

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Teachers' Views on Organizational Trust and Administrators' Crisis Management

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### Abstract

This study investigated teachers' perceptions of school principals' crisis management skills and organizational trust, examined the relationship between these perceptions, and explored differences according to personal variables. Utilizing a relational survey model, the research was conducted with 228 teachers from primary and secondary schools in Bolu during the 2023–2024 academic year. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Mann–Whitney U, Kruskal–Wallis, and Spearman's Rho correlation tests. Findings indicated that teachers were "undecided" regarding principals' crisis management skills in the pre-crisis and during-crisis stages, but "agreed" with statements about post-crisis practices. Organizational trust was rated at the "agree" level overall and across sub-dimensions: trust in colleagues, trust in administrators, and trust in the institution. Analysis of personal variables revealed that only the teaching field significantly influenced views on crisis management during the crisis phase, while gender significantly affected trust in administrators. Correlation analysis showed a moderately to strongly positive and significant relationship between teachers' organizational trust and principals' crisis management skills at both the overall scale and sub-dimension levels. The findings suggest that strengthening crisis management practices may enhance organizational trust in educational settings

**Keywords:** *Crisis management, organizational trust, teacher*

## Introduction

The concept and process of crisis—used in response to extraordinary and unexpected situations involving adverse events—represent a significant challenge that can disrupt both individuals and organizations, especially when necessary, precautions are not taken, and effective management is lacking. In today's increasingly complex and dynamic world, crises can severely affect operational continuity. When these organizations are educational institutions, crises may disrupt daily activities in the short term and hinder the achievement of long-term goals. As open systems, educational institutions differ from other organizations primarily in their human-centered nature and their direct or indirect, constant interaction with societal processes, which makes them more vulnerable to the impact of crises. This indicates that the consequences of a crisis extend beyond the institution itself and can also significantly affect the broader social context. In managing crises in educational settings, building trust among staff plays a critical role, contributing positively to many aspects such as communication, organizational resilience, morale, and overall dynamism. In this regard, the present study addressed and investigated the issues of crisis management and organizational trust in schools.

### Crisis and Crisis Management in Schools

The concept of crisis—defined as “a period of difficulty, distress, or turmoil experienced within a society or organization, either within a country or across nations” (TDK, 2025)—represents one of the major threats that can emerge across a wide range of fields, including management, psychology, sociology, economics, politics, and education. Although it is challenging to predict the possible scenarios and difficulties posed by crises, which often occur unexpectedly and across broad domains (Bozkurt, 1998), they typically emerge with certain warning signs. Crises not only bring difficulties into every aspect of social life but also threaten the existence of organizations and may lead to emotional problems among employees (Corps, 1997). Given the consequences of crises that occur within organizational work environments, they must be treated with utmost seriousness by both administrators and staff. This necessitates that organizational leaders possess a high level of foresight to anticipate and manage potential crises when planning organizational processes, and that they have the competence to develop rational solutions during times of crisis.

Crisis management encompasses the full range of strategies, procedures, and methods aimed at predicting potential chaos situations in advance and taking preventive measures to avoid their emergence, or at acting deliberately during a crisis to ensure the organization weathers it with minimal damage (Gezer, 2020). It is therefore a dynamic management process that involves not only responding to a crisis once it occurs, but also planning what needs to be done before and after the crisis. This process is typically divided into three stages: pre-crisis, crisis period, and post-crisis (Aydın & Örnek, 2011; Çalışkan, 2020). Crisis situations—often marked by stress, chaos, conflict, bullying, and threats—require a specialized form of management rather than routine administrative approaches (Bozkurt, 1998). As a distinct type of management, crisis management involves dealing with events that may endanger the existence of an organization. Its primary goals include being prepared for potential crises, resolving them in the shortest time possible with the least cost and maximum benefit, and navigating a complex and challenging process composed of multiple stages. It also involves critical decision-making and shares characteristics with strategic management principles (Can, Azizoğlu & Aydın, 2011; Dinçer, 2019). Effective crisis management depends on planning preventive actions, organizing what must be done during and after the crisis, establishing crisis management teams to ensure a collaborative approach, and analyzing the effects of the crisis to guide future actions scientifically (Filiz, 2007). These steps highlight that crisis management requires critical competencies and an effective administrative process for both organizations and their employees.

In schools—the most common form of educational institutions—crisis refers to various emergency situations that threaten the safety or normal functioning of students, teachers, staff, and the overall operation of the school (Aksoy & Aksoy, 2003). Such situations may include incidents of school violence, armed attacks, threats, and bomb alerts; natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and fires; health crises such as influenza outbreaks or pandemics; teacher strikes, administrative resignations, and conflicts among staff; suicide attempts, student deaths, allegations of abuse or mistreatment; as well as cyber threats,

substance abuse, and gang activity. These events not only create crisis situations within schools but can also disrupt operations, endanger lives, and negatively impact the educational process (Sayıl, 2000; Dündar, Gülderen, Demir, Bahar, Mahum, 2025; Yılmaz, 2025). Given their potential to adversely affect all educational stakeholders—especially students—such crises underscore the critical importance of effective crisis management in schools.

