

## RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOLS

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**Abstract.** The relevance of this study is to show risks that are available at schools and identify some strategies to manage such risks if they are likely to occur. Thus, education given at schools becomes better and more effective once the right strategies are set for risk management. In this respect, schools need good quality planning to avoid any risk that would prevent students from learning and facing treats. Therefore, establishing risk management policy and making risk analysis before the academic year begins will help to monitor risks, and see the weaknesses beforehand to maximise good quality education. This research is done to reveal the opinions of teachers and managers and their past experiences in such cases. Pre-test and post-test were applied in the study and the results were evaluated. It also aimed to examine the current strategies used at schools and find out if the strategies, policies are good enough and applied correctly. As a result of the study, it is seen that schools quality can become better with the right setting of risk management, risk policies and risk strategies.

**Keywords:** Risk, Management, Strategies, Policies, Treats, Education

**Introduction:** Risk management is the process of addressing the problems while setting up the objectives for the lesson to be taught and trying to get the maximum benefit of all the activities associated with the related topics. At this point, risk management aims to minimize any problem that are likely to occur in the class/school within the aim of meeting the objectives set by the school administration and the ministry of education in the most effective way that is possible.

According to Corluccio (2014), risk management “is the process of handling with uncertain exposures that could affect the school and students. Therefore, the most important is to identify the risk whether it is the result of the people, or the property. Once, it is identified then, it can be analyzed and controlled.<sup>1</sup> In life it is not possible to do everything in the desired way. Sometimes, plans are made, but outcomes are different than expected. This is the same in schools. How much precaution schools take does not fully prevent the approaching problems. There are a lot of risks that are needed to be taken into consideration with a careful strategy planning to be able to keep students and staff safe. For this reason, at first, potential risks should be identified beforehand. Secondly, there should be a process to assess them at least in mind and priorities like employees or students must be identified. If risk management is done effectively, this would bring some benefits to education, school, time and administrators.<sup>2</sup>

Managing risks at all steps gives a chance for successful implementation. Any place that adds the risk management into their system gets better results and reaches success at the end as they can give more rational decisions. In today’s world it is impossible to imagine a place without risk management. It is all the decisions taken to improve the quality and the performance of teaching and avoiding, eliminating or minimizing the problematic outcomes. In the process of teaching, awareness of student’s is highly important. They must know the rules and regulations they are entitled to from the beginning. The quality of the program is another important factor. This means students’ should get the conveyed message clearly and understand the lesson well and there should be a balance of what is being given to them and the exams they take at the end. Another one is technical support; this means, the environment all is done ( Öznacar, 2018). Technical support and equipment are important in learning because if they are good, they can improve the performance of lectures, but if they are poor or bad, they can diminish it. So, with these in mind, careful management should be done to avoid any of these problems.<sup>3</sup> Taking some measures regarding these should be in the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, the Board of Management, and the principal of each school to establish a productive environment for everyone to work in class. Some of these measures that are put forward are; making students’ and teachers understand and obey the school rules, making sure that students who are ill have recovered when they come back to the school by checking their medical reports, keeping everything that is in use such as; playground, school equipment, labs clean and in good condition, removing anything dangerous or broken from the surface to prevent students getting any harm from these, checking whether all the curricular activities are done on time, ensuring that all the area of the school are covered with fences and safe gates, and also ensuring that if the students are going to a school trip they have a written parental permission with them.<sup>4</sup> For any institution risk management should be carefully examined from all different angles to provide a positive result from the risk. Risk

<sup>1</sup> Corluccio, Stacy (2014). Effective School Risk Management. Knight Communications.

<sup>2</sup> Krone, Anthony (2016). Prioritizing Risk Management Strategies in Schools.

<sup>3</sup> Ruzic-Dimitrijevic, Ljiljana and Dakic, Jelena (2014). The risk management in higher education Institutions. Volume 2, Issue 1.

<sup>4</sup> <https://eduflow.wordpress.com/2014/04/04/risk-management-in-schools/>

management can be examined by two important factors. 1) How the training institutions are organized (director's role). 2) How the educational institutions are organized (staff, students, parents). The aim of the risk management here would be how all can get the maximum benefit. If no solution is found, forming a system to deal with the risk management would help to the solution of the problem.<sup>5</sup>

Schools are the places which are expected to well manage learning and all the school leaders are expected to demonstrate professional attitude in an educational field, managing people, managing facilities and making a good plan of finance and strategy to be used. Any attempt that are likely to be taken in the process of managing all possible risks need to follow certain steps:

- 1- Set the Context: organize the goals
- 2- Identify the Risks: find anything that will undermine the goal
- 3- Analyse the Risks: think of the consequences
- 4- Evaluate Risks: determine whether there is a risk now or any further treatment is needed
- 5- Treat Risks: set responsibilities to control and change the used strategies
- 6- Monitor and Review: set clear objectives and goals with a clear language to manage everything in the risk environment

With the education system at schools there are many expectations from the community. So, all factors that may hinder the achievement of these goals must be identified. Sometimes, there can be a mistake made by the school as they make too broad or unclear statement while setting the goals to be achieved. How this can be precise and clear?

