



Crowd Management Strategies in Mass Events: Theoretical and Practical Approaches

Kitlesel Etkinliklerde Kalabalık Yönetimi Stratejileri: Teorik ve Pratik Yaklaşımlar

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ABSTRACT

Today, crowd management has become an important field of study within security management sciences. Effective crowd management strategies are essential for large-scale events, demonstrations, sporting competitions, and crisis situations. This article examines both theoretical frameworks and practical strategies developed for crowd management, supported by real-world examples. In terms of methodology, the study is based on a qualitative review and descriptive case study analysis of crowd management incidents. Academic studies, policy documents, and official reports were analyzed to identify common patterns, theoretical frameworks, and best practices in managing large gatherings. The study consists of the following sections: the concept and characteristics of crowds, crowd management strategies, misconduct of officials and examples of correct practices, international examples, and the conclusion. Key topics such as crowd psychology, risk management, technological tools, and the role of law enforcement are also discussed. With a particular focus on official misconduct, the study provides essential suggestions on proper approaches to crowd management. Identified forms of misconduct include: excessive use of force, misinformation or lack of communication, absence of preventive dialogue, aggressive or provocative behavior, unplanned or uncoordinated interventions, inadequate response, and blocking of escape routes. Examples from several countries illustrate how poor intervention can lead to loss of control in crowd situations. The study emphasizes that proper training of security forces and conscious decision-making during crises are crucial to preventing potential chaos. It further suggests that professionals responsible for crowd management should receive formal Crowd Management Training. In the future, the integration of data analytics and artificial intelligence systems is expected to enhance the effectiveness of crowd management strategies.

Keywords: Crowd Management, Mass Events, Collective Behavior, Public Order, Crisis and Risk Management.

Öz

Günümüzde kalabalık yönetimi, güvenlik yönetimi bilimleri kapsamında önemli bir çalışma alanı hâline gelmiştir. Kalabalık yönetimi stratejileri; büyük ölçekli etkinlikler, gösteriler, spor müsabakaları ve kriz durumlarında kamu güvenliğini korumak açısından kritik öneme sahiptir. Bu çalışma, kalabalık yönetimi için geliştirilen kuramsal çerçeveleri ve pratik stratejileri gerçek olay örnekleriyle birlikte incelemektedir. Yöntem bakımından çalışma, kalabalık yönetimi olaylarına ilişkin nitel bir derleme ve betimsel örnek olay analizine dayanmaktadır. Akademik çalışmalar, politika belgeleri ve resmî raporlar incelenerek geniş katılımlı toplulukların yönetiminde ortak örüntüler, kuramsal yaklaşımlar ve iyi uygulama örnekleri belirlenmiştir. Çalışma; kalabalık kavramı ve özellikleri, kalabalık yönetimi stratejileri, yetkililerin hatalı davranışları ve doğru uygulama örnekleri, dünyadan vaka örnekleri ve sonuç bölümlerinden oluşmaktadır. Ayrıca çalışma kapsamında kalabalık psikolojisi, risk yönetimi, teknolojik araçların rolü ve kolluk kuvvetlerinin işlevi tartışılmıştır. Yetkililerin hatalı müdahalelerine odaklanarak, kalabalık yönetiminde doğru yaklaşımlara ilişkin temel öneriler sunulmuştur. Hatalı uygulama biçimleri; aşırı güç kullanımı, yanlış yönlendirme veya iletişim eksikliği, önleyici diyalog kurmama, saldırgan ya da provokatif davranışlar, plansız ve koordinasyonsuz müdahaleler, yetersiz tepkiler ve kaçış yollarının engellenmesi olarak sınıflandırılmıştır. Çeşitli ülkelerden verilen örnekler, hatalı müdahalelerin kalabalıkların kontrolden çıkmasına nasıl yol açabileceğini göstermektedir. Araştırma, güvenlik güçlerinin uygun şekilde eğitilmesinin ve kriz anlarında bilinçli hareket etmesinin olası kaosları önlemede kritik rol oynadığını vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca, kalabalık

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yönetiminden sorumlu profesyonellerin “Kalabalık Yönetimi Eğitimi” almalarının gerekliliği önerilmiştir. Gelecekte veri analitiği ve yapay zekâ destekli sistemlerin kullanımıyla kalabalık yönetimi stratejilerinin daha da gelişmesi beklenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kalabalık Yönetimi Stratejisi, Kamu Düzeni, Kitleleşme Etkinlikleri, Kolektif Davranış, Kriz ve Risk Yönetimi.

