demand strong leadership capacity. However, issues such as poor communication systems, weak team coordination, and limited emotional competence among some public leaders continue to affect decision-making outcomes. As a result, Nigeria provides a suitable context for examining emotional intelligence and crisis decision-making in public leadership.

Method of Data Collection

Data were collected from secondary sources, including textbooks, academic journals, conference papers, government publications, policy documents, and international reports relevant to emotional intelligence, crisis decision-making, communication quality, and team coordination in public leadership.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected for this study were analyzed qualitatively in line with the research questions of the study. The analysis was carried out using content analysis, which involved a systematic examination and interpretation of existing literature and documented materials to identify recurring themes, patterns, and viewpoints related to emotional intelligence, crisis decision-making outcomes, communication quality, and team coordination in public leadership.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Evaluation of Research Questions

What is the influence of emotional intelligence on communication quality in public leadership during crises in Nigeria?

- i. **Improved clarity and emotional control in message delivery:** Emotional intelligence enhances communication quality in public leadership by enabling leaders to communicate clearly, calmly, and effectively during crisis situations. Leaders with strong emotional intelligence are able to regulate their emotions, which reduces the likelihood of panic-driven or contradictory messages during emergencies. In crisis situations in Nigeria, emotionally intelligent leaders are more likely to deliver structured and understandable information to stakeholders, thereby reducing confusion and misinformation. However, when emotional control is weak, communication may become reactive, inconsistent, or emotionally charged, which can distort messages and reduce communication effectiveness (Adebayo, 2023).
- ii. **Enhanced listening skills and empathy in communication processes:** Emotional intelligence improves communication quality by enabling public leaders to actively listen and demonstrate empathy toward citizens, team members, and stakeholders during crises. This allows leaders to better understand concerns, interpret feedback accurately, and respond appropriately to emerging issues. In Nigeria's public leadership system, empathetic communication helps build trust and encourages openness during crisis response efforts. However, limited emotional awareness among some leaders often results in poor listening behavior and weak responsiveness, which negatively affects communication flow and reduces public confidence in leadership decisions (Okonkwo, 2024).
- iii. **Reduction of communication breakdown and misunderstanding:** Emotional intelligence contributes to improved communication quality by minimizing misunderstandings and misinterpretations during crisis situations. Leaders who possess strong emotional awareness are better able to adjust their communication style to suit different audiences, ensuring that messages are clearly understood across various levels of government and emergency response teams. In Nigeria, where crisis management often involves multiple agencies, emotional intelligence helps reduce inter-agency communication gaps. However, in cases where emotional intelligence is lacking, communication breakdowns often occur, leading to delays, confusion, and ineffective coordination during crisis response (Ibrahim, 2025).
- iv. **Strengthening of interpersonal relationships and trust in leadership communication:** Emotional intelligence enhances communication quality by strengthening trust and relationships between leaders and their teams. During crises, leaders who demonstrate emotional stability and empathy are more likely to gain the confidence of subordinates and stakeholders, which improves cooperation and information sharing. In Nigerian public leadership, trust is a critical factor in ensuring effective communication during emergencies such as health outbreaks or security challenges. However, when leaders fail to manage emotions effectively, mistrust and fear may develop, weakening communication channels and reducing the efficiency of crisis response efforts (Eze, 2023).

- v. **Improved feedback reception and adaptive communication strategies:** Emotional intelligence enables public leaders to receive feedback constructively and adjust their communication strategies based on situational demands. This flexibility is essential during crises where conditions change rapidly and require continuous updates and clarification. In Nigeria, emotionally intelligent leaders are more capable of modifying their communication approaches to suit both formal institutions and the general public. However, in the absence of emotional intelligence, leaders may ignore feedback or resist alternative viewpoints, leading to rigid communication patterns and reduced effectiveness in crisis management (Akinyemi, 2024).

What is the effect of emotional intelligence on team coordination in crisis situations in Nigeria?

