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PUBLIC EVALUATIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE AFTER THE WILKES-BARRE FLOOD

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Disaster conditions present a considerable challenge to a wide range of organizations in any affected community. Scarce resources, extreme time constraints, and disruption of channels of communication and modes of transportation often push organizations to the limits of their capabilities. Yet some organizations are overloaded while others are barely affected. A number of students of organizations (for example, Haas and Drabek, 1973, and Price, 1967) have grappled with the complex and difficult issues of organizational characteristics and environmental demands. The Disaster Research Center (DRC) at The Ohio State University has studied aspects of this for specific organizations in the past (for example, Kennedy, 1970; Adams, 1970; Ross, 1970). However, a different perspective can be taken. Regardless of exactly how an organization meets the tasks imposed by a disaster situation, its legitimacy and long-term success often are linked more with how the public in general thinks the organization performed than with actual organizational experience.

Barton (1969: 297-301) recognizes the importance of public attitudes toward organizations and summarizes the most important results from earlier studies. But most striking is the relative inattention in the literature. This is somewhat surprising, since the most widely studied disaster organizations are either governmental or voluntary and thus heavily dependent upon public support, whether for budgetary allocations or contributions. Public evaluations thus have implications for both emergent and more established organizations, which may be forced to undergo operational and management changes or even face challenges to long-term organizational survival. Public evaluations, however, constitute a strange middle ground between studies of individuals and studies of organizations. Therefore, neglect is understandable, since older studies tended to focus upon the psychological states of victims, and more recent studies have emphasized the organization and its clients. In spite of this, some past studies did deal with public evaluations to a certain extent. These include work by Marks and Fritz (1954), Form and Nosow (1958), Moore (1958), and Bourque et al. (1973).

The first attempt to deal systematically and empirically with issues of public evaluation was the landmark series of studies conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) in the early nineteen-fifties (Marks et al., 1954). In its study of the White County, Arkansas, tornado of March 21, 1952, probability sampling was used to ensure coverage of the full spectrum of experience and to allow generalization to the whole affected area. This study considered favorable and unfavorable comments related to medical center activities, the Red Cross, and the Salvation Army, differentiating between impact area residents and others. The effects of other variables were not considered. In general, the study found that the great majority of comments were favorable. Impact area respondents were only half as likely to respond favorably in regard to medical center activities as non-impact area respondents. The situation was almost exactly reversed for Salvation Army and Red Cross comments, which were twice as likely to be favorable for impact than for non-impact respondents. Also, the Salvation Army was found to be more highly evaluated than the Red Cross. No statistical tests were reported for either significance or the strength of any of the relationships. It is recognized, however, that the problem at hand was only a side-issue for NORC. This study still represents the definitive in-depth empirical study of a disaster in terms of both experience and population characteristics. It is particularly notable for its comprehensiveness, clarity of exposition, and sound methodological base.

A later study by Form and Nosow (1958) of rescue and assistance operations in the June 8, 1953, Flint-Beecher, Michigan tornado also includes reference to organizational evaluations. A primary focus of their study was upon rescue operations, and most of their interviews (105 out of 116) are with members of rescue groups. A content analysis was done of all organizational references in the interviews resulting in a classification as positive, negative, or non-evaluative items. Results were reported for police, National Guard, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Civil Defense, churches, and hospitals, as well as other organizations. With the exception of the Red Cross and Red Feather, evaluations tended to be strongly positive, supporting the NORC findings previously indicated. In addition, the marked difference in evaluation of the Salvation Army and the Red Cross appears dramatic, with a negative response to the Red Cross in contrast to an overwhelmingly positive response to the Salvation Army. Form and Nosow improve upon NORC by extending consideration beyond the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and medical activity centers to include a better approximation of the range of disaster-involved organizations. However, although their results appear to be consistent with those of NORC, their use of an unsystematic sample raises questions about the generalizability of their results beyond the respondents themselves. Another consideration is the lack of differentiation among the respondents in terms of either experience or personal background. But these methodological criticisms should not obscure the clear contribution of Form and Nosow for emphasizing the importance of public evaluations and for expanding consideration to a fuller range of disaster-involved organizations.

One additional study is worth noting. Moore (1958) studied the Waco-San Angelo, Texas tornadoes of May 11, 1953, including a survey of victims which asked each respondent to mark those groups which he/she felt had done an "adequate job in helping the victims of the disaster" (Moore, 1958: 100). Moore reports the rank ordering of the groups with a comparison of responses in Waco and San Angelo. The groups included federal, state, and local government, police, churches, National Guard, Salvation Army, Red Cross, and other local agencies. Although some discrepancies between the two communities are found, the rankings are largely similar, with National Guard, churches, and police at the top, government in the middle, and local voluntary agencies at the bottom. However, the previously noted relationship between the Salvation Army and Red Cross evaluations holds up, with the Red Cross at or near the bottom in ranking and the Salvation Army in the top half. Although the sampling method used was ingenious and extremely useful for ensuring adequate coverage of victims, since it was not really random, criticisms can be raised about its generalizability to the entire community population. Again, as in the previous two studies, no attempt was made to control for possibly relevant variables. The major contribution of Moore's study for the issue at hand is that it offers a comparative treatment of two major cities and demonstrates similarities of evaluation between them.