INTRODUCTION

The movements of all living organisms that can be observed, recorded, or measured are referred to as behaviors. Behaviors arise as a result of stimuli and the corresponding reactions. In humans, behaviors can be classified into two categories: innate behaviors and learned behaviors (Still, 2014; Helbing & Mukerji, 2012).

Innate behaviors are instinctive actions that are not the product of learning. Such behaviors play a crucial role in ensuring the survival of an organism and the continuation of its species. Sudden and unchanging responses to external stimuli are known as reflexes. Reflex actions are rapid because they are governed by the spinal cord without involving the brain. All organisms with a nervous system exhibit reflexes, which are unconscious, inherited, and species-specific (Carlson, 2013, p. 102).

Instinctive behavior refers to a fixed pattern of action triggered by a specific stimulus. These behaviors consist of a sequence of activities in which the organism consistently reacts in the same way to the same stimulus (Kalat, 2017, p. 88). Learned behaviors, on the other hand, are knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired through learning or interaction. They may encompass both positive and negative behavioral patterns, as well as habits developed over time (Schunk, 2012, p. 56).

Humans exhibit various behaviors in the face of certain stimuli, including reflex, instinctive behavior and learned behavior (Tinbergen, 1951). There may be many stimuli that trigger sudden defensive behaviors of human beings to protect themselves. Especially in crowds, individuals adapt to the movements and behavior patterns of the majority. Sometimes a small warning can turn into a mass movement that starts from one point in the crowd, spreads in rings and gets out of control. People who manage crowds, who have the right and authority to address crowds, local authorities, local administrators, school principals preachers and imams, law enforcement officers, etc. should have knowledge about human behavior and the behavior patterns of crowds (Karayaman, 2022).

1. What is a Crowd?

A crowd (kalabalık) can be conceptualized as a temporary assembly of individuals in a shared location, typically lacking formal organizational structure or enduring social bonds (Turner & Killian, 1957). Such gatherings often emerge spontaneously and are characterized by the absence of structured roles, a clear hierarchy, or task differentiation (McPhail, 1991). In Turkish linguistic usage, the term “kalabalık” denotes “a group formed by the gathering of a large number of people” and, metaphorically, “a collection of unrelated or chaotic elements,” reflecting the dual social and disorder-related connotations of the concept (Türk Dil Kurumu, 2022). Kesici’s (2021) study on Istanbul’s İstiklal Street demonstrates how spatial characteristics—such as street width, architectural enclosure, and pedestrian flow dynamics—influence the formation, emotional tone, and movement patterns of everyday, mass-gathering, and chaotic crowds. Additionally, national standards framed in the “Türkiye Eylem Modeli” emphasize that law enforcement is expected to act with neutrality, fairness, accessibility, and within legal boundaries, highlighting both theoretical guidelines and ethical imperatives for managing crowds effectively.

1.1. What are the Characteristics of a Crowd?

Crowds have certain characteristics. These characteristics can be listed as follows: It takes place in a specific and narrow area; there is no division of labor among; the individuals who make up the crowd They do not know each other, their relations are at the lowest level. Lack of Organization: Crowds do

not possess a structured organization, nor do they have a hierarchy of roles and responsibilities (Blumer, 1939). What they have in common is that they share only temporary excitement. Crowds are not permanent; they come together for a specific event or situation (Turner & Killian, 1957). They adapt to each other unconsciously; They are anxious and emotional. Emotional Contagion: The crowd environment encourages the expression and spread of emotions among individuals (McPhail, 1991). They feel the power of the crowd as their own power; There is wannabe/imitation; It is anonymous. Individuals in a crowd usually do not know each other and remain anonymous (Le Bon, 2001).