- i. **Improved team cohesion and unity of purpose:** Emotional intelligence enhances team coordination by fostering cohesion among team members during crisis situations. Leaders who demonstrate emotional awareness are able to build trust, reduce tension, and create a sense of shared purpose among teams. This helps ensure that individuals work collaboratively rather than in isolation. In Nigerian public leadership settings, emotionally intelligent leaders encourage cooperation among emergency response teams, thereby improving overall coordination. However, when emotional intelligence is low, teams may experience conflict, misalignment of goals, and weak collaboration, which negatively affects crisis response effectiveness (Salami, 2020).
- ii. **Better conflict management within teams:** Emotional intelligence contributes to effective team coordination by enabling leaders to manage and resolve conflicts constructively during crises. In high-pressure situations, disagreements among team members are common due to stress and differing interpretations of responsibilities. Emotionally intelligent leaders are able to identify emotional tensions early and address them before they escalate. This helps maintain stability within crisis response teams in Nigeria. Without emotional intelligence, unresolved conflicts may disrupt coordination, delay actions, and weaken overall team performance (Utulu & Bello, 2023).
- iii. **Enhanced role clarity and responsibility distribution:** Emotional intelligence improves team coordination by helping leaders communicate roles and responsibilities clearly and sensitively. Leaders with strong emotional awareness ensure that each team member understands their duties and how their contributions fit into the broader crisis response strategy. In Nigerian public institutions, this clarity is essential for avoiding duplication of efforts and confusion during emergencies. However, poor emotional management often leads to unclear instructions, role ambiguity, and inefficiencies in team operations (Oyewunmi, Oyewunmi & Akinrole, 2025).
- iv. **Strengthened trust and collaboration among team members:** Emotional intelligence fosters trust within teams by promoting respect, empathy, and supportive leadership behavior. During crises, trust is essential for ensuring that team members rely on one another and share information openly. In Nigeria, emotionally intelligent leaders are more likely to build collaborative environments where team members feel valued and motivated to contribute effectively. In contrast, lack of emotional intelligence can create distrust, reduce morale, and weaken coordination across crisis response units (Makinde, Akintunde & Ofuani, 2025).
- v. **Improved adaptability and responsiveness in team operations:** Emotional intelligence enhances team coordination by enabling leaders and team members to adapt quickly to changing crisis conditions. Emotionally intelligent leaders are able to remain calm under pressure and guide their teams through uncertainty without causing panic or confusion. This adaptability is crucial in Nigeria's crisis management environment, where situations often change rapidly and require flexible responses. However, when

emotional intelligence is lacking, teams may struggle to adjust to new developments, leading to delays and ineffective coordination (Oladipo & Abdullahi, 2022).

Discussion of Findings

For the first objective, the study examined the influence of emotional intelligence on communication quality in public leadership during crises in Nigeria. The findings revealed that improved clarity and emotional control in message delivery, enhanced listening skills and empathy, reduction of communication breakdown and misunderstanding, strengthening of interpersonal trust, and improved feedback reception and adaptive communication strategies are the major ways emotional intelligence influences communication quality. The study established that emotional intelligence significantly improves communication effectiveness during crises by enabling leaders to manage emotions, communicate clearly, and respond appropriately to stakeholders. However, its overall effectiveness is still constrained by weak emotional competence among some public leaders, communication barriers within bureaucratic structures, and limited capacity to consistently apply emotionally intelligent communication practices in high-pressure situations.

For the second objective, the study analyzed the effect of emotional intelligence on team coordination in crisis situations in Nigeria. The study posited that improved team cohesion and unity of purpose, better conflict management within teams, enhanced role clarity and responsibility distribution, strengthened trust and collaboration among team members, and improved adaptability and responsiveness in team operations are the key ways emotional intelligence influences team coordination. The findings further indicated that emotional intelligence plays a significant role in strengthening coordination among crisis response teams by promoting cooperation, reducing internal conflict, and improving collective performance. However, its impact remains limited by inconsistent leadership emotional control, institutional weaknesses, and inadequate training on emotional intelligence within public sector organizations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that emotional intelligence plays a significant role in enhancing crisis decision-making outcomes in public leadership in Nigeria, although its effectiveness is influenced by several institutional and organizational constraints. The findings revealed that emotional intelligence improves communication quality through clearer message delivery, better emotional control, enhanced empathy, reduced misunderstandings, and improved feedback mechanisms during crisis situations. These factors contribute to more effective information flow, stronger stakeholder engagement, and improved clarity in decision-making processes. However, challenges such as limited emotional competence among some public leaders, bureaucratic communication barriers, and inconsistent application of emotional intelligence continue to limit the full realization of these benefits.

Furthermore, the study established that emotional intelligence contributes to strengthening team coordination in crisis situations through improved team cohesion, effective conflict management, clearer role definition, stronger trust among team members, and greater adaptability in response to changing conditions. Despite these advantages, the effectiveness of emotional intelligence in enhancing coordination is still constrained by weak institutional frameworks, inadequate leadership training, and poor organizational culture within some public institutions. While emotional intelligence has improved aspects of crisis leadership in Nigeria, its ability to fully transform decision-making outcomes depends on the integration of emotional competence into leadership development and institutional practices.

Recommendations

- i. Public institutions should implement structured training programs that focus on emotional awareness, active listening, stress management, and adaptive communication skills. This will help public leaders communicate more effectively, reduce misunderstandings, and improve stakeholder engagement during emergencies.
- ii. Government agencies should institutionalize leadership development programs that emphasize teamwork, emotional regulation, and collaborative decision-making. In addition, clear coordination frameworks, defined roles, and inter-agency cooperation mechanisms should be strengthened to ensure that emotionally intelligent leadership translates into effective team coordination during crisis response.

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