The final relevant study was done by Bourque et al. (1973) of the February 9, 1971, San Fernando, California earthquake. They explored the effects of the earthquake "on the victims' subsequent contact with, and attitudes toward, social agencies" (Bourque et al., 1973: 1). They recognized that earthquakes represent an important qualitative difference from most other disaster agents, since there is currently no warning possible. Questions about respondent experience and evaluation were included as part of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area Study. Questions assessed knowledge of, contact with, and evaluation of, each organization. Victim/non-victim status was differentiated only on the basis of contact. Although an "Index of Damage-Injury" was constructed for use

in other reported results, there is no indication that it was used in the reported results to separate victims who did not contact a particular organization from victims who did. Thus, based on the information provided, the generalization to all victims from contact individuals only is unwarranted. Respondents were asked to rate organizations on a five-point scale from "very effective," 5, to "somewhat effective," 3, (considered as neutral by Bourque and her co-workers), to "not effective," 1. Intermediate points were unnamed. They found that evaluations by victims were much more positive than in the past but the rank order of organizations remained very similar. "Rescue and short-term relief organizations" were rated more positively than "formal, professional rehabilitative organizations." Their findings confirmed that, while the American Red Cross was now highly positively evaluated in an absolute sense, when compared to other organizations, it remained in its "familiar position at or near the bottom of the list."

The major criticism of this study is the same as that leveled against the other studies considered: results are presented without statistical measures of significance and strength of relationship. This is somewhat surprising in this case, however, since multiple regression analysis was used in another part of the same study, not related to the organizational evaluations. The study nevertheless is noteworthy for two reasons. First, it extends evaluation studies to a second disaster agent, earthquakes, which is obviously different from tornadoes. Second, it makes a clear effort to compare results with those reported by previous studies, which it largely supports.

These studies represent the major empirical efforts to approach the study of public evaluation of organizational performance. By their pioneering nature they represent a substantial contribution. However, they suffer from a number of shortcomings. First, although two disaster agents, tornadoes and earthquakes, are considered, these two agents are very similar in many of their characteristics. This raises questions about comparability of results with other disaster agents, such as floods, which have very different characteristics and thus have correspondingly different effects upon communities.

Second, methodological conscientiousness varies widely from the strict sampling of NORC to the unsystematic efforts of Form and Nosow. No study reports the results of any statistical tests of either significance or strength of relationship, meaning that they can be taken as suggestive but not conclusive. In addition, if any tests are applied in secondary analysis of their reported results, those large enough to permit testing do not achieve significance.

Third, although it is admitted that organizational performance evaluations were not the primary focus of these prior studies, it is unfortunate that attempts at tabular analysis were meager, since data was available.

RELEVANT ISSUES

The whole area of organizational effectiveness suffers from lack of consensus upon even basic perspectives. One approach is to accept the stated goals

of the organization and to measure performance against them, while another is to assess the success of the organization in exploiting its environment (Price, 1972). For purposes of public evaluation, however, the performance of organizations in disasters is likely to be best approached in terms of the stated goals which should, to some extent, mirror public expectations. The difficulty, of course, is that the goals of different organizations often have little in common (Etzioni, 1964). The matter is further confounded because different segments of a community have different views and expectations of any particular organization. A compromise approach is to avoid specifying goals and to ask instead about a deliberately vague "job performance." Such an open-ended strategy is legitimate for an exploratory study which seeks only to establish the existence of relationships and their general nature. Further research is then necessary to examine in detail which images of job effectiveness are associated with the differential evaluations of the factors which are found to be related.

As has already been noted, past research on job evaluation has not tended to consider the entire community affected by the disaster. Yet the environment of an organization is composed of the public as well as of other organizations and their clients. It is especially true that the basic arena for most disaster-involved organizations is the community, and support, either in the politics of budgetary allocations or the direct contribution of funds, must come from the public. Due to the political considerations at budget renewal time, even state and national level governmental agencies are very sensitive to public evaluation in individual disasters. In other words, public evaluations of organizational performance are extremely important, and require assessing the entire community rather than merely one segment, whether it be victims or organizational elites.

It is just as important in the issue of public evaluations as in any other aspect of disaster research to try to extend findings to the greatest level of generality. Specifically, it is important to separate out the effects that are tied to one type of disaster agent or to a unique set of circumstances from those which seem to apply across a full range of agents. This has not been possible yet in the area of public evaluation of organizational performance because only two agents, earthquakes and tornadoes, with many similar characteristics have been explored. It could be argued that the best possible contrast with these agents would be a flood. Tornadoes and earthquakes arrive quickly, often without warning, do a tremendous amount of damage in a short time, are relatively clean, and depart soon after they arrive, allowing immediate and largely unhindered recovery efforts. In contrast, floods usually occur slowly with a reasonable measure of warning, do their damage over an extended period, leave the area filthy and smelly, and stay around for a number of days, seriously hampering recovery efforts. Thus, the contrast between tornadoes and earthquakes, on the one hand, and floods, on the other, could be expected to constitute a strategic test with potential for research payoff.