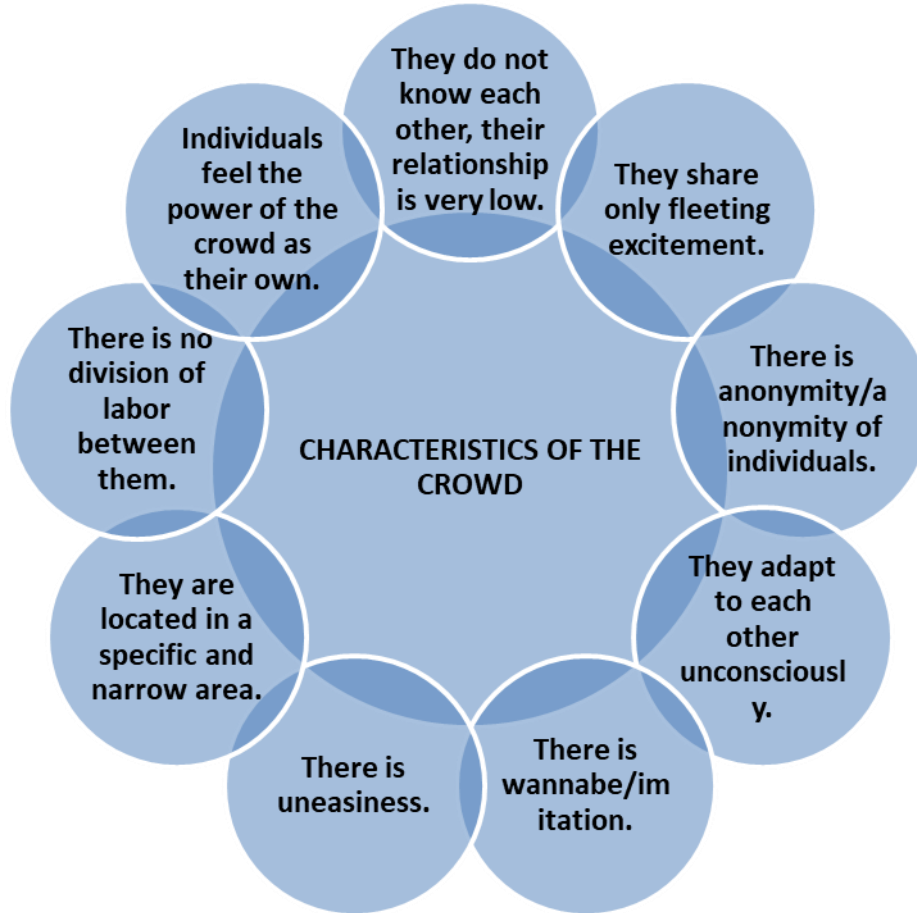


Figure 1. Basic Characteristics of a Crowd (This figure was created by the author).

1.2. What are the Types of Crowds?

It is possible to classify crowd types according to their formation intentions and dynamics. The most basic classification is organized (active) and unorganized (passive) crowds. If the time and place of the activity is predetermined, it is called an organized crowd. If the time and place of the activity is not predetermined, it is called an unorganized crowd. Active crowd if there is a situation that requires the intervention of law enforcement, otherwise passive crowd. For example, people coming to the cinema to watch a movie or crowds in the marketplace are unorganized - passive crowds. In a demonstration march, crowds that cause damage and outbursts, crowds that attempt to lynch a rapist or snatcher are unorganized - active crowds (Kesici, 2021; Le Bon, 2001).

1.3. Crowd Typologies in the Context of Social and Security Studies

Scholars have developed multiple typologies to categorize crowds based on their composition, purpose, and behavioral patterns. While classical approaches such as those proposed by Le Bon (2001), Blumer (1939), Turner and Killian (1957), and McPhail (1991) emphasize psychological and structural distinctions, more recent studies integrate socio-political context and spatial dynamics (Kesici, 2021;

Adang, 2020). The following discussion synthesizes key crowd categories, linking them to both theoretical frameworks and practical implications for crowd management.

