

**MANAGERIAL AND EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES OF SPORTS MANAGERS  
TO CRISIS SITUATIONS IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**ABORDAGENS GERENCIAIS E EDUCACIONAIS DOS GESTORES DESPORTIVOS  
ÀS SITUAÇÕES DE CRISE NA PANDEMIA COVID-19**

**ENFOQUES GERENCIALES Y EDUCATIVOS DE LOS GERENTES DEPORTIVOS A  
LAS SITUACIONES DE CRISIS EN LA PANDEMIA DEL COVID-19**

Şihmehmet YİĞİT<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of the research, the pandemic has also shown its effect in the field of sports. The postponement or cancellation of the competitions restricted the development of the athletes and their working areas, so the athletes could not fully devote themselves to sports. The research was carried out in relational screening model. During the pandemic period, 375 men and 193 women working in amateur sports clubs consisted of a total of 568 people. The “Crisis Management Scale” developed by Sayın (2008) was used with the personal information form. The scale has 45 items and 6 sub-dimensions and is in the form of a five-point Likert scale. Cronbach Alpha coefficient was found to be 85. Data IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0 Package program was used. Early warning system, spread of damage, learning is positive, preparedness and prevention, repair and recovery are negative, crisis is medium level.

**KEYWORDS:** Pandemic. Sports. Manager.

**RESUMO:** *Objetivo da pesquisa, a pandemia também mostrou seus efeitos no campo dos esportes. O adiamento ou cancelamento das competições restringia o desenvolvimento dos atletas e de suas áreas de trabalho, fazendo com que os atletas não pudessem se dedicar integralmente ao esporte. A pesquisa foi realizada em modelo de triagem relacional durante o período da pandemia, 375 homens e 193 mulheres que trabalhavam em clubes esportivos amadores consistindo em um total de 568 pessoas. A “Escala de Gestão de Crises” desenvolvida por Sayın (2008) foi utilizada com o formulário de informações pessoais. A escala possui 45 itens e 6 subdimensões e está em forma de escala Likert de cinco pontos. O valor encontrado foi 85 para Coeficiente alfa de Cronbach. O programa Data IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0 Package foi usado. Sistema de alerta precoce, propagação de danos, aprendizagem aparecem positivo, preparação e prevenção, reparo e recuperação são negativos, crise mostra nível médio.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Pandemia. Esportes. Gerente.*

<sup>1</sup> Bülent Ecevit University, Zonguldak – Turkey. Asst. Prof, School of Physical Education and Sports. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6770-8711>. E-mail: [smehmetyigit@hotmail.com](mailto:smehmetyigit@hotmail.com)

**RESUMEN:** *El propósito de la investigación, la pandemia también ha demostrado su efecto en el campo de los deportes. El aplazamiento o cancelación de las competencias restringió el desarrollo de los deportistas y sus áreas de trabajo, por lo que los deportistas no pudieron dedicarse plenamente al deporte. La investigación se llevó a cabo en un modelo de cribado relacional. Durante el período de la pandemia, 375 hombres y 193 mujeres que trabajaban en clubes deportivos aficionados eran un total de 568 personas. La “Escala de gestión de crisis” desarrollada por Sayın (2008) se utilizó con el formulario de información personal. La escala tiene 45 ítems y 6 subdimensiones y tiene la forma de una escala Likert de cinco puntos. Coeficiente Alfa de Cronbach. Se encontró que era 85. Se utilizó el programa Data IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0 Package. El sistema de alerta temprana, la propagación del daño, el aprendizaje positivo, la preparación y la prevención, la reparación y la recuperación son negativos, la crisis es de nivel medio.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Pandemia. Deportes. Gerente.*

## Introduction

During the pandemic period, many international and national sports competitions have been postponed or canceled. Sports institutions and organizations that want to get out of this situation with the least damage have made an effort to manage this crisis situation well or to close it with the least damage. At such a time, the workload of both sports managers and coaches has increased. According to economists, the damage of the Covid-19 Pandemic to the sports industry in 2020 is 160 billion dollars. The loss of Europe’s top 5 football leagues is estimated to be approximately 4 billion Euros (HARD IN SPORTS, 2020). The sports industry has suffered great losses due to cancellations and postponements (YURTSIZOĞLU, 2021). Today, events occurring anywhere in the world can turn the whole world into a crisis phenomenon in a short time. In this over-interactive world, being able to act according to the conditions of the day has become the most important requirement (ÇETINALP, 2014). The word crisis is originally accepted as a synonym for “decision”, “sudden deterioration”, “significant distress”, “depression” and similar words. The crisis, which means “to decide” in the origin of the word, also makes it necessary to make a new decision and questioning about the past and the future (KEYDER, 1981). In crisis management, the source of the crisis separates into two groups as internal and external environmental factors. Depending on the epidemic, the global crisis originates from the external environment. As it causes ambiguity and chaos it has become mandatory for the business to activate the crisis management processes (DINCER, 2007).