Another consideration is the need for a more exact specification of the nature of the experience of the individuals involved. Some people are untouched by disaster except what they read in the papers; others lose everything. Some victims seek aid; others do not. Not everyone experiences looting or profiteering. Evacuation occurs with and without loss, and not all victims evacuate. Rather than be satisfied with a simple distinction between victim and

non-victim, it is more useful to differentiate among the varieties and combinations of experience and to examine how each is related to evaluations of organizational effectiveness.

It is, of course, of paramount importance to determine, as much as possible, the social backgrounds of the respondents. Many social categories indicate the past experience which an individual can be expected to bring to a situation. Stratification variables, such as occupation, income, and education, are usually found to be related in some way to a social phenomenon. Demographic variables, such as sex, age, and marital status, should be examined. Finally, census categories, such as household type, religion, ethnicity, and employment should be considered. It might also be relevant, in some cases, to inquire about prior disaster experience.

Also worthwhile would be an attempt to assess different reactions to the disaster, both objective; such as migration or purchase of insurance, and subjective; such as emotional states and attitudes. Considerable caution must be exercised, since the interaction between attitudes and behavior is very complex and is especially sensitive to its context (Liska, 1974; Festinger, 1957). Current lack of knowledge about this interaction indicates that, although the existence and nature of joint variation may be noted, issues of directionality and causality are seldom resolvable.

A final requirement for a useful study of this sort is an attempt to use at least elementary statistical techniques for establishing the significance and strength of relationships. Most data in the social sciences do not qualify for anything beyond tabular presentations and analysis, but much can be learned using only these, if the data is available.

Study Design

Sample

On June 26, 1972, the northeastern United States was subjected to severe flooding as a result of the aftermath of Hurricane Agnes, and over 80,000 people were left homeless, with over one billion dollars worth of damage estimated. The worst effects were largely concentrated on Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and surrounding communities. An intensive study of the flooding and its effects was undertaken by DRC. As part of this study, one year later (August to November, 1973), a mail questionnaire was sent to 1,990 households representing a three-and-one-third percent sample of the population of the affected communities. From the initial mailings and three followups, 964 returns (48.3%) were achieved, yielding a one-and-six-tenths percent sample of the 59,832 households in the target population. For the present study no significant differences were found between sample characteristics and target population characterisitics as reflected in census figures.

Measures

The general measure chosen for evaluation of organizational effectiveness is a variation of one used by Georgopolous and Mann (1962), as suggested by Price (1972). Two differences to be noted are the number of categories, and specification of general job performance rather than a specific goal. Only four rating categories were used, for it was felt that two favorable and two

unfavorable categories would offer sufficient discrimination. (Past studies had used merely one for each.) The problem with most of the past studies had been the overwhelming choice of the one favorable category. Two favorable and two unfavorable categories seemed to offer the best compromise between discrimination, on the one hand, and potential respondent confusion on the other. The general question asked was: "How would you judge the job done after the flood by the following organizations?". Because of the absence of a neutral category, respondents were instructed to omit answering if a judgment was problematic. A list of twenty-three organizations was included opposite four columns labeled: "did a very good job," "did a good job," "did a poor job," and "did a very poor job."

The only other non-standard measure was an attempt to assess subjective reactions to the flood. Four issues (evaluation of general community response, individual health, closeness to others, and individual self-confidence) were posed in both positive and negative form, intermixed. The respondent was instructed: "Since the flood have you had any of the following reactions that you believe are primarily the results of your experience in the June 1972 flood?" (emphasis in original). The respondent was asked to check as many as were applicable. A simple scale was constructed by assigning +1 to the positive responses and -1 to the negative ones. A score was calculated for each person by summing the values of the marked items, and the results were collapsed into three categories: positive, neutral, and negative.

A number of variables were included to specify, as completely as possible, each of the three major considerations: experience, social background, and reactions. Experience variables found to be related significantly to job evaluations included observation of profiteering (yes/no), experience of looting (yes/no), and household loss (yes/no, dollar value). Significant background variables were sex, age, marital status, family income, education, employment status (full-time or not), and home ownership (yes/no). Finally, reactions found to be significant included perception of relative help and the previously noted list of reactions.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The job evaluations tended to follow the pattern obtained by other researchers. By and large, people rated organizations favorably. Table 1 reports the frequencies, means, and rankings for the organizations evaluated. Means were calculated by assigning values: "very good" equal to 1, "good" equal to 2, "poor" equal to 3, and "very poor" equal to 4. Data is presented upon individual organizations, the average response over all evaluated organizations for each respondent, and the average response over a selected group of high-scoring organizations and over a selected group of low-scoring organizations. The last two measures of average responses for high and low scoring groups are intended to further aid in interpretation of the single overall job evaluations.

In examining the individual organization evaluations, it is apparent that private service organizations, such as the Salvation Army and the American Red Cross, tend to be at the top and are rated as "very good." In the middle are a number of public service organizations, such as local police, the Corps of

Engineers, and Civil Defense. There overall ratings tend to be "good," but with a sizable minority of "very good" ratings. Finally, at the bottom are found local and state governmental ratings which tend to be "good," as with public service organizations, but the unfavorable ratings outweigh the "very good" ones.