- Provide safe and motivating learning environment for all children, so it can be seen by all the community
- In school examinations get to some level and show that the goals are achieved
- For each year, provide a waiting list

Create an enthusiastic atmosphere in which all teachers would compete with one another to carry their students to a better level<sup>6</sup>

#### **Risk Management Strategies and Policies:**

The number of students at schools and rapidly developing technology are some of the factors that can be perceived as risk factors for students. However, there should be ways of dealing with these risks. Managing all the risks need effective strategy plan. In order to do this and to overcome these problems the press, the TV, the radio, the Government and parents should be involved in the process because no one can deny the fact that any form of technology can reach to the individuals easier and faster than anything else. Using information technologies in relation to the risk analysis and plans will help to the solution of the problems (Öznacar, 2018). Any kind of publication and information that will be distributed to the parents will help them keep their children away from those risks. Another important thing is to be aware of what children are watching on TV or what kind of sites they are going into when using Internet? Due to what they watch and see as models via technology, they can sometimes show misbehaviour at schools. Therefore, to prevent these risks, families should be contacted by the teacher, ideas should be shared and more encouragement should be made for students to participate in other activities.<sup>7</sup> Adopting risk management strategies and policies provide assurance for internal control and corporation for making the necessary arrangements. The aim of setting strategies is to identify and evaluate any risk that would prevent any school from achieving its aims, goals and objectives. These risks that are likely to occur are usually in the areas of: Strategy, People, Curriculum, Objectives set, Outcome, Finance, and Appliance (how these strategies are being applied). While making a strategy plan how much risk can be accepted, what kind of actions and controls may be taken to avoid these risky situations and what kind of responsibility can be given to make these problems better or to prevent such risks should be stated clearly as to create a healthy learning environment. For this reason, roles and responsibilities should be clearly stated and monitoring should be done effectively and anything that seems to be risky should reported immediately from the beginning. All strategies should be written clearly, so it is understandable by everyone. This means that there should be no doubt of what success would look like and what is expected by all when the written strategies are read. The benefit of these clear objectives would be the elimination of uncertainty and maximization in the achievement of those goals.<sup>8</sup>

Besides these risks students encounter due to technology, we should also be aware of the fact that there are natural disasters as well which can be seen as unpredictable risks. Therefore, when making plans this should be thought and any plan should be made accordingl (Öznacar, Kızıl & Yılmaz, 2018).. The reason for this is, it is impossible to foresee these dangers in

<sup>5</sup> Dağlı, G. and Oznacar, B. (2017). Evaluation of Risks for School Directors in Education in Developed / Developing Countries, 1-11.

<sup>6</sup> Rabihah, S. and Zurina, S. (2017). Risk Management in Universities, 1-16.

<sup>7</sup> Öznacar, B. (2018). Risk Management Strategies in School Development and the Effect of Policies on Tolerance Education.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.chilternlearningtrust.org/assets/files/Governance/Policies/Polices%202017-2018/CLT\\_Risk\\_Management\\_Policy\\_and\\_Strategy\\_approved\\_by\\_Board%201\\_3\\_17.pdf](https://www.chilternlearningtrust.org/assets/files/Governance/Policies/Polices%202017-2018/CLT_Risk_Management_Policy_and_Strategy_approved_by_Board%201_3_17.pdf)

advanceThus, necessary measures should be taken to minimize any harm. If any harm is going to happen at schools, the plan should be ready in hand to get rid of it as fast as possible to prevent education from being obstructed in such cases. So, the plan should state the needs to be done to minimize the effects of these and if possible to lessen these risks before happening. Once these are ready, then, there would be no problem in the continuation of schools and also education. As Özmen et al. (2015) stated in his study, there are some plans and programs in Turkey and in other countries available now to fight with and overcome natural disasters for the betterment of schools.<sup>9</sup>

**Results:**

In this part of the study, the findings of the demographic information belonging to the sample group and the results obtained by the analysis of the data obtained for the sub-problems of the researcher with the appropriate statistical method are included and comments on these findings are given. Below, the pre-test and post-test results that are applied in the seminars and held in different topics within the scope of the research are separately expressed in tables.