Crowds of the Will are gatherings formed around a shared intent to express a particular theme or sentiment. These include attendees at theatrical performances, sports events, or dance parties. From a management perspective, such crowds are often predictable in structure and purpose but may shift in mood depending on external triggers, illustrating the relevance of the Elaborated Social Identity Model (Reicher, 2001) in anticipating changes in group cohesion.

Listening Crowds, typically present at concerts, conferences, or press briefings, are characterized by heightened receptivity to a central speaker or performance. Their collective focus creates a dynamic in which information dissemination can be efficient but also susceptible to rapid shifts in sentiment if the message challenges audience expectations (McPhail, 1991).

Religious or Expressive Crowds, such as congregations in mosques, sect gatherings, or participants at funerals, serve as a prime example of Blumer's (1939) expressive crowd concept. These gatherings revolve around shared emotional or spiritual expression. In Turkey, religious commemorations and public mourning events (e.g., large-scale funeral processions) illustrate how such crowds blend ritual with collective sentiment, often necessitating culturally sensitive management approaches.

Acting (Aggressive) Crowds represent a more volatile typology, emerging in response to perceived grievances and often engaging in environmental damage, confrontation, or rebellion. Le Bon's (2001) notion of emotional contagion and leader-driven mobilization is particularly evident here. Contemporary examples include protest groups that escalate into rioting, such as segments of the 2013 Gezi Park demonstrations or international cases like the 2011 London riots.

Casual Crowds are unstructured and temporary assemblies, such as shoppers in a market. While generally benign, Turner and Killian (1957) note that under certain stimuli, these crowds can transition into more organized or emotionally charged forms, making them a latent concern for public order planning.

Spectator Crowds gather around shared interests or curiosity, such as audiences at sporting events or political rallies (Ha, 2024; Kara & Yıldırım, 2023). Although usually orderly, the competitive or partisan nature of such gatherings can catalyze sudden behavioral shifts, a phenomenon well documented in both sports event security literature and political campaign studies (Adang, 2020)

2. Research Aim, Questions and Method

The aim of this research is to explore how crowd control efforts are influenced by the behavior and intervention strategies of security personnel and administrators, and to provide evidence-based suggestions for improving these practices. Research Questions:

1. What forms of official misconduct are most frequently observed in the context of crowd management?
2. How do these behaviors contribute to the escalation or failure of crowd control efforts?
3. Which theoretical and practical approaches have proven effective in enhancing the ethical and operational quality of crowd management?
4. What can be learned from case-based examples in Turkey and around the world regarding successful and unsuccessful crowd control interventions?

2.1. Method

This study is a qualitative review based entirely on secondary data sources and aims to examine crowd management strategies. In line with the reviewers' recommendations, the research design was structured in a clear two-stage framework:

(1) Although this study does not constitute a full systematic review, it was designed as a qualitative review grounded in established scientific research principles. Accordingly, the literature review process was conducted in alignment with the PRISMA 2020 reporting principles to ensure transparency and methodological clarity.

(2) A descriptive and comparative case analysis based on purposively selected incidents.

This approach enables the systematic synthesis of existing knowledge and the derivation of practice-oriented insights from prior research (Snyder, 2019). Case analysis, in turn, is widely recognized as an appropriate method for understanding complex social events in their contextual settings and for elucidating the relationships between interventions and outcomes (Yin, 2018; Flyvbjerg, 2006).

2.1.1. Literature Review and Search Strategy

The literature review was conducted using the Scopus and Google Scholar databases. In both databases, the keywords "crowd management" and "mass event management" were used, and the search was limited to publications published between 2010 and 2025. The Scopus search yielded a total of 39 academic publications. Using the same keywords and time frame, the Google Scholar search produced 8,080 documents.

Given the broad scope of Google Scholar results, this database was treated as a complementary source, and the review focused exclusively on journal articles that explicitly addressed the concept of "mass event management." Following this filtering process, 11 articles from Google Scholar were included in the final evaluation. Details regarding the databases searched, keywords used, initial search results, and the number of studies ultimately included are summarized in Table 1. The screening and selection process was structured in accordance with the transparency principles of the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021).