In schools—which encompass every segment of society and bring together the largest portion of the population—crises have a high potential to disrupt the educational process and even lead to its suspension. To minimize the impact of such crises, it is essential to take preventive measures and implement an effective crisis management approach. Schools must anticipate potential crisis situations and define the necessary actions for the pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis stages, as well as the strategies and procedures to follow. Establishing crisis intervention teams is also vital for effective crisis management. Strategies should be developed in advance, and pathways clearly identified to enhance preparedness for future crises. To this end, schools should monitor current and potential global and societal issues and be prepared for possible crisis scenarios with well-equipped individuals. Timely and appropriate intervention by a qualified team can help schools build resilience against crises (Aksoy & Aksoy, 2003). However, research indicates that crisis management is not yet fully implemented in schools, and school administrators often lack adequate crisis management skills (Sayın, 2008). The recent pandemic and the February 6 Kahramanmaraş earthquake in Türkiye have tragically underscored the vital importance of crisis management in educational institutions. Schools must learn from these experiences, and administrators should be equipped to lead during such events by preparing pre- and post-crisis plans and ensuring crisis teams are properly trained. The competence of school leaders is especially critical; in moments of sudden crisis, it is the administrators who must choose and apply the right strategies to mitigate the negative impacts, prevent the spread of misinformation (Özdemir & Uçar, 2020), and minimize harm through timely and appropriate measures. In some cases, they may even be able to turn a crisis into an opportunity, guide their staff effectively, and derive long-term benefits from the situation.

### **Trust and Organizational Trust in Schools**

Trust is often perceived as a concept that is easy to understand, yet it proves to be quite difficult to define precisely (Taylor, 1989). In the relevant literature, various definitions of trust exist: it is described as an individual's belief in the truthfulness of another's words, actions, and decisions (McAllister, 1995); as a willingness to be vulnerable to another party (Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis, 2007); and as a mutual relationship characterized by confidence, competence, benevolence, reliability, honesty, and openness (Moran & Hoy, 2000). Although broad in scope, the concept of trust has gained significance across multiple disciplines, including sociology, psychology, politics, economics, and education. Trust is not only a personal attribute but also a defining characteristic for organizations. Interpersonal trust within an organization manifests as organizational trust, which goes beyond individual relationships to reflect confidence in the institution itself (Doney & Cannon, 1997). Organizational trust refers to the trust employees have in one another, in their leaders, and in the organization as a whole (Büte, 2011). It is a multifaceted concept closely linked to various organizational processes such as justice, commitment, organizational citizenship, identification, support, happiness, and job satisfaction (Altaş, 2021; Yorulmaz, Püsküllüoğlu, Çolak, & Atıncık, 2021; Çağan & Demirtaş, 2023; Demirtaş & Bal, 2023). In a trustworthy environment, employees are less affected by potential adversities and are more likely to focus on organizational goals and perform their duties with dedication (Utomo et al., 2023). Trust fosters harmonious and effective communication, reduces conflicts, enhances individual performance, and contributes to a productive work environment (Kıyılıoğlu & Özgenel, 2020). In short, an organization's ability to achieve its goals and sustain its development largely depends on a workforce grounded in mutual trust (Yıldız, 2013). Organizational trust is closely tied not only to the resources and opportunities provided to employees but also to the honesty of the leader, a democratic organizational structure, and a positive work climate. It plays a crucial role in strengthening both horizontal and vertical relationships within the institution (Mishra & Morrissey, 2000). The way crises and work-related challenges are handled, the attitudes of administrators during such periods, and the honest and reliable environment they foster all contribute positively to building trust in the organization.

Creating an atmosphere of trust in schools—one of the most critical institutions in society—is essential for ensuring effective operations, enhancing performance, and achieving the intended outcomes. Organizational trust in schools refers to the development and sustainability of a sense of trust among all educational stakeholders within the school environment. Ensuring trust between school leadership, teachers, students, and other staff significantly influences the quality of interactions and relationships and thus plays a vital role in both improving the quality of education and fostering a more positive and supportive school climate. Trust among employees contributes to the emergence of positive emotional states and, by enhancing motivation, can lead to favorable outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and improved performance. Particularly in the school setting, the sense of trust that positively affects teacher performance also serves as a key driver in enabling schools to reach their educational goals.

One of the key factors that critically influences the development of organizational trust in schools is the leadership style adopted by school administrators. A democratic, fair, equitable, and objective approach to leadership plays a vital role in fostering teachers' trust in their schools (Kozan, Çoban, & Yalçın, 2025). When school leaders maintain an equal distance from all staff members, demonstrate supportive behavior, ensure fair distribution of duties, and share authority and responsibilities in a democratic manner, it significantly contributes to building trust among teachers toward the school. Moreover, administrators who exhibit honesty, act transparently, and maintain neutrality in decision-making further reinforce the development of the desired sense of trust (Kupersmith, 1983). Such a climate of trust fosters collaboration and solidarity among teachers and contributes to the establishment of effective communication. This mutual trust among staff also influences students, encouraging respect and understanding toward their teachers, which in turn enhances overall performance and supports the creation of a positive and supportive learning environment (Lenz, 2008). All these characteristics become even more crucial in schools during periods of crisis or unexpected disruptions beyond normal daily operations.

### **The Relationship between Crisis Management and Organizational Trust in Schools**

The ability of educational institutions to effectively respond to unexpected events is a key determinant of their organizational resilience and sustainability. Crisis management, in this context, refers to the structured processes through which schools anticipate, mitigate, respond to, and recover from critical incidents such as natural disasters, public health emergencies, technological breakdowns, or violent events. These events often create significant operational, emotional, and educational disruptions within schools. Therefore, managing crises effectively requires both strategic planning and the active participation of all stakeholders, particularly teachers, who are central to the school's social and operational framework (Coombs, 2015).