**Personal Information**

**A. Quantitative Data Analysis:**

**Table 1.** Gender distribution of participants

		Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Women	40	67
	Men	20	33
	Total	60	100

In Table 1, the gender distribution of the participants (67%) was male and eleven (33%) were female.

**Table 2.** Marital Status of Participants

		F	%
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	50	84.4
	Single	10	16.6
	Total	60	100

In Table 2, it can be seen that 84.4% of the respondents were married and 16.6% were single.

**Table 3.** Position of participants

		F	%
<b>Position</b>	Manager	5	9.4
	Teacher	55	91.6
	Total	60	100

As shown in Table 3; Five (9.4%) of the participants were administrators and 55 (91.6%) were teachers.

**Pre-test and Post-test Findings**

**Pre-Test Questions for Evaluation of Seminar Studies by School Stakeholders.**

**Question 1: What are the risks for educational stakeholders?**

**Table 1.** According to the participants, what are the risks within the education stakeholders (Teacher, Management, Parent, Personnel).

<b>Theme</b>	<i>Teacher</i>		<i>Other</i>		<i>Manager</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Being exposed to violence from environment	10	%50	3	%60	2	%13.3	15	%37.5
	5	%25	5	%100	-	0	%25	
Being exposed to domestic violence	10	%50	5	%100	11	%73.3	26	%77.5
	16	%80	5	%100	-	1	%70	
Domestic property difficulties	6	%30	3	%60	13	%86.6	21	%70
	13	%65	3	%60	13	%86.6	29	%72.5
Demonstrating no care for children	11	%55	2	%40	12	%80	25	%62.5
	7	%35	2	%40	10	%66.6	17	%47.5
	5	%25	3	%60	12	%80	20	%50

<sup>9</sup> Özmen B, Gerdan S, Ergünay O. Disaster and Emergency Management Plans for Schools. Journal of Electronic Professional Development and Research. 2015;3(1):

Insufficiency in the lock staff

Lacking motivation

Having short comings in control areas

Failure of getting good quality in communication

Lack of information and strength to give good decisions

Participants' opinions;

*Domestic financial difficulties affect children psychologically.*

*For some areas it is qualified and for others there is no personnel (Y3).*

*Indifference towards children (P19).*

*As shown in Table 1; When we look at the opinions of the individuals participating in the research about the risk stakeholders in the schools, we see that the participants give answers in a way that corresponds to the total number of participants on more than one theme. These include lack of key personnel, loss of motivation, lack of control, quality communication and lack of decision-making and lack of information. When specifying these, it should be noted that participants consider these themes as factors that threaten each dimension.*

**Methods of risk analysis in schools.**

**Table 3.** Methods of risk analysis in schools according to participants.

Theme	Manager		Teacher		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
With volunteer participants through communication	11	%73	5	%25	1	%20	16	%40
	8	%53.3	14	%70	-	-	22	%55
Finding and evaluating the table of risks	12	%80	16	%80	3	%60	31	%75
Observing evolving events								

Participants' opinions;

*Choosing volunteers allows us to get clearer and more realistic answers (T1).*

*Evaluation of the risks that may arise or are likely to arise may reveal the risks more clearly (Y6).*

As seen in Table 3, participants generally observe the events in schools and choose a risk analysis as a result of this observation. In addition to this, they aim to create a table of risks and to make analysis from that table or to perform risk analysis by conducting interviews with volunteer participants.

**Pre-Test Questions for Evaluation of Seminar Studies by School Stakeholders**

**Question 4. What are the risk areas in schools.**

**Table 4.** What are the risk areas in schools according to the participants.

Theme	Manager		Teacher		Other		Total		N
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Internal and external school environment	9	%60	12	%60	4	%80	25	%62.5	
	2	%13.3	5	%25	-	-	-	%17.5	
Dead end streets close to school	3	%26	10	%55	2	%20	16	%39	
Abandoned structures near school									

Participants' opinions;

*The environment is the biggest threat to schools (D1).*

*Half-construction and abandoned buildings near schools (Y15).*

As seen in Table 4; The main risks for schools are the internal and external dangers that are provided by environment. This risk comes first with a percentage of 25%. Immediately after that, the abandoned buildings that are close to the school and the dead-end streets close to the schools come with a percentage of 39%.