There are many environmental factors that will affect sports organizations. Good planning and projects in organizations will prevent possible disruptions. Resolving sudden

events in organizations with crisis management practices ensures that sports organizations are tolerant, quality and efficiency oriented. Thus, it can be ensured that sports organizations are preferred by large masses (DEVECİOĞLU, 2003). Crisis management is a management model that covers such qualities as to get the signals against the crisis situations, to interpret them, to prevent the crises if it is possible, to overcome the crisis by protecting the goals and benefits individually and institutionally and even at the country level if the crisis has occurred, in the next stage to learn lessons from the situation, to implement the necessary plans in order to rehabilitate, to provide control (FİLİZ, 2007).

In crisis management, there is a reactive process as a proactive and during the crisis. Accordingly, it is understood that a reactive process must be observed when an evaluation for pandemic is made. In the understanding of *proaktif* crisis management, intervention and solution sets are developed on the possible scenarios. Precautions against possible crisis can be taken by making plans with predictions on the topics such as raw material, cash flow, sectoral contraction, stock etc. (ÖZDEN, 2014). While crises threaten individual goals, inefficiency, tension and anxiety, and physical and mental fatigue are seen in the crisis management team (KUKLAN, 1998). Sports clubs can be considered as businesses that provide sports services in general. According to Ramazanoğlu and Öcalan (2005), the aim of sports businesses is to provide quality services specific to various branches, to facilitate the activities of individuals who want to benefit from these services and ultimately to increase the satisfaction level of those who benefit from these services. In addition to the unique features of sports management, according to the most widely accepted view; different functional aspects of management such as planning, organizing, executing, coordinating and controlling, which are accepted as common in different fields in the process, and the principles and methods related to these are also valid in sports activities. Therefore, according to this approach, sports management is expressed as the application of the principles, methods and rules of the general management concept in the field of sports (İMAMOĞLU, 1992).

For managers, ensuring the success of the organization is seen as an important task. For example, the manager of any sports club wants his team to be successful, to be at the top in scoring, or he knows that he has responsibilities for performing below the level of the team (ÖZALP, 2012). Strategic thinking approach means seeing organizations and their competitive environments, the big picture including positive and negative situations that may occur, exploring how to bring them together harmoniously, and having a long-term perspective. This ability, which is required at every stage, is important for analyzing data, questioning assumptions and developing new ideas (TOKGÖZ, 2012). It is seen that the

uncertainty and change in the environment constantly both puts the institutions in unexpected danger and offers opportunities. For institutions to continue their lives, they need to protect themselves from these dangers and to take advantage of opportunities (DEVECIOĞLU, 2003). Crisis management is a process that requires expertise, tries to predict events that may disrupt important future relations, tries to meet the goals of a manager in possible danger situations with the least cost and at the same time reaches a state of equilibrium (CENER, 2007).

Sports have become a way of life today, but during the Pandemic period, sports businesses have had difficulty in offering a special working method for athletes in crisis situations in order to survive. It has been determined that the athletes have experienced a decrease in sports during the covid-19 pandemic process and the individual efforts of the athletes are at the forefront to get rid of this situation.

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Research Model**

For the purpose of the study, the descriptive survey model, which aims to determine the current situation, was used in the study. Descriptive survey is a research approach that aims to describe a pre-existing or present situation as it is, without intervening. The event, individual or object that is the subject of the research is tried to be defined in its own terms and/or exactly. No effort is made to influence or change them randomly (KARASAR, 2020).

### **Universe and Sample**

The universe of the research consists of sports managers working in different provinces. The sample of the research consist of 375 men and 193 women, a total of 568 management staff working during the pandemic period.