In educational settings, crisis management goes beyond procedural responses. It involves cultivating a collaborative and supportive institutional culture where communication is transparent, responsibilities are clearly defined, and individuals feel empowered to act. Teachers' roles are especially significant, as they are responsible not only for the continuity of instruction but also for maintaining emotional safety and a sense of normalcy for students during and after crises (Allen et al., 2019). Teachers who trust their institutions, feel emotionally secure, and experience high levels of job satisfaction are more likely to engage proactively in crisis response efforts and demonstrate leadership in mitigating adverse effects (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Organizational trust plays a crucial mediating role in the effectiveness of school crisis management. Trust, in this context, can be defined as the belief among school personnel that their colleagues and administrators are reliable, competent, honest, and benevolent (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). It enables smoother communication, reduces uncertainty, and facilitates collective decision-making, all of which are essential during high-stress periods. Furthermore, high-trust environments support psychological safety, enabling teachers to express concerns, share knowledge, and collaborate in developing solutions without fear of reprisal (Edmondson, 2004).

Studies have shown that trust within schools not only enhances day-to-day functioning but also improves resilience in times of crisis. When teachers perceive their leadership as trustworthy and supportive, they are more likely to remain committed to their professional roles and contribute constructively to the school's recovery efforts (Louis, 2007). This is especially vital in environments where schools serve as both educational and emotional anchors for students and communities. For instance, research indicates that teacher morale is closely tied to the perceived fairness and transparency of school leadership, both of which are foundational to organizational trust (Özdemir, 2000).

Additionally, the emotional dimension of crisis response cannot be overlooked. Teachers who feel psychologically supported are better able to provide socio-emotional support to students, reduce anxiety, and help rebuild the learning environment. Emotions such as trust, solidarity, and a sense of belonging contribute to teacher efficacy and collaborative engagement, which are indispensable during recovery phases (Hargreaves, 2001). School administrators, therefore, play a critical role in both designing crisis management protocols and fostering a climate of relational trust that encourages participation and mutual support.

In conclusion, crisis management in schools is not solely a matter of strategic planning or administrative preparedness. Its effectiveness is significantly shaped by the underlying relational dynamics within the school, particularly the levels of organizational trust. When trust is present, teachers are more resilient, responsive, and willing to invest in the collective well-being of the school community. Educational leaders must therefore integrate trust-building into both their daily practices and their long-term crisis response strategies. Such integration enhances institutional capacity to manage disruptions, ensures the psychological safety of all stakeholders, and supports the long-term sustainability of the educational mission.

In addition to these explanations, the relationship between crisis management and organizational trust can be further understood through a multi-theoretical perspective. Crises create environments characterized by uncertainty, perceived risk, and emotional strain, which increase employees' reliance on organizational leaders (Weick, 1988). In such contexts, managerial actions function as critical signals that shape employees' interpretations of organizational intentions and reliability. According to sensemaking theory, employees actively interpret managerial responses during crises to assess whether the organization is trustworthy and capable of protecting their interests (Maitlis & Sonenshein, 2010).

Moreover, organizational justice theory suggests that fair procedures, transparent communication, and consistent decision-making during crises strengthen trust perceptions by reinforcing beliefs about managerial integrity and benevolence (Colquitt et al., 2001). When school administrators manage crises in a participatory and equitable manner, teachers are more likely to perceive the organization as reliable and supportive, which enhances organizational trust. Conversely, perceived injustice or lack of transparency in crisis responses may lead to distrust and weakened organizational cohesion.

From an educational management perspective, crisis situations intensify the relational dimension of leadership, making trust not only an outcome but also a prerequisite for effective crisis management. As noted by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000), trust in school settings is closely associated with leadership behaviors that emphasize openness, competence, and concern for stakeholders. Therefore, effective crisis management practices contribute to organizational trust by reinforcing teachers' confidence in school leadership and institutional stability.

## **Purpose of the Study**

This study mainly aimed to examine the relationship between organizational trust levels and school principals' crisis management skills based on the views of teachers working in schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). Additionally, the study sought to investigate whether there were significant differences in teachers' views on crisis management and organizational trust behaviors based on personal variables. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

- 1- What is the level of teachers' views on: a) Principals' crisis management skills? b) Organizational trust?
- 2- Do teachers' views on principals' crisis management and organizational trust differ significantly based on personal variables such as gender, years of experience, school level, and branch?
- 3- Is there a significant relationship between teachers' views on principals' crisis management and organizational trust?

## Methodology

### Research Model

In this study, a relational survey model was used to examine the relationship between teachers' views on principals' crisis management and organizational trust.

### Study Population

The study population consisted of 228 teachers working in public schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Bolu during the 2023–2024 academic year. Table 1 presents information about the participating teachers.

**Table 1.** *Personal information of the participant teachers*

	Variables	f	%
<b>Gender</b>	Woman	165	72,4
	Male	63	27,6
<b>Professional Seniority</b>	1-10 years	90	39,4
	11-20 years	84	36,9
	21years or more	54	23,7
<b>School Level</b>	Basic education	156	68,4
	Secondary education	72	31,6
<b>Branch</b>	Verbal	24	1,5
	Quantitative	81	35,5
	Talent	27	11,8
	Classroom Teacher	96	42,1
<b>Total</b>		228	100,0

According to Table 1, out of the 228 participating teachers, 165 were female and 63 were male; 156 worked in primary/basic education, while 72 were employed at the secondary education level. In terms of professional experience, 90 teachers had 1–10 years of experience, 84 had 11–20 years, and 54 had 21 years or more. Regarding their branch, 24 taught verbal (language and social sciences) and 81 taught quantitative fields (mathematics and sciences), 27 were in skill-based subjects (such as arts or physical education), and 96 were classroom teachers.

### Data Collection Tools and Data Collection

The Personal Information Form, the Crisis Management Scale, and the Organizational Trust Scale were used in this study as data collection tools. After obtaining the necessary permissions for the research, data were collected from teachers working in primary and secondary education through a digital Google Form, on a voluntary basis, between March and May 2023. The Personal Information Form included

questions about participants' gender, professional seniority, school level, and subject area, in order to determine their demographic characteristics.