TABLE 1

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON ORGANIZATIONAL EVALUATIONS

Item	Mean Rating	Percent Responded: Very Good 1	Good 2	Poor 3	Very Poor 4	N
Organizations						
Salvation Army	1.24	78.0	20.1	1.5	0.4	787
Red Cross	1.28	75.4	22.0	2.0	0.7	856
Hospitals	1.33	69.6	29.0	0.9	0.5	756
National Guard	1.37	69.2	27.1	1.9	1.9	798
Churches & Religious Groups	1.38	67.5	28.6	2.7	1.1	801
Local Police	1.55	55.4	37.2	4.9	2.5	753
Local Civil Defense	1.66	49.4	39.8	7.9	3.9	717
Small Business Administration	1.74	39.5	49.3	9.2	2.0	740
Corps of Engineers	1.75	43.7	41.9	9.8	4.6	671
Federal Government in general	1.87	33.4	50.0	13.0	3.6	730
Housing and Urban Development	1.87	33.9	48.7	13.3	4.1	752
Local Government	2.08	30.7	39.8	20.1	9.4	671
State Government	2.20	24.7	40.1	24.6	9.9	630
Groups of Organizations						
Overall	1.66	38.3	58.0	3.6	0.1	911
Service (top)	1.35	66.6	32.3	1.0	0.1	891
Government (bottom)	2.18	22.1	44.4	27.1	6.4	752

In the second section of Table 1 are found the results for overall job evaluation and for the high and the low groups of organizations. It can be seen that by far the most common overall response was "good" (58.0%), and the second largest response was "very good" (38.3%). Thus together these constitute a total favorable response of 96.3%. In contrast, there is only one overall

"very poor" response. The mean for overall job evaluation is 1.66, which is almost exactly the mean for all responses (1.67). To help in understanding overall job evaluation, two important groups of organizations have been isolated, and average scores for the group calculated. One is the group of established private service organizations (the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and churches and religious groups). All these organizations have mean ratings clearly in the "very good" range. The other group is composed of those organizations at the bottom of the rankings (local and state governments). Their mean ratings are clearly in the "good" range, and, in fact, unfavorable ratings predominate over "very good" ratings.

Comparison with Previous Findings

Before beginning a detailed analysis of factors related to overall job evaluation, it is profitable to examine how the descriptive statistics already presented correspond with the evaluations reported in earlier studies. First, NORC's (Marks et al., 1954) reported evaluations of medical activity centers, the Red Cross, and the Salvation Army will be examined. It is necessary to note that differences between the two studies make comparison difficult and resolution of differences impossible. First of all, NORC differentiates between impact area and non-impact area respondents. In the current study a similar distinction is made between those households which suffer flood-caused loss and those which do not. But no measure is available which corresponds to impact area/non-impact area. Second, NORC evaluated medical activity centers, while the present study evaluates only hospitals. Finally, respondents in the present study were asked to commit themselves to a rating. Methodologically, NORC's content analysis of interviews not addressed to this specific issue raises serious questions of comparability of results. On the one hand, overt questions may complicate the matter by activating biases and defense mechanisms. On the other hand, only the strongest positive or negative reactions would be likely to show up indirectly.

It was found that none of the three evaluations were significantly related to the occurrence of household loss, in contrast to the differences found by NORC between impact area and non-impact area respondents. It will be suggested later that the present study indicates that private service organizations have a cache of goodwill which is overcome only by direct negative experience. Apparently this condition did not hold 20 years ago when the NORC and other studies were done.

The Salvation Army was found to be just as favorably judged now as it was then (98.6% now to 100.0% then). However, the Red Cross and medical activity centers are evaluated differently. Marks et al. reported favorable Red Cross ratings from 74.0% of the non-impact area respondents and 83.0% of the impact area respondents. The present study finds a 97.3% favorable rating. The favorable ratings of the medical activity centers vary from 84.0% to 87.0% between impact and non-impact area respondents, while the current study yields hospital evaluations which are 98.6% favorable.

In conclusion, NORC's findings were not confirmed for the most part. However, lack of comparability prohibits disconfirmation. In any case, the current ratings only exaggerate ratings which were already strongly favorable.

Next, Form and Nosow (1958) reported the positive/negative evaluations of a number of well-known organizations based upon a content analysis of their

interviews with rescue workers. Table 2 expresses percentages of positive and negative responses to all evaluative responses rather than to all responses, evaluative and neutral. Thus it is directly comparable to the corresponding figures from the current study. Again, a note of caution is in order, since their figures are based upon a secondary content analysis not upon overt questioning as in the present study.