### **Data Collection Tools and Methods**

The data collection tool consists of two sections. The first part consists of the personal demographic characteristics form and the second part consists of the “Crisis Management Scale” created by Sayın (2008). The Crisis Management Scale was developed by Sayın (2008). The scale consists of 45 items and in order to determine managers’ attitudes towards

crisis management, it is graded as “1=Never (1.00-1.79), 2=Very rarely (1.80-2.59), 3=Sometimes (2.60-3.39), 4=Often (3.40- 4.19) and 5=Always (4.20-5.00)”. As a result of the factor analysis conducted by Sayın (2008), it was stated that 45 items in the scale were collected in 6 sub-dimensions (Early Warning Signal Collection, Preparation and Prevention, Moment of Crisis, Preventing the Spread of Damage, Repair and Recovery, Learning). As a result of the reliability analysis performed by Sayın (2008), the Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the entire scale was calculated as .85; and the reliability coefficients of the sub-dimensions of the scale; Early Warning Signal Collection, Preparation and Prevention, Moment of Crisis, Prevention of the Spread of Damage, Repair and Recovery and Learning were respectively found to be .74, .76, .49, .79, .58 and .77.

### Statistical analysis

IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0 Package program was used to analyze the data. Missing data were identified, removed and were not included in the analysis. Before proceeding to the analysis of the data, in order to determine the appropriate analysis method, whether the data were normally distributed or not was determined according to the kurtosis and skewness values. Independent sample t-test was used to detect the difference between groups.

### Results

In this part of the study, the findings and statistical results are included. Descriptive statistical information on the crisis management scale sub-dimension (1- Early Warning Signal Collection 2-Preparation and Prevention 3-Crisis Moment 4-Preventing the Spread of Damage 5-Repair and Recovery 6-Learning) scores of the amateur sports managers participating in the study and whether the crisis management status differs according to the variables of gender, age, education level, and working time were tested with appropriate analysis methods and the data related to the results have been reported.

**Table 1 - Crisis Management Scale Descriptive Statistics Data**

The Scale and Sub-Dimensions	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Early Warning Signal Collection	3.636	1.44	5.00	.5240	-.366	.770
Preparation and Prevention	2.365	1.00	4.00	.6655	-.133	-.682
Moment of Crisis	2.686	1.00	4.67	.7534	-.343	-.307

Preventing the Spread of Damage	3.990	1.44	5.00	.6781	-.524	.153
Repair and Recovery	2.576	1.00	4.33	.5810	-.168	-.171
Learning	3.485	1.38	4.88	.5834	-.319	.237

\*p<0.05

Source: Prepared by the authors

When the crisis management scale average scores of the participants are examined, it is seen that early warning signal collection is  $\bar{x}= 3.636$ ; preparation and prevention is  $\bar{x}= 2.365$ ; crisis moment is  $\bar{x}=2.686$ ; damage prevention is  $\bar{x}=3.990$ ; repair and recovery is  $\bar{x}=2.576$  and learning is  $\bar{x}=3.48$ .

The mean of the sub-dimensions of the CMS;

Being in the range of 1.0 - 1.79 points is very negative

Being in the range of 1.80 - 2.59 points is negative.

Being in the range of 2.60 and 3.39 is moderate.

Being in the range of 3.40 – 4.19 points is positive

Being in the range of 4.20 - 5.00 is evaluated as very positive.

It is seen that early warning system collection is positive, preparation and prevention is negative, crisis is moderate, damage prevention is positive, repair and recovery is negative, and learning is positive. According to the data collected to determine the attitudes of the trainers before, during and after the crisis, it can be said that the managers are insufficient in the departments of preparation and prevention, repair and recovery.

Skewness and Kurtosis values were reported to determine whether the data showed a normal distribution. According to these value measures, the skewness values of the variables used in the study are between -.133 -.524 while the kurtosis values are between -.682 and -.770. It was stated by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) that normality values were accepted as a normal distribution in the range of  $\pm 1.5$ , and according to these data, the data collected for the study show normal distribution.

**Table 2 - Participants' Crisis Management Scale Scores by Gender Variable**

Variables	Gender	N	X	SS	.	P
Early Warning Signal Collection	Male	375	3.6403	.53515	.250	.803
	Female	193	3.6287	.50317		
Preparation and Prevention	Male	375	2.3443	.67274	-1.042	.298
	Female	193	2.4057	.65114		
Moment of Crisis	Male	375	2.6462	.74368	-1.759	.079
	Female	193	2.7634	.76820		
Preventing the Spread	Male	375	3.9467	.71326	-2.159	<b>.023 *</b>

of Damage	Female	193	4.0760	.59683	1.025	.306
	Male	375	2.5942	.57310		
Repair and Recovery	Female	193	2.5415	.59610	-.849	.396
	Male	375	3.4703	.60101		
Learning	Female	193	3.5142	.54795		