The Crisis Management Scale, developed by Çalışkan (2020), consists of three dimensions—pre-crisis, crisis process, and post-crisis activities—and a total of 23 items, designed to identify crisis management practices. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient indicating internal consistency of the scale was reported as .95 for pre-crisis, .98 for crisis process, and .97 for post-crisis activities, with an overall reliability of .97 for educational institutions. In the present study, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated as .96, .97, and .98 for the sub-dimensions, and .95 for the overall scale.

The Organizational Trust Scale, developed by Çalışkan (2021), is designed to identify and measure organizational trust. It consists of three sub-dimensions—trust in colleagues, trust in administrators, and trust in the institution—with a total of 17 items. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, indicating internal consistency, was reported for educational institutions as .92 for trust in colleagues, .95 for trust in administrators, and .94 for trust in the institution, with an overall reliability of .93. In the present study, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated as .96, .93, and .93 for the sub-dimensions, and .90 for the overall scale.

Both scales use a 5-point Likert-type format, with response options ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." This study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, following the application (Protocol No. 2024/239) and the decision made at the meeting dated July 4, 2024 (Meeting No. 2024/06).

## Data Analysis

The data collected in the study were analyzed using the SPSS software package. To determine the appropriate analyses, data distribution was examined through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and skewness-kurtosis coefficients. As a result of these tests, it was found that the data did not show normal distribution, and therefore, non-parametric tests were used in the analyses ( $p < .05$ ). Accordingly, mean and standard deviation values were calculated for teachers' opinions, and Spearman's Rho correlation analysis was conducted to determine significant relationships between teachers' views. Considering the sub-problems related to personal variables, Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests were applied. The significance level for the data analysis was set at .05. The interpretation of the scores on the scale was as follows: "1.00–1.79 = Strongly Disagree; 1.80–2.59 = Disagree; 2.60–3.39 = Neutral; 3.40–4.19 = Agree; 4.20–5.00 = Strongly Agree."

## Findings

### Findings Regarding Administrators' Crisis Management and Organizational Trust

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for teachers' views on administrators' crisis management and organizational trust

Scale	Sub Dimension	n	$\bar{X}$	Ss
Crisis Management Scale	Pre-Crisis Activities	228	3,31	.923
	Crisis Process Activities	228	3.22	.957
	Post-Crisis Activities	228	3.40	.919

	Total	228	3,29	.905
<b>Organizational Trust Scale</b>	Trust in the Colleagues	228	3,47	.807
	Trust in the Administrator	228	3,40	1,026
	Trust in the Organization	228	3,54	.991
	Total	228	3,47	.846

When examining the teacher's views in Table 2, it can be observed that the average views regarding administrators' crisis management are at the "undecided" level for the total scale ( $\bar{X} = 3,29$ ), pre-crisis activities ( $\bar{X} = 3,31$ ), and crisis-process activities ( $\bar{X} = 3,22$ ), while for post-crisis activities, it reaches the "agree" level ( $\bar{X} = 3,40$ ). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that teachers' awareness of school administrators' crisis management is at an average level only for post-crisis activities. In contrast, they remain undecided regarding the actions taken before and during the crisis. This may stem from the fact that teachers are more aware of the outcomes of the crisis, which occur after it, than of the actions taken before and during the crisis. This is because the most impactful and noticeable aspect of the crisis is its consequences and the effects it creates. The Covid-19 pandemic and the Kahramanmaraş earthquake serve as examples. Prior to these crisis situations, the teams that were established or actions taken were perceived by most teachers as routine tasks, and they were largely unaware of these processes. However, the results of the crisis affected not only the school staff but also the entire community. The competencies that administrators possess in crisis management are also crucial in this process. Being prepared for potential crises, providing reassurance to employees, managing the process transparently, taking calculated risks when necessary, and establishing an effective communication network are all vital to minimizing damage during the crisis. This process requires continuous monitoring and tracking from start to finish. However, many teachers believe that merely surviving the crisis constitutes crisis management, and they have limited knowledge in this area. In fact, a study by Sayın (2008) on secondary school administrators revealed that their knowledge of crisis management was quite low. Similarly, Maya (2014) found that public elementary school administrators had an average level of crisis management skills, which supports this finding. In contrast, Yılmaz and Yıldırım (2020) stated that administrators' management skills were high in pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis stages, while Demir and İra (2024) found that, according to teachers, school administrators' crisis management skills were rated as "agree." The discrepancies in these findings may be due to the specific crises experienced and their outcomes. The type, size, timing, duration, and the administrators' prior experience with crises all play a role in shaping the process and impacting the institution and its personnel. For example, the fact that the studies conducted after the Covid-19 pandemic and the Kahramanmaraş earthquake were done close to the crisis period and that the actions taken afterward were much more visible, directly affecting schools and staff, could explain the varying results.