**Question 5. Probability of risks occurring in schools.**

**Table 5.** Probability of the risks occurring in schools according to the participants

Theme	Manager		Teacher		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
% 50	5	%25	3	%20	2	%40	10	%62.5
	3	%20	7	%35	2	%40	12	%17.5
%40	3	%20	5	%25	2	%40	10	%39
	6	13.3	3	%15	3	%60	8	%20
%30								
%20								

As seen in the Table 5, the participant individuals see that the risks occurring in schools can be realized at a large rate. According to the participants, here 50%, 40%, 30% and 20%, the value of the risks in half rate is likely to occur from the percentages seen.

**School Risk Assessment and Control Questions**

**Question 6. Areas where risks are encountered in educational institutions.**

**Table 6.** Areas in which educational institutions are exposed to risks according to participants. (Student, Management, Parent, Staff)

Theme	Student		Management		Parent		Staff	
The structure of school administration	12	%25	5	%100	6	%40	23	%37.5
	2	%12.5	4	%80	8	%53.3	14	%25
	9	%25	3	%60	11	%73	23	%77.5
School parking area	10	%40	5	%100	15	%100	30	%100
	6	%15	2	%40	6	%40	28	%100
	13	%32.5	3	%60	13	%86.6	29	%100
School sports hall	10	%32.5	2	%40	4	%26.6	16	%40
	8	%32.5	5	%100	3	%20	16	%40

Electrical installation in school and garden

School structures and social areas around school

The attitude of school management

Irregularity and misbehaviour at school canteen

Attitudes of school employees

Participants' opinions;

*Attitudes of school staff may cause students to leave the school (D2).*

*School-entries and parking areas that are left open for cars create a danger for children (D1).*

As seen in Table 6; When the opinions of the participants about the risk stakeholders in schools are reviewed, it can be said that the electrical installations in the schools are thought to be the most risky for the students and can harm them. In addition, the attitudes and attitudes of the school administration towards both teachers, students and parents are among the most important risks in schools.

**Question 7. The level of risks hazard available in schools.**

**Table 7.** Risk dimensions in schools by participants.

Theme	Manager		Teacher		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Students falling behind from courses	11	%73.3	5	%25	1	%20	16	%40
	3	%53.3	14	%70			-	-
	655							22
As a result of accidents being injured	12	%80	16	%80			3	%60
	675							31
Students gaining bad habits	7	%46.6	13	%			2	%40
	655							22
Students acquiring bad habits through quarrel and violence								

Participants' opinions;

*The risks that occur in schools may lead to disruption of the lessons due to one or the other reason (Y14).*

*Risks in and around school may cause students to acquire bad habits and they may adopt them (O19).*

As it is seen in Table 7, the highest risk group in terms of the risks in schools are said to be gained by bad habits as they cannot be protected from them. In addition to this, students' injuries at the end of the accidents and the incidents such as fighting and violence are thought to be harmful for one another.

**Question 8 . Levels of violence in schools.**

**Table 8.** Violence level of risks in schools according to participants.

Theme	Manager		Teacher		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
High level of violenc	10	%66.6	5	%25	3	%60	18	%45
Medium level of violence	8	%53.3	14	%70	1	%10	23	%57.5
Low level of violence	-	-	1	%5	1	%10	2	%5

As can be seen from Table 8, when we look at the severity of the risks in the schools, it is observed that there is a widespread observation on a high degree of violence among participants. In addition, the number of participants who stated that there were risks at the high level of violence and that the students were exposed to these risks were at a level that could not be ignored.

**Discussion:** This research aimed to find out, if directors, school managers and teachers are aware of dangers at schools and if they are applying risk management strategies to fight with such circumstances thoroughly. In the study, how much managers and teachers are aware of these risks and the precautions they are taking are examined. The vast majority of studies on this subject involve the findings and discussions on risk management strategies. When we look at tables, according to the answers given by the participants the risks education stakeholders are exposed are a result of violence from the environment, domestic violence, financial problems, indifference towards children, lack of key personnel, loss of motivation, lack of supervision, difficulties in establishing good quality communication and having lack of courage to give important decisions can viewed as crucial themes. Among these results, the most commonly mentioned theme is the occurrence of loss of motivation. When the literature is examined, it can be seen that Terzi (2005), Aslan (2008), İpek (2012) and Yaprak Kaya (2015) found that the most important of the risks in this area was the indifference towards children. Obviously, this indifference brings along a lack of motivation and failure. Another similar point they determined is that there are deficiencies in the students' areas of control. İra (2011), Terzi (2005), Esinbay (2008), Sezgin (2010) and Süzer (2010) found that the most important risk was through environmental factors.