\*p<0.05

Source: Prepared by the authors

When the table is examined, there is no significant difference between the gender differences of the managers and the sub-dimensions of the crisis management scale, early warning signal collection  $T_{(566)}=.803$ ,  $p>0.05$ , preparation and prevention  $T_{(566)}=.298$ ,  $p>0.05$ , the moment of crisis  $T_{(566)}=.079$ ,  $p>0.05$ , repair and recovery  $T_{(566)}=.306$ ,  $p>0.05$ , learning  $T_{(566)}=.396$ ,  $p>0.05$ , while a significant difference was found in the dimension of preventing the spread of damage. When we look at the average values, we can say that the difference is positive in favor of women, both of them have a positive average score in the evaluation score range, but statistically, women get a significantly higher score than men in the dimension of preventing the spread of damage in crisis management. Female managers are more successful than male managers in preventing the spread of damage in crisis management.

**Table 3 - Crisis Management Scale Scores by the Variable of the Participants' Years of Professional Experience**

Crisis Management Scale	Years of Experience	N	X	SS	F	P	Difference
Early Warning Signal Collection	Less than 5	163	3.636	.532	4.132	<b>.003*</b>	2-3
	5-10 years	253	3.556	.502			
	11-15 years	74	3.794	.439			
	16-20 years	33	3.771	.568			
	Over 20	45	3.728	.628			
Preparation and Prevention	Less than 5	163	2.422	.627	.553	.697	-
	5-10 years	253	2.351	.643			
	11-15 years	74	2.293	.712			
	16-20 years	33	2.369	.733			
	Over 20	45	2.348	.792			
Moment of Crisis	Less than 5	163	2.799	.690	1.922	.105	-
	5-10 years	253	2.682	.738			
	11-15 years	74	2.567	.861			
	16-20 years	33	2.515	.854			
	Over 20	45	2.614	.758			
Preventing the Spread of Damage	Less than 5	163	3.977	.625	4.309	<b>.002*</b>	2-3 2-5
	5-10 years	253	3.889	.766			
	11-15 years	74	4.175	.527			
	16-20 years	33	4.124	.505			
	Over 20	45	4.202	.547			
Repair and Recovery	Less than 5	163	2.595	.571			
	5-10 years	253	2.590	.565			



	11-15 years	74	2.608	.681	1.314	.264	-
	16-20 years	33	2.560	.609			
	Over 20	45	2.388	.484			
	Less than 5	163	3.434	.643			
Learning	5-10 years	253	3.453	.531	1.890	.111	-
	11-15 years	74	3.584	.560			
	16-20 years	33	3.636	.574			
	Over 20	45	3.577	.64913			

\*p&lt;0.05

Source: Prepared by the authors

When the table is examined, while there was no significant difference between the managers' years of professional experience and from sub-dimensions of crisis management scale scores, preparation and prevention  $F_{(4.563)}=.553$ , moment of crisis  $F_{(4.563)}=1.922$ , repair and recovery  $F_{(4.563)}=1.314$ , learning  $F_{(4.563)}=1.890$ , a significant difference was detected in the sub-dimension of early warning signal collection  $F_{(4.563)}=4.132$  and preventing the spread of damage  $F_{(4.563)}=4.309$ , ( $p<.05$ ).

In the Post-HocTukey test, which is one of the sub-tests made to determine between which groups the difference is, it is seen that the difference in both sub-dimensions is in the age groups against the 5-10 year group. It was determined that the scores of the 11-15 year group in the early warning system collection dimension were significantly higher than the scores of the 5-10 year group, and the scores of the 20 and over year group in the dimension of preventing the spread of damage were significantly higher than the scores of the 5-10 year group.

**Table 4 - Crisis Management Scale Scores of Participants by Education Variable**

Crisis Management Scale	Educational Attainment	N	X	SS	F	P	Difference
Early Warning Signal Collection	High School	50	3.384	.496	6.205	<b>.000*</b>	1-3
	Associate Degree	37	3.666	.655			1-4
	Undergraduate Degree	367	3.629	.513			
	Postgraduate Degree	114	3.760	.484			
Preparation and Prevention	High School	50	2.510	.523	2.285	.078	-
	Associate Degree	37	2.464	.631			
	Undergraduate Degree	367	2.371	.656			
	Postgraduate Degree	114	2.247	.743			
Moment of Crisis	High School	50	2.940	.578	4.496	<b>.004*</b>	1-4
	Associate Degree	37	2.792	.730			