When examining teachers' views on organizational trust, it was found that both the overall scale ( $\bar{X} = 3,40$ ) and the sub-dimensions—trust in colleagues ( $\bar{X} = 3,47$ ), trust in the administrator ( $\bar{X} = 3,40$ ), and trust in the institution ( $\bar{X} = 3,54$ ), are at the "agree" level. Based on these findings, it can be argued that teachers have a positive view of organizational trust, and that teachers trust their administrators, their institutions, and their colleagues. In the relevant literature, Karakuş and Doğan (2021) and Özer and Çağlayan (2016) reported that teachers generally perceive organizational trust at a high level; Çınar, İbiş, and Erdoğan (2022) found it to be at an average level; while Yücel, Kaya, Şahin, Kaya, Şahin, and Mol (2024) indicated that general trust and trust in administrators were high, trust in the institution was moderate, and trust in colleagues was very high. One of the most important factors affecting trust in an organizational environment is organizational culture (Demircan & Ceylan, 2003). Culture is a phenomenon that develops over time, influenced by and influencing everything that happens within the institution. The variables shaping culture, such as the competence of the administrator, open and transparent communication reaching all employees, the timely and effective fulfillment of duties and responsibilities, and the supportive and helpful attitudes of employees toward one another, are important for establishing trust. The establishment of a trust environment is crucial for the achievement of schools' goals, fostering collaboration and teamwork, and ensuring a peaceful atmosphere. Additionally, it will facilitate overcoming problems and preventing conflicts. In this context, the fact that teachers' levels of trust in administrators, colleagues, and institutions

are above average indicates that schools, while not perfect, possess positive characteristics in the process of creating a trust-based environment.

### Teachers' Perceptions of Administrators' Crisis Management and Organizational Trust Levels According to Personal Variables

#### According to gender

Table 3. Mann-Whitney U test results on teachers' views of administrators' crisis management and organizational trust levels according to gender

Scale	Sub Dimensions	Gender	n	Mean Rank	Rank Sum	U	p
<b>Crisis Management Scale</b>	Pre-crisis Activities	Female	165	111,28	18361,50	4666,500	.232
		Male	63	122,93	7744,50		
	Crisis Process Activitie	Female	165	115,13	18996,00	5094,000	.816
		Female	63	112,86	7110,00		
	Post-crisis Activities	Male	165	115,13	18996,00	4914,000	.519
		Female	63	112,86	7110,00		
	Total	Female	165	116,22	19176,00	5080,500	.793
		Male	63	110,00	6930,00		
<b>Organizational Trust Scale</b>	Trust in the Colleagues	Female	165	112,78	18609,00	4914,000	.522
		Female	63	119,00	7497,00		
	Trust in the Administrator	Male	165	109,15	18010,50	4315,500	.047*
		Female	63	128,50	8095,50		
	Trust in the Organization	Female	165	110,55	18240,00	4545,000	.141
		Male	63	124,86	7866,00		
	Total	Female	165	110,55	18127,50	4432,500	.068
		Female	63	124,86	7978,50		

\*p>.05

In Table 3, when examining teachers' views on administrators' crisis management according to gender, it was found that there was no significant difference in both the total scale score (U=5080,500, p=.793) and in the sub-dimensions: pre-crisis (U=4666,500, p=.232), crisis process (U=5094,000, p=.519) and post-crisis activities (U=4914,000, p=.519). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the gender variable does not significantly affect teachers' views on administrators' crisis management, and the views of male and female teachers are similar. In the relevant literature, Kaya (2025), Sepetçi (2021), Yılmaz and Yıldırım (2020), and Özsüer (2019) also concluded in their studies that school administrators' crisis management did not differ according to gender. The findings suggest that teachers, regardless of gender, perceive administrative crisis processes in a similar way. This situation could be due to the inclusive impact of crisis management practices in schools, which affect all teachers equally, regardless of gender. Additionally, it might also stem from school administrators' gender-neutral, equal, and consistent approach to crisis management, free from discrimination.

In the examination of teachers' views on organizational trust according to gender, no significant differences were found in the total scale (U=4432,500, p=.068), trust in the colleagues (U=4914,000, p=.522), and trust in the organization (U=4545,000, p=.141). However, a significant difference was found in trust in the administrator (U=4315,500, p=.047). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the gender variable does not have a significant effect on the total scale, trust in the colleagues, and trust in the organization, and that the views of male and female teachers are similar. However, there is a difference in views regarding trust in the administrator. In the dimension where a significant difference was found, the average scores of male teachers were higher than those of female teachers. In other words, male teachers have a higher level of

trust in administrators compared to female teachers. While the levels of trust in colleagues and the institution are similar between men and women, the significant difference in trust in the administrator is noteworthy. The similar views on colleagues and the institution can be considered an important finding indicating gender equality and shared values in the schoolworking environment. On the other hand, the fact that male teachers have more trust in administrators may be due to the predominance of male administrators in schools, allowing male teachers to more easily reach out to and engage with male administrators in communication and interaction. This may also be influenced by societal gender norms. Indeed, in Turkish society, it is a striking and widespread feature for men to assume leadership and managerial roles, not only in educational institutions but also in other public institutions. The findings by Çokluk Bökeoğlu and Yılmaz (2008), Kıyılıoğlu and Özgenel (2020), and Yücesoy et al. (2023) indicate that there was no significant difference in teachers' overall perceptions of organizational trust according to gender, which aligns with the results of this study.

#### According to professional seniority

**Table 4.** Teachers' views on administrators' crisis management and organizational trust according to professional seniority: kruskal-wallis test results

Scale	Sub Dimensions	Pprofessional seniority	N	Mean Rank	Sd	$\chi^2$	p	Significant Difference
Crisis Management Scale	Pre-Crisis Activities	1-10 years	90	116,22	,923	1,835	,399	-
		11-20 years	84	107,37				
		21 years or more	54	121,91				
	Process Activities	1-10 years	90	115,53	,757	1,178	,555	-
		11-20 years	84	108,64				
		21 years or more	54	120,37				
	Post-Crisis Activities	1-10 years	90	116,80	,919	1,414	,493	-
		11-20 years	84	107,95				
		21 years or more	54	119,82				
	Total	1-10 years	90	115,87	,905	1,455	,483	-
		11-20 years	84	108,05				
		21 years or more	54	121,05				
Organizational Trust Scale	Trust in the Colleagues	1-10 years	90	113,70	,807	,491	,782	-
		11-20 years	84	110,81				
		21 years or more	54	118,73				
	Trust in the Administrator	1-10 years	90	118,55	1,026	1,283	,527	-
		11-20 years	84	108,08				
		21 years or more	54	116,84				
	Trust in the Organization	1-10 years	90	120,98	,991	2,349	,527	-
		11-20 years	84	106,32				
		21 years or more	54	116,70				
	Total	1-10 years	90	118,26	,736	1,569	,456	-
		11-20 years	84	107,45				
		21 years or more	54	107,45				