TABLE 2

COMPARISON OF EVALUATIONS WITH FORM AND NOSOW'S
(%)

	EVALUATIONS			
	Form and Nosow		Wilkes-Barre	
ORGANIZATIONS	+	-	+	-
Police in general	68.0	32.0	92.6	7.4
National Guard	85.0	15.0	96.2	3.8
Red Cross	40.0	60.0	97.3	2.7
Salvation Army	95.0	5.0	98.1	1.9
Churches	100.0	0.0	96.2	3.8
Hospitals	100.0	0.0	98.6	1.4
Other organizations	93.0	7.0	96.3	3.7

Adapted from Form and Nosow (1958: 119)

It can be seen that only minor differences are apparent for the Salvation Army, churches, hospitals, and "other" organizations. However, police in general, the National Guard and the American Red Cross present markedly different images. The police rating has climbed from 68.0% to 92.6%, the National Guard rating has increased from 58.0% to 96.3%, and, most dramatically, the Red Cross has reversed its negative evaluation by climbing from 40.0% to 97.4%. The low ratings for police and National Guard appear to be specific to Flint-Beecher, since they were the top-ranked organizations in Moore's (1958) study conducted at the same time in Texas and are found to be very favorably rated in the present study. Much has been written about the low evaluations of the Red Cross, especially in contrast to the Salvation Army (for example, Stoddard, 1969), which is also reported in Moore's study. The improved rating found in the current study will be discussed in a later section.

The third study which offers data for comparison is Moore's (1958) Tornadoes over Texas. Moore specifically asked respondents to indicate which organizations had done a good job, and then ranked the organizations by resulting score. Table 3 offers a condensed version of his rankings with the corresponding order yielded

by the present study. The large discrepancies between the two rankings are illustrated by a rho equal to .19. (Rho is a measure of correspondence which indicates how accurately one sequence can be predicted from another.) However only three organizations made major shifts (three or more positions): police, the Salvation Army, and the Red Cross. Police has fallen from the top to the middle, and the Salvation Army and the Red Cross have risen from the middle and bottom to the top. The rise of the Red Cross is particularly dramatic, rivaling the reversal shown in the Form and Nosow study. A clear change has occurred since Moore's study was done. Voluntary organizations have taken over the top rankings, pushing law and order from the top to the middle. It is not clear whether the change is due to a shift from law and order or due to increased professionalization and effectiveness of voluntary organizations.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF EVALUATION RANKINGS WITH MOORE'S

ORGANIZATIONS	MOORE	W-B	ORGANIZATIONS	W-B	MOORE
National Guard	1	3	Salvation Army	1	4
Police	2	5	Red Cross	2	8
Local Churches	3	4	National Guard	3	1
Salvation Army	4	1	Local Churches	4	3
Local Government	5	7	Police	5	2
State Government	6	8	Federal Government	6	7
Federal Government	7	6	Local Government	7	5
Red Cross	8	2	State Government	8	6

Rho = .19 W-B = Wilkes-Barre

Adapted from Moore (1958: 101)

The final study by Bourque et al. (1973) offers a more direct comparison. Respondents were asked to use a multi-point scale to evaluate the organizations. Although their scale differs markedly from the one used in the present study, the results are roughly compatible. The overwhelmingly positive evaluation is also found, and the relative ranking of the three common organizations (Salvation Army, Red Cross, and Civil Defense) is the same between the two studies. However, the current study finds the Salvation Army and the Red Cross to be at the top of the evaluated organizations while all the other studies, including Bourque et al., find the Salvation Army only in the middle and the Red Cross to be at the bottom. Comparison with the Bourque study is especially difficult since there is so little overlap in organizations evaluated, either with the other studies or the current one. This might be a direct reflection of their methodology which asked the respondent to name salient disaster-involved

organizations and reported evaluations only for these. Only high-visibility organizations are treated, and comprehensiveness is sacrificed. The danger with such an approach is ensuring that an adequate variety of organizations are involved for comparison with other events in other locations -- that the idiosyncratic does not overshadow the common.

The scale used by Bourque et al. (1973) is ambiguous in that it does not label intermediate points in contrast to the scale used in the present study. In addition, their "somewhat effective" is treated as neutral, while the unlabeled position between "somewhat effective" and "not effective" is treated as negative. This procedure seems questionable, particularly because it is unnecessarily indirect and inferential. In any case, it is not directly comparable to a forced negative/positive explicit evaluation. Thus, rough comparability of findings is the best that could be hoped for. No direct translation of values from one scale to the other is defensible. However, the relative rank should be the same, as it was found to be. The difficulties of comparison are evident when one examines the overall evaluation of all organizations and the Red Cross evaluation, which are the only two reported (and even these are collapsed into positive/neutral/negative instead of giving the full scale). There is no significant difference between the aggregate evaluations found by Bourque et al., 95.0% positive, and by the present study, 96.0% positive. However, the current study found a 97.0% favorable rating of the Red Cross, while Bourque and her co-workers report only a 93.0% favorable rating. While this is significant statistically, the marked differences in methodology do not allow such a small difference to be considered as theoretically significant.

In conclusion, the results of Bourque et al. appear to agree with those found by the current study -- where they are comparable. It is suggested that the contrary finding by Bourque et al. that, due to the organizations with which the comparison was made, the Red Cross still being at the bottom may be an idiosyncratic artifact rather than an updated empirical confirmation. However, distinct methodological differences raise these issues without permitting a final resolution until further studies are done.

In summary, dramatic changes appear to have occurred in the evaluation of voluntary organizations in general and the Red Cross in particular. Yet most of the results of previous studies appear to be unchanged. Ratings tend to be favorable. The Salvation Army, churches, and hospitals are still well evaluated. Local and state governments tend to receive the lowest evaluations.