The second most important risk was the lack of personnel. According to the research findings, the lack of staff in schools means that the needs of the children are not met sufficiently and this situation paves the way for the children to fail. According to the results of the study, it is seen that the findings overlap with many researches and they show similarity.

Participants participated in the study explained the methods of risk analysis in schools with 3 themes. Most of these participants have the opinion of the events. One of them is that the participant is observing the events that have developed. The other 2 themes are the themes of analyzing and evaluating the risks table according to the participant opinion rates and analyzing and communicating with the volunteer participants. According to the participants, when the risk areas in the schools and the areas in which the risks are observed, the inner and outer surroundings of the school, the dead end streets and the buildings near the school, the structure of the school administrative building, the school parking area, the school sports hall, the structures around the school, social areas, school administration, canteen, school staff and management attitudes can be seen as themes. We can treat these two questions as a common problem because they are linked with each other. In this context, when the literature is examined, it is possible to see the similar findings of Erjem (2005), Aġaoġlu and Madden (2005) and Çalıřır (2006) about the determination of risk areas in schools. As a result of these researches, they found that the empty areas around the schools were the risky areas.

Erjem (2005), Aġaoġlu and Madden (2005) and Çalıřır (2006), have similar findings and it was found that the risk area is due to an external environment, dead end streets and abandoned buildings. A large proportion of the participants are likely to have a 50% chance of achieving these risks in educational institutions. When we look at the danger dimensions of the risks in the schools, we see that the risk of the students gaining bad habits is the most thought theme. In addition to this, it is observed that the violence and fighting habits among the students are widespread, the students are injured as a result of accidents and the students are left behind because of certain reasons. Moreover, when in the opinions of participant's intensity level of risks are evaluated, we can see that the participants state the theme of the moderate level of violence most frequently (DAVOODABADI & Shahsavari, 2013). By looking at the results of the study, it can also be said that if no action is taken to minimize the effects of risks before they happen both teacher and students would be in the state of facing risks in different ways. Making plans and implementing them would also help students to keep their motivation at high levels and achieve their aims and everyone would benefit from it. From the data obtained it has been noted that the environment of school is very important and many risks can occur from it unless the right planning is done (Piteira et al, 2018). Other findings show that in order to avoid such risks, students should be encouraged to participate more in social activities, ideas should be shared, teachers and managers should be in contact with families to be able to identify risks as this would help to minimize or stop before happening. This would also ensure safer learning environment for all educators and students in which they would be relax and happy to work in.

**Conclusion:** The findings of this research indicated that today's organizations and institutions are aware of the importance of risk management to ensure information security and the need to use a specialized method. However, as there are many options for risk analysis and management, it is difficult to decide which of these alternatives is appropriate for them. In this study, a model for the problem in question was introduced and applied to a sample virtual organization. One of the reasons for uncertainty inherent in risk is the lack of sufficient data to determine the exact values of risk elements (such as lack of confidence in the method or the accuracy of the results of the method. Uncertainty of risk elements is the work of risk analysis and management tools. They try to do this by using statistical and mathematical structures in the methods they apply. Providing trust in risk management, which is the other reason of uncertainty, is only possible by finding the most appropriate method for the organization. There should be an approach that gives confidence to the school to select the most appropriate risk management method.

In the literature, the approach put forward in previous studies was to find the best method which provides certain features or only to find the most appropriate method for schools, while in this study the needs were determined and based on the approach to reach the best method that meets the needs in a flexible way was searched for. According to the proposed model, the key qualifications that are necessary to reveal the structure of the school and its expectations from the method to be implemented are determined. Then, a questionnaire is created for each qualification based on these qualifications. As the prepared questions reflect the needs and priorities of the schools, the result will help to strengthen the confidence in the risk analysis. Some suggestions can be made to prevent such risks and to make the necessary implementations;

- If the organizational way of schools need to change, some evaluation questions can be reapplied and only the suitability values of the methods can be updated and compared without re-analysis of all methods.
- With the help of the data obtained in the researches about the risks at schools, the school can choose one of the methods considering the priorities that are taken into consideration and change things accordingly to avoid risks occurring.
- When risks analysis is done, strategic plan should be made accordingly and all risky situations must be taken care of.

Once this plan is developed taking such issues into an account will make the plan more successful and it would have the betterment of schools. It can also be argued that adapting risk management can strengthen the education given at schools as students would feel safer. In the case of any harm resulting from available and underestimated treats, psychosocial support can be given to these students to help them move their future confidently.

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