\*p<.05

When teachers' views on administrators' crisis management were analyzed according to professional seniority in Table 4, no significant differences were found in the total scale [ $\chi^2 = 1,455, p = ,483, p > .05$ ] or in the sub-dimensions of pre-crisis [ $\chi^2 = 1,835, p = ,399, p > .05$ ], crisis process [ $\chi^2 = 1,178, p = ,555, p > .05$ ] and post-crisis activities [ $\chi^2 = 1,455, p = ,483, p > .05$ ]. The results suggest that teachers' views on crisis management are

similar across different professional seniority levels. This finding may be attributed to the standardization of crisis management processes in schools, where all teachers are exposed to similar practices. Additionally, crisis management in schools is generally shaped by the school administration and institutional practices, resulting in similar experiences for all teachers. In fact, similar training and guidelines for teachers regarding crisis management are provided in schools, along with support mechanisms. This may lead teachers, regardless of their seniority, to align on a common ground. In the relevant literature, Kaya (2025) and Yılmaz and Yıldırım (2020) found that professional seniority only affected activities during the crisis, while Özsüer (2019) identified significant differences in the total scale and all sub-dimensions. The differences in results could stem from variations in the sample populations and the professional experience of the administrators in the schools involved in the studies. Administrators' experience and their ability to manage and control the crisis may play a significant role in shaping these outcomes.

When teachers' views on organizational trust were examined according to professional seniority, no significant differences were found in the total scale [ $\chi^2 = 1,569, p = ,456, p > .05$ ] or in the sub-dimensions of trust in the colleagues [ $\chi^2 = ,491, p = ,782, p > .05$ ], trust in the administrator [ $\chi^2 = 1,283, p = ,527, p > .05$ ] and trust in the organization [ $\chi^2 = 2,349, p = ,527, p > .05$ ]. Based on the findings, it can be argued that teachers, regardless of their professional seniority, have similar levels of trust in each other, their administrators, and the organization. Considering the necessity of both individual actions and teamwork for achieving the goals of schools, it is a positive finding that the trust levels of newly appointed and experienced teachers are similar. This result indicates that trust in schools develops based on effective communication and interaction among teachers, maintaining a collective school climate alongside individual experiences, and the consistent approach of administrators. In the relevant literature, Kıyılıoğlu and Özgenel (2020), Gürarlan (2021), and Yücesoy et al. (2023) examined teachers' perceptions of organizational trust according to their professional seniority and found no significant differences, supporting the results of this study.

*According to school level*

**Table 5.** Mann-Whitney U Test results on teachers' views of administrators' crisis management and organizational trust according to school level

Scale	Sub Dimensions	School level	N	Mean Rank	Rank Sum	U	p
Crisis Management Scale	Pre-crisis Activities	Basic Education	156	105,00	8505,00	5184,000	,106
		Secondary Education	72	119,73	17601,00		
	Crisis Process Activities	Basic Education	156	112,89	9144,00	5823,000	,784
		Secondary Education	72	115,39	16962,00		
	Post-crisis Activities	Basic Education	156	107,61	8716,50	5395,500	,236
		Secondary Education	72	118,30	17389,50		
Total	Basic Education	156	108,00	8748,00	5427,000	,269	
	Secondary Education	72	118,08	17358,00			
Organizational Trust Scale	Trust in the Colleagues	Basic Education	156	121,50	9841,50	5386,500	,232
		Secondary Education	72	110,64	16264,50		
	Trust in the Administrator	Basic Education	156	112,94	9148,50	5827,500	,791
		Secondary Education	72	115,36	16957,50		
	Trust in the Organization	Basic Education	156	114,61	9283,50	5944,500	,985
		Secondary Education	72	114,44	16822,50		
Total	Basic Education	156	115,44	9351,00	5877,000	,872	
	Secondary Education	72	113,98	16755,00			

\*p < .05

When examining teachers' views on administrators' crisis management according to school level in Table 5, no significant differences were found either in the total scale ( $U=5427,000$ ,  $p=,269$ .) or in the sub-dimensions of pre-crisis ( $U=5184,000$ ,  $p=,106$ ), crisis process ( $U=5823,000$ ,  $p=,784$ ) and post-crisis activities ( $U=5395,500$ ,  $p=,236$ ). The findings suggest that the school level where teachers work does not have a significant impact on their views of administrators' crisis management, indicating that teachers in both primary and secondary education have similar views. This result also reveals that both school administrations adopt similar approaches in crisis situations, the crisis management processes are structured similarly at both levels, and teachers experience similar processes. These findings align with the results of studies by Kaya (2025), Özsüer (2019), and Çiçek Sağlam and Özsezer (2015).

Teachers' views on organizational trust, based on school level, also showed no significant differences in the total scale ( $U=5877,00$ ,  $p=,872$ ), trust in the colleagues ( $U=5386,500$ ,  $p=,232$ ), trust in the administrators ( $U=5827,500$ ,  $p=,791$ ) or trust in the organization ( $U=5944,500$ ,  $p=,985$ ). The findings suggest that teachers' views in both primary and secondary education are similar. This may be due to the similarities in the management, culture, communication styles, and activities of the two types of schools. Relevant literature, such as studies by İcen and Sezgin (2024) and Yücesoy et al. (2023) found no significant difference in organizational trust based on school type, while Kıyılıoğlu and Özgenel (2020) identified a significant difference in trust towards administrators.