Table 1. Summary of Scopus and Google Scholar search results (2010–2025).

Database	Keyword	First search (n)	Filter	After Filter (n)	Last search (n)
Scopus	"crowd management", "mass event management"	39	• Year of publication: 2010–2025 • Document type: Article. • Focus concept: "mass event management"	27	27
Google Scholar	"crowd management", "mass event management"	8.080	• Year of publication: 2010–2025 • Document type: Article. - Focus concept: "mass event management"	11	11

2.1.2. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were defined a priori. Studies were included if they:

- (1) were directly related to crowd management or mass event management,
- (2) were published between 2010 and 2025,

- (3) were published in peer-reviewed academic journals or based on institutionally verifiable reports, and
- (4) provided applicable insights within the context of civilian and public crowd events.

Studies that were not directly related to the research focus, lacked sufficient verifiability, or fell outside the scope of the study were excluded.

2.1.3. Case Selection and Case Analysis Process

Following the literature review, a descriptive case analysis was conducted to enhance the analytical depth of the study. In total, 11 social or mass-crowd incidents were examined. Cases were selected using a purposive sampling approach, based on the following criteria:

- (1) direct relevance to crowd management strategies,
- (2) high national or international visibility and significant societal impact, and
- (3) documentation through academic assessments, official institutional reports, and verifiable media sources.

The case analysis was conducted in four stages. First, each case was described in terms of its contextual background and situational conditions. Second, the crowd management strategies and intervention practices applied during the event were examined. Third, authority–crowd interactions and reported outcomes; such as escalation dynamics, security implications, and public order effects were evaluated. Finally, similarities and differences across cases were compared to identify which practices contributed positively or negatively to trust, legitimacy, and safety (Yin, 2018; Flyvbjerg, 2006).

2.1.4. Secondary Data Reliability and Bias Mitigation

As the study relies entirely on secondary data, specific measures were taken to enhance data reliability and minimize selection bias. Priority was given to peer-reviewed academic publications and policy documents issued by international institutions. Information related to case events was cross-checked across multiple independent sources whenever possible to ensure consistency and accuracy. Furthermore, case selection was guided by predefined criteria rather than outcome-based judgments, thereby reducing the risk of selective bias (Snyder, 2019).

3. Crowd Psychology

Unlike individual psychology, the behavioral dynamics of crowds are shaped by collective consciousness and group influence (Reicher, 2001). Understanding crowd psychology is a critical factor in predicting and managing potential hazards. Borch (2013) argues that a rational understanding of crowd behavior should be adopted to inform management strategies, criticizing over-reliance on older crowd theories that portray crowds as irrational. This shift in perspective can lead to more effective crowd control measures and reduce the likelihood of panic or chaos during events.

Crowd psychology encompasses a set of fundamental characteristics that influence how individuals behave in collective settings. A clear understanding of these features is essential for professionals engaged in public event management, including law enforcement officers, emergency planners, sports venue administrators, local government officials, school principals, and religious leaders. These actors play a critical role in anticipating and managing the dynamics of group behavior to maintain safety and order (Reicher et al., 2007; Drury & Reicher, 2000). From a social identity perspective, crowds are not inherently irrational or chaotic; rather, their actions are shaped by shared norms, perceptions of legitimacy, and intergroup relationships (Stott & Adang, 2018).

Manipulation of crowd behavior often occurs through targeted psychological strategies, with propaganda being one of the most prominent. Propaganda refers to organized communication efforts

aimed at shaping public attitudes and behaviors in favor of specific interests, frequently by framing events in ways that elicit strong emotional responses (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2019). In high-density gatherings, such tactics can escalate tensions, create divisions, or mobilize support, depending on the strategic intent. Similarly, the deliberate or accidental induction of panic—defined as uncontrolled, rapid movements triggered by acute fear and the urgent need to seek safety—can severely compromise crowd safety (Helbing et al., 2007). Panic episodes not only disrupt orderly movement but also increase the risk of stampedes, bottlenecks, and mass casualties. Consequently, understanding these psychological triggers is essential for designing crowd management strategies that emphasize communication, trust-building, and preventive intervention rather than coercion.