Factors Related to Overall Job Evaluation

The variables which are found to be related to overall job evaluation are indicated in Table 4, which shows them grouped into the three categories of experience, reactions, and background. The experience-related variables tend to show that evaluation becomes less favorable with experience. Household loss and its magnitude in dollars and profiteering and looting experience were found to be related to overall job evaluation. Three other variables (evacuation, need for agency housing, and work loss) were related, but the association disappeared when household loss was controlled. Unrelated experience variables included length of time evacuated, where the respondent was sheltered, whether the respondent sheltered others, and voluntary efforts. Simple, direct, and unequivocal factors tend to be the only ones related. Table 5 shows the effects of profiteering experience upon overall job evaluation. "Very good" evaluation

drops from 40.5% without experience to only 22.2% with experience of profiteering, while those giving a "poor" rating climb from 1.8% to 12.7%. This pattern of relationship holds for all experience-related variables.

TABLE 4

VARIABLES RELATED TO JOB EVALUATION GROUPS
(Cramer's V)

VARIABLES	JOB EVALUATION GROUPS		
	OVERALL	SERVICE	GOVERNMENT
Experience			
Household Loss	.16	---	.12*
Looting Experience	.13*	---	---
Profiteering Experience	.25	.12*	.21
Dollar Loss	.13**	---	.14*
Reactions			
Relative Help	.13*	.14*	.16*
Flood Reactions	.14	---	.11*
Background			
Sex	.13*	---	.10**
Age	.13	---	.15
Marital Status	.13	---	.11*
Education	.13	---	.14
Family Income	.12	---	.13
Home Ownership	.11**	---	.14*
Full-time Job	.11**	---	.14*

p under .001 except: *p under .01 and **p under .05

TABLE 5

OVERALL JOB EVALUATION BY PROFITEERING EXPERIENCE OF RESPONDENT
(%)

PROFITEERING EXPERIENCE	OVERALL JOB EVALUATION				
	Very Good N=305	Good N=488	Poor N=32	Very Poor N=0	Total N=825
No	40.5	57.7	1.8	0.0	80.5
Yes	22.2	65.2	12.7	0.0	19.2
Total	37.0	59.1	3.9	0.0	100.0

Chi square = 51.6, df = 2, p under .001

Reaction variables are: (1) relative help as perceived by the respondent and (2) general flood reactions. In both, the nature of the relationship is essentially linear, with negative reactions and perception of less help associated with lower evaluations. Flood insurance was also found to be related, but the association disappeared when household loss was controlled. Same residence and perception of relative losswere not found to be related. Thus only subjective reactions and attitudes were found to be related. The lack of relation of objective reactions can only be pointed out, due to the complexity of interaction between behavior and attitudes. Table 6 shows the relationship of overall job evaluation with perception of relative help. "Very good" drops from 50.0% to 22.4% as relative help declines from greater to less, and at the same time "poor" ratings increase from 1.8% to 12.7%. A similar relationship holds for flood reactions.

TABLE 6

OVERALL JOB EVALUATION BY RELATIVE HELP OF RESPONDENT
(%)

	OVERALL JOB EVALUATION				
RELATIVE HELP	VERY GOOD N=169	GOOD N=281	POOR N=26	VERY POOR N=0	TOTAL N=476
Greater	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	2.9
Same	39.8	56.1	4.2	0.0	70.8
Less	22.4	68.0	9.6	0.0	26.3
Total	35.5	59.0	5.5	0.0	100.0

Chi square = 16.7, df = 4, and p under .01

Related background variables include education, family income, full-time employment, home ownership, marital status, and sex. Values of these variables which indicate increased investment in and concern for community activities are associated with lowered evaluations. The more education or income, full-time employment or home ownership, being married or male, all cause evaluations to decline. One other variable, age, was found to be related to overall job evaluation. Increasing age is associated with higher evaluations. Whether this relationship means that youth is more critical or age means blind conservatism is not clear. Variables not found to be related include perceived class, nature of household, occupation, ethnic identification, religion, unemployment, prior disaster experience, and length of residence. Some of these variables, such as occupation and religion, no longer differentiate as strongly as they once did, while others, such as prior disaster experience, differentiate experience which occurred to only a small segment of the population a long time ago.

Table 7 shows the relationship between family income and overall job evaluation, which is typical of the other background variable relationships except age. As income increases, "very good" drops from 50.5% to 25.6%. However,

"good" picks up the change since the unfavorable categories do not change. Thus, investment in the community appears to cause critical scrutiny but not disloyalty. Table 8 shows how age and overall job evaluation are related. As age increases, "very good" increases from 29.4 % to 50.6%. Again, the change is picked up from "good" while the unfavorable categories do not change significantly.