#### According to branch

Table 6. Kruskal-Wallis Test results of teachers' views on administrators' crisis management and organizational trust levels according to subject area

Scale	Sub Dimensions	Branch	N	Rank Mean	Sd	$\chi^2$	p	Significant Difference
Crisis Management Scale	Pre-Crisis Activities	Verbal	24	115,16	,923	3,670	,289	-
		Quantitative	81	119,89				
		Talent	27	119,50				
		Classroom Teacher	96	92,50				
	Crisis Process Activities	Verbal	24	114,76	,757	4,870	,183	-
		Quantitative	81	115,33				
		Talent	27	138,75				
		Classroom Teacher	96	94,83				
	Post-Crisis Activities	Verbal	24	120,01	,919	8,693	,034*	Verbal-Quantitative; Talent-Class T.
		Quantitative	81	119,61				
		Talent	27	111,50				
		Classroom Teacher	96	80,33				
Total	Verbal	24	114,46	,905	4,707	,195	-	
	Quantitative	81	119,39					
	Talent	27	128,25					
	Classroom Teacher	96	90,83					
Organizational Trust Scale	Trust in the Colleagues	Verbal	24	122,35	,807	2,443	,380	-
		Quantitative	81	110,94				
		Talent	27	104,75				
		Classroom Teacher	96	102,00				
	Trust in the Administrator	Verbal	24	118,91	1,026	3,078	,398	-
		Quantitative	81	117,22				
		Talent	27	102,25				
		Classroom Teacher	96	97,83				
	Total	Verbal	24	118,21	,991	2,961	,447	-

Trust in the Organization	Quantitative	81	117,22				
	Talent	27	102,25				
	Classroom Teacher	96	95,50				
Total	Verbal	24	118,16	,736	2,443	,486	-
	Quantitative	81	117,33				
	Talent	27	105,25				
	Classroom Teacher	96	98,33				

\*p<.05

When teachers' views on administrators' crisis management were examined according to the branch variable in Table 6, no significant differences were found in the total scale score [ $X^2=4,707$ ,  $p=,195$ ,  $p>.05$ ] and the sub-dimensions of pre-crisis [ $X^2=3,670$ ,  $p=,289$ ,  $p>.05$ ] and crisis process activities [ $X^2=4,870$ ,  $p=,183$ ,  $p>.05$ ]. However, a significant difference was found in post-crisis activities [ $X^2=8,693$ ,  $p=,034$ ,  $p<.05$ ]. This finding shows that the branch variable causes differences in teachers' views on post-crisis activities but does not have an effect on other activities. The significant difference in post-crisis activities is between verbal and quantitative, as well as talent and classroom teachers. The difference in subject teachers' views on post-crisis activities may arise from different perceptions of working conditions and hours in schools, as well as how administrators' attitudes and behaviors regarding crisis management are perceived. In the relevant literature, Aslan and Sarı (2019), and Babayiğit (2024) have also found significant differences in teachers' views on administrators' crisis management.

When teachers' views on organizational trust were examined according to the branch variable, no significant differences were found in the total scale score [ $X^2=2,443$ ,  $p=,486$ ,  $p>.05$ ] and the sub-dimensions of trust in the colleagues [ $X^2=2,443$ ,  $p=,280$ ,  $p>.05$ ], trust in the administrator [ $X^2=3,078$ ,  $p=,398$ ,  $p>.05$ ] and trust in the organization [ $X^2=2,691$ ,  $p=,447$ ,  $p>.05$ ]. Lack of significant differences in teachers' views based on branch may be due to the general school culture, management style, and relational dynamics within the school being similar. Common professional values and shared experiences among teachers could also reinforce this similarity.

**The Relationship between Teachers' Views on Administrators' Crisis Management and Organizational Trust Levels**

Table 7 presents the results of the Spearman Rho correlation analysis conducted to determine whether there was a significant relationship between teachers' views on organizational trust and administrators' crisis management.

**Table 7.** The relationship between teachers' views on administrators' crisis management and organizational trust

			Crisis Management Scale			
			Pre-Crisis Activities	Crisis Process Activities	Post-Crisis Activities	Total Scale
<b>Organizational Trust Scale</b>	Trust in the Colleagues	r	,562**	,578**	,541**	,584**
	Trust in the Administrator	r	,848**	,799**	,750**	,838**
	Trust in the Organization	r	,873**	,809**	,786**	,839**
	Total Scale	r	,807**	,791*	,747**	,818**

\*\*p<.01

According to Table 7, significant positive correlations of medium to high level were found between organizational trust and teachers' views on administrators' crisis management, both overall and within the dimensions. Specifically, a strong positive correlation was found between the total scores of crisis management and organizational trust ( $r=.818$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Based on these general findings, it can be said that as teachers' views on organizational trust increase, their views on administrators' crisis management also rise significantly. In other words, trust in school administrators enhances the perception that administrators exhibit more effective and reassuring behaviors during crises. While organizational trust helps in teachers' cohesion, administrators' ability to build trust among teachers will also facilitate uniting and motivating them towards common goals during the crisis process.

There is a strong positive and significant relationship between the total score of the organizational trust scale and the subdimensions of administrators' crisis management scale, namely pre-crisis activities ( $r=.807$ ,  $p<.01$ ), crisis process activities ( $r=.791$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and post-crisis activities ( $r=.747$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Based on these findings, it can be said that as teachers' views on organizational trust increase, their views on the management of pre-crisis, crisis process, and post-crisis activities also significantly improve. This finding suggests that teachers' trust in administrators positively influences and increases their perceptions of administrators' crisis management processes. As teachers' trust in their administrators grows, they are likely to believe that administrators can exhibit more effective, planned, and reassuring management during crises. Organizational trust may not only increase teachers' tendency to provide more support to administrators during crises but also lead to more successful outcomes in crisis management processes.