	Undergraduate Degree	367	2.697	.751			
	Postgraduate Degree	114	2.502	.799			
Preventing the Spread of Damage	High School	50	3.673	.576			
	Associate Degree	37	3.930	.843	7.420	<b>.000*</b>	1-3 1-4
	Undergraduate Degree	367	3.977	.674			
	Postgraduate Degree	114	4.193	.614			
	High School	50	2.603	.460			
Repair and Recovery	Associate Degree	37	2.545	.474	4.234	<b>.006*</b>	3-4
	Undergraduate Degree	367	2.627	.601			
	Postgraduate Degree	114	2.409	.566			
	High School	50	3.315	.506			
Learning	Associate Degree	37	3.554	.661	3.697	<b>.012*</b>	1-4
	Undergraduate Degree	367	3.461	.583			
	Postgraduate Degree	114	3.614	.567			
	High School	50	3.315	.506			

\*p<0.05

Source: Prepared by the authors

When the table is examined, while there was no significant difference between the education levels of the managers and one of the sub-dimensions of the scores of the crisis management scale, preparation and prevention  $F_{(3,564)}=2.285$ , a significant difference was found in its sub-dimensions early warning signal collection  $F_{(3,564)}=6.205$ , moment of crisis  $F_{(3,564)}=4.496$ , preventing the spread of damage  $F_{(3,564)}=7.420$ , repair and recovery  $F_{(3,564)}=4.234$ , learning  $F_{(3,564)}=3.697$  ( $p<.05$ ).

In the Post-HocTukey test, which is one of the subtests conducted to determine between which groups the difference is, in the early warning signal collection dimension, high school graduates have significantly lower scores than undergraduate and graduate graduates, in the crisis moment dimension, postgraduate graduates have significantly lower scores than high school graduates, in the dimension of preventing the spread of damage, high school graduates have significantly lower scores than undergraduate and postgraduate graduates, in the repair and recovery sub-dimension, postgraduate graduates have significantly lower scores than undergraduate graduates, and in the learning sub-dimension, high school graduates have significantly lower scores than postgraduates.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Crisis management means to determine the factors causing the crisis calmly, to take corrective measures that will not cause problems in the long term, to make a flexible emergency plan against a possible crisis in the future (AKDEMİR, 1997). In their study, Şirin, Bilir, Eryılmaz and E.Şirin (2020) suggested the development of long-term sports policies in order to ensure that sports branches, athletes and sports stakeholders take part in a sustainable way in the future, according to the new world order caused by the Covid-19 epidemic.

As a result of the research, when we look at the average values according to the gender variable, we can say that the difference is positive in favor of women, both of them have a positive average scores in the evaluation score range, but statistically, women get a significantly higher score than men in the dimension of preventing the spread of damage in crisis management. Female managers are more successful than male managers in preventing the spread of damage in crisis management. According to the gender variable, sufficient resources could not be reached in the field search. When we look at Crisis Management by Year of Experience Variable, it can be said that there is an increase in skill level as seniority and age increase, and as seniority and age decrease, avoidant decisions can be seen with the thought of being uneasy or avoiding responsibility (AKTAŞ, 2014). Sayin (2008) compared the scores obtained from the sub-scale of 'learning and preventing the spread of damage' in terms of school administrators' age and managerial seniority variables, and it was found that there were statistically significant differences found to be more effective in their work.

According to the education variable by Dinçer (2013), he concluded in his research that very few of the sports managers are graduates of the field. As a result of their studies, Adamson and Peacock (2007) emphasized the effect of education in preparing for crises and suggested that education should be emphasized. Sanders (2008) found in his study that decision-making styles did not differ significantly according to the education level of individuals. In Merey (2010)'s research, the education variable and self-confidence differ significantly between countries. As a result of the research it has been seen that the early warning signal collection, prevention of damage, learning are positive, preparation and prevention, repair and recovery are negative, crisis moment is moderate. According to the data collected to determine the attitudes of managers before, during and after the crisis, it can be said that managers are insufficient in the departments of preparation and prevention, repair and recovery.

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### How to reference this article

YIĞIT, Ş. Managerial and educational approaches of sports managers to crisis situations in the Covid-19 pandemic. **Revista online de Política e Gestão Educacional**, Araraquara, v. 26, n. esp. 1, e022028, Mar. 2022. e-ISSN: 1519-9029. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22633/rpge.v26iesp.1.16504>

**Submitted:** 03/11/2021

**Required revisions:** 30/12/2021

**Approved:** 18/02/2022

**Published:** 31/03/2022