TABLE 7

OVERALL JOB EVALUATION BY FAMILY INCOME OF RESPONDENT
(%)

	OVERALL JOB EVALUATION				
FAMILY INCOME	VERY GOOD N=305	GOOD N=487	POOR N=31	VERY POOR N=1	TOTAL N=824
Under $5,000	50.5	44.0	4.9	0.5	22.3
$5,000-10,000	39.2	57.3	3.4	0.0	35.6
$10,000-15,000	29.2	67.7	3.1	0.0	27.4
Over $15,000	25.6	70.2	4.2	0.0	14.7
Total	37.0	59.1	3.8	0.1	100.0

Chi square = 34.6, df = 9, p under .001

TABLE 8

OVERALL JOB EVALUATION BY AGE OF RESPONDENT
(%)

	OVERALL JOB EVALUATION				
AGE	VERY GOOD N=343	GOOD N=521	POOR N=33	VERY POOR N=1	TOTAL N=898
Under 30 years	29.4	67.6	2.9	0.0	18.9
30-59 years	34.1	61.9	3.7	0.2	50.9
60 years or more	50.6	45.4	4.1	0.0	30.2
Total	38.2	58.0	3.7	0.1	100.0

Chi square = 28.9, df = 6, p under .001

Although a number of variables are found to be related to overall job evaluation (most beyond the .001 level of significance) the strengths of the relationships are quite weak, varying between .11 and .16, except for profiteering experience which yields .25. Clearly, very little of the variance in

overall job evaluation is explained by any one of these relationships. In the absence of tools for considering large systems of weakly related qualitative variables, little more can be done than to note the relationships and their nature.

In conclusion, experience, reactions, and increasing investment in the community are associated with lower evaluations, while increasing age is associated with higher evaluations.

Comparison of High and Low Evaluation Groups

Table 4 shows that the lowest ranking group, local and state governments, does not differ markedly from the pattern of relationships found for overall job evaluation. The only major difference is that the governmental group is not related to looting experience. Apparently, responsibility for looting is felt to reside elsewhere, for example, with specialized agencies like the police or the National Guard. Although Table 4 does not list them, the same pattern of relationships holds for agencies of the federal government, including Housing and Urban Development and the Small Business Administration, even though these organizations are better evaluated. Also, the nature of the relationships is unchanged for all variables, and this constant nature extends even to the nature of the relationships of variables associated with the highest ranking group, service organizations. Apparently variables related to job evaluation exert the same kind of effect if they are related, exclusive of the kind of organization.

Table 4 also shows the pattern of relationships for these service organizations. It can be seen that decidedly different circumstances hold here. Only two variables, profiteering experience and relative help, are found to be significantly related to public evaluations of service organization performance. The relative independence of background characteristics and the requirement of direct negative personal experience, profiteering or less relative help, seem to indicate that private established service organizations, which include the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and churches and religious groups, draw upon a great storehouse of public goodwill which tends to carry them in the absence of direct contradictory evidence. Even household loss does not relate to the job evaluations of service organizations.

Table 9 shows the pattern of relationships for the service groups as a whole and for each of the constituent organizations. It is apparent from the table that, although only two factors affect the evaluation of service organizations in general, each individual organization has one or more other variables related specifically to it. Sex differences are found in the public evaluation of the Salvation Army performance. If one accepts Stoddard's (1969) distinction between image and actual performance, one could hypothesize that traditional sex roles expose the female more to the image and the male more to the actual performance.

TABLE 9

VARIABLES RELATED TO JOB EVALUATIONS OF SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
(Cramer's V)

	SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS			
VARIABLES	SERVICE	SALVATION ARMY	RED CROSS	CHURCHES
EXPERIENCE				
Profiteering Experience	.12*	.15*	.15	.12**
Looting Experience	---	---	---	.12**
REACTIONS				
Relative Help	.14*	.18	.13**	.14**
BACKGROUND				
Sex	---	.10**	---	---
Age	---	---	.10**	---
Full-time Job	---	---	.11**	---

p under .001 except: * p under .01 ** p under .05

Age and full-time employment were found to be related to Red Cross evaluations. Apparently the Red Cross appeals more across the board with increasing age. It is also possible that older people are better able to appreciate the trade-off between bureaucratic effectiveness and personal needs. Full-time employment may interact with age because of the large elderly population of Wilkes-Barre.

Finally, churches and religious groups differ from the general service group evaluation only in that occurrence of looting experience was also found to be significant. Whether this finding reflects increased disillusionment with man's perfectability, or whether it merely shows that the same suspicious individuals who are prone to think they have been looted are the same ones who are critical of churches is not clear.

In conclusion, service organizations are found to be very different from governmental organizations in the pattern of variables to which they are related. A halo effect seems to be in operation. However, the measures of association reveal only weak relationships, significant largely at the .01 level, but explaining little variance.

Comparison of the Red Cross and the Salvation Army

Because of the interest in the past literature in the more favorable evaluations of the Salvation Army than of the American Red Cross, a short discussion of the implications of the present study is in order. All previous studies indicated that the Salvation Army was decidedly better evaluated than the Red Cross. NORC showed this to be true both absolutely and comparatively. Moore (1958) extended this comparison to a number of other organizations and showed how the Red Cross still came out the worst of all organizations considered.