A moderate positive and significant relationship was found between the total score of the crisis management scale and the organizational trust sub-dimension of trust in the colleagues ( $r=.584$ ,  $p<.01$ ), while a strong positive and significant relationship was identified with the sub-dimensions of trust in the administrator ( $r=.838$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and trust in the organization ( $r=.839$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Based on these findings, it can be stated that as teachers' perceptions of administrators' crisis management improve, their trust in the administrator and the institution increases significantly, while their trust in colleagues also increases at a moderate level.

When examined in terms of sub-dimensions, a strong positive and significant relationship was found between trust in the administrator and pre-crisis activities ( $r=.848$ ,  $p<.01$ ), crisis process activities ( $r=.799$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and post-crisis activities ( $r=.750$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Similarly, there was a strong positive and significant relationship between trust in the organization and pre-crisis activities ( $r=.873$ ,  $p<.01$ ), crisis process activities ( $r=.809$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and post-crisis activities ( $r=.786$ ,  $p<.01$ ). On the other hand, a moderate positive and significant relationship was found between trust in the colleagues and pre-crisis activities ( $r=.562$ ,  $p<.01$ ), crisis process activities ( $r=.578$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and post-crisis activities ( $r=.541$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that as teachers' trust in administrators and the organization increases, their evaluations of crisis management before, during, and after crises also increase significantly. Likewise, as trust in colleagues increases, perceptions of crisis management processes also increase, albeit at a moderate level. The qualities, competencies, attitudes, and behaviors of school administrators shape institutional management, indicating that trust in the administrator and in the institution are interrelated and complementary variables. The significant and strong relationship found between teachers' trust in both administrators and the institution and their views on crisis management supports this conclusion. Trust in administrators and the institution enhances the perception that administrators act more effectively and reassuringly during crises. Meanwhile, the moderate relationship between trust in colleagues and perceptions of crisis management suggests that although teachers focus more on administrators during crises, teamwork and collaboration among teachers are still perceived as important elements.

## **Conclusion and Discussion**

Teachers' views on administrators' crisis management were at the level of "undecided" in the total scale as well as in the pre-crisis and crisis process subdimensions, while they were at the level of "agree" in the post-crisis subdimension. Regarding organizational trust, teachers' perceptions were at the level of

“agree” across the total scale and all subdimensions (trust in the colleagues, trust in the administrator, and trust in the organization).

Variables such as gender, professional seniority, and school level did not result in any significant differences in teachers' views on administrators' crisis management. However, the subject area variable revealed a significant difference in the post-crisis activities sub-dimension. Whether teachers were male or female, at the beginning or in the later stages of their careers or working at the primary or secondary level did not affect their views. While no significant differences were found in the total scale or in the pre- and during-crisis activities in terms of subject area (e.g., quantitative vs. verbal subjects, talent/skill or classroom teachers), a significant difference was identified in post-crisis activities between quantitative and verbal subject teachers as well as between talent and classroom teachers.

Variables such as professional seniority, subject area, and school level did not lead to significant differences in teachers' perceptions of organizational trust. However, the gender variable revealed a significant difference in the “trust in the administrator” sub-dimension of organizational trust. Whether teachers were at the beginning of their careers or had many years of experience, whether they worked in primary or secondary schools, or whether they specialized in different subject areas, did not significantly affect their views. On the other hand, gender did not yield significant differences in the total organizational trust score or in the sub-dimensions of trust in the organization and trust in colleagues, but a significant difference in favor of male teachers was found in the “trust in the administrator” sub-dimension.

A positive and statistically significant relationship ranging from moderate to high was identified between teachers' perceptions of organizational trust and their views on administrators' crisis management, both on the overall scale and across sub-dimensions. As teachers' perceptions of organizational trust increased, their evaluations of administrators' crisis management also rose at moderate to high levels. Based on the results obtained from the research, the following recommendations have been developed:

Necessary training and informational activities can be conducted in schools to increase teachers' awareness of school administrators' crisis management capabilities. These efforts may focus on explaining the importance of crisis management processes to teachers, emphasizing fundamental principles of crisis management, effective crisis resolution strategies, and the roles of teachers during times of crisis. Such initiatives will enable teachers to act more effectively and consciously during crisis periods. Teachers from various subject areas can be actively involved in crisis management processes to help them adapt more easily. Additionally, in-service training can be provided to teachers regarding the institutional impacts of crisis management. These sessions may include information about how crisis management practices affect the overall functioning of the school, teacher-student relationships, and school culture.

Seminars, in-service training programs, and similar activities can be organized for both administrators and teachers to enhance perceptions of organizational trust. These programs could focus on building trust for school principals by emphasizing leadership and crisis management strategies, as well as effective communication methods for building strong relationships with teachers. Furthermore, giving teachers more voice in school governance and increasing their participation in decision-making processes can help reinforce their trust in both the institution and its leadership. Providing detailed explanations regarding the reasons and outcomes of decisions made by school administration can also increase the level of trust teachers feel toward the institution and its leaders. This type of transparent communication will contribute to strengthening teachers' sense of fairness and justice within the organization.

This study can be expanded to include a larger participant group by considering different demographic variables (e.g., age, experience, school level), and can be conducted in both public and private schools using qualitative methods. In doing so, teachers' perceptions of both crisis management and organizational trust can be examined more comprehensively, allowing for deeper and more detailed insights.

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