In this context the results of the present study constitute evidence for a dramatic reversal of image. The mean evaluation for the Red Cross is approximately the same as that for the Salvation Army (1.28 vs. 1.24). The Red Cross's ration of favorable to unfavorable ratings is 97.4% to 2.7%, while the Salvation Army's ration is 98.1% to 1.9%. The Salvation Army still possibly maintains a slight lead, since the ratio of "very good" to "good" is 78.0% to 22.0%, while for the Red Cross it is only 75.4% to 20.1%. Obviously, though, the major differences of the past have disappeared. In the past the evaluation of the Red Cross was both generally negative and comparatively worse than that of the Salvation Army. Now the Red Cross is very favorably evaluated, and is one of the top ranked organizations rather than the bottom one as it appeared in previous studies.

In part this might be due to the apparent general improvement in the image of voluntary organizations over the past twenty years. Part of it is probably due to internal changes in response to the strong threat to organizational survival posed by the negative evaluations. Not only has the Red Cross survived, but it has apparently even flourished. (See Adams, 1970, and Ross, 1970, for detailed studies of how the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, respectively, function in disaster situations.)

The plight of the Red Cross as a professional private service organization is documented in the NORC study (Marks et al., 1954), Form and Nosow (1958), and Moore (1958). These researchers found the Red Cross to be ranked at the bottom, while the Salvation Army was at least ranked in the middle. Stoddard (1969) indicates that the different mandate of the Red Cross requires bureaucratic administration which the Salvation Army is able to avoid. He concludes that "the public image of an organization arises from the manner in which aid is rendered, rather than the quality of the relief administered" (1969: 188). If this is the case, how does one account for the dramatic reversal?

It is suggested that the rise in the evaluations of private service organizations is directly related to the overwhelming success in bureaucratization of the vast majority of organizations in everyday life. No longer is bureaucracy identified only with certain specialized organizations. Since it has spread to almost all community level service organizations, its presence is no longer a deciding factor in organizational evaluations.

The generally higher rating of private organizations over public ones is probably related to the increasingly widespread expectation that government has the responsibility for providing disaster relief to members of the community. In such a climate of opinion, a private service organization can offer

aid strategically, since it is clearly acting out of altruism not duty. In contrast, government today does not have the available resources nor the legal mandate to adequately meet its growing obligations for disaster aid. In the past, the situations for private service organizations and government were almost reversed. No governmental obligations were seen, and instead private service organizations were the only alternative beyond individual self-reliance.

SUMMARY

Past studies of public evaluations of organizational performance in disasters (Marks et al., 1954; Form and Nosow, 1958; Moore, 1958; Bourque et al., 1973) were examined and found to be limited in several important respects. Only two similar disaster agents, tornadoes and earthquakes, were treated and all but one of the disasters studied occurred in 1952 and 1953. This offers little comparative spread and raises tantalizing questions about changes which might have occurred over the past twenty years. Techniques of sampling limited generalizability, while analysis did not consider more than one other related variable. The present study attempts to contribute to a re-examination and extension of the earlier findings by considering a different disaster agent, a flood, in a recent disaster. A sample of the entire affected community is used, and elementary survey analysis techniques, such as cross-tabulations and measures of significance and association are applied.

In general, job evaluations are found to be favorable, but differences among organizations in "very good" and "good" rating proportions allow discrimination of private service organizations from public service organizations and government in general. Established private service organizations receive the highest ratings, largely "very good", while local and state government receive the lowest ratings, largely "good" but with more unfavorable ratings than "very good" ones. Comparison of these ratings with past ratings shows a rise in the general evaluations until they are now ranked higher than other organizations. Most dramatic is the change of the American Red Cross from negative to strongly positive.

Experience factors found to be related to overall job evaluation are household loss, including magnitude of dollar loss, and profiteering and looting experience. Reaction factors include perceived help relative to others and general emotional reaction to the flood. Finally, a number of background factors are significantly related: sex, age, education, income, home ownership, marital status, and full-time employment. In general, occurrence of experience results in lowered evaluations, as does increased investment in community life. Negative reactions or perceived less help are also associated with lower evaluations. Increasing age, however, deviates from the pattern established by the other variables, by increasing the favorable public image of these organizations with direct negative experience required to overcome the halo effect.

It was noted that the American Red Cross has dramatically improved its evaluations over the past twenty years. It has gone from largely unfavorable evaluation and ranking at the bottom of compared organizations to being one of the top-ranked organizations and being very favorably judged. No major differences were found between the ratings and rankings of the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, contrary to the findings of earlier studies.

In conclusion, the present study attempts to reassess the results found by past studies of public evaluations of organizational effectiveness after twenty years of change in American life. In addition, an effort is made to extend the scope by considering another disaster agent, a flood, and by trying to take into account the experience and background characteristics of the entire community. Obviously such an ambitious undertaking is bound to fail in at least some respects. Yet it is hoped that the findings presented here contribute to a better understanding of the factors related to public evaluations and stimulate further research efforts. In particular, the present study is exploratory in nature, seeking to discover relationships. Further research is needed both to consider other variables and other disasters and to examine in detail these discovered relationships. From this can be learned more about the different images of organizational effectiveness in general and of specific organizations. To which images are different segments of the population responding, and how are these specified by the factors found to be significantly related in the present study?

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