3.1. Key Determinants of Crowd Management

3.1.1. Risk Management Strategies

Risk management during mass events includes preventive and intervention measures (Fruin, 1993). Risk analyses help to identify potential hazards and take precautions. In addition, evacuation plans, emergency scenarios and crisis communication strategies are important for the safe management of mass crowds.

3.1.2. The Role of Technological Tools

Today, technological tools used in crowd management play a critical role in enhancing security. Camera systems, facial recognition technologies, artificial intelligence-based analytics, and mobile applications allow for tracking crowd movements and creating early warning systems (Helbing & Johansson, 2011).

These tools are effectively utilized in both preventive and immediate intervention processes. Technology plays a crucial role in crowd detection and monitoring, enabling authorities to manage crowds more effectively and reducing the risk of disasters. The implementation of advanced monitoring systems facilitates timely interventions by providing real-time data (Lazarou, Kesidis, & Tsatsaris, 2025).

3.1.3. Role of Law Enforcement and Intervention Strategies

Police and security forces are among the most important actors in the management of mass crowds. Intervention strategies include the management of peaceful demonstrations, crowd management and crowd dispersal techniques (Waddington, 2007). In addition, trained personnel and crisis management protocols are key elements in ensuring security.

The behavior and approach of security guards is a critical factor in crowd management. A simple hand gesture, an aggressive attitude or a misdirection can cause the crowd to react suddenly and chaos can ensue (Hoggett & Stott, 2010). In particular, excessive use of force or misdirection can lead to mass panic and escalation of social incidents. Therefore, it is of great importance that security officers are trained and act calmly in times of crisis. Training programs, psychological awareness and communication techniques can enable security forces to manage crowds more effectively (Le Bon, 2001).

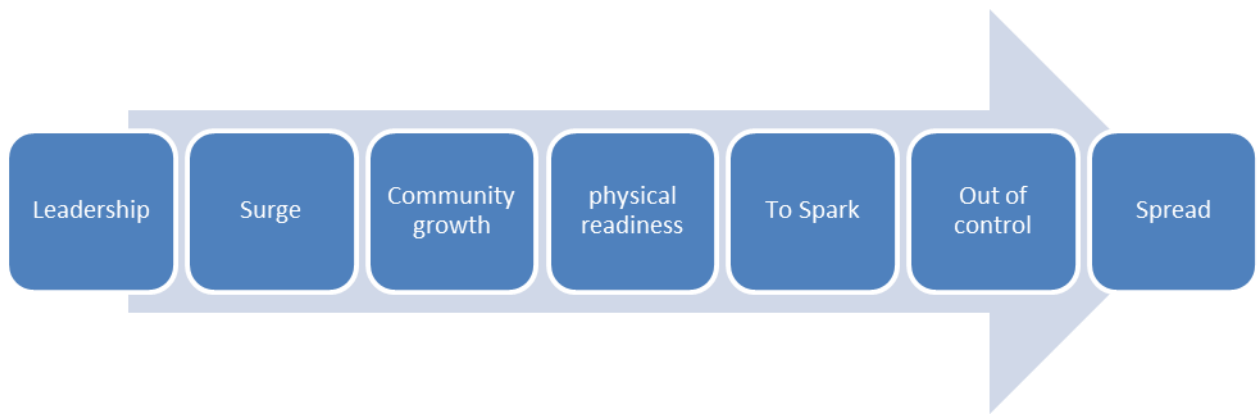


Figure 2. Stages of the Transformation of a Crowd into an Act of Violence. (This figure was created by the author).

There are individuals capable of mobilizing crowds instantly. Such individuals may act in ways that attract public attention for a specific purpose, sometimes under the direction of others, and at times without being aware of the consequences (Kara & Çamur, 2024). Individuals who intentionally seek to mobilize a crowd for a specific goal are referred to as provocateurs. The actions and behaviors employed by provocateurs to mobilize crowds include:

- Widespread propaganda
- Making a speech
- Increase excitement
- Transition to action

The management of mass crowds is of great importance for security management and the maintenance of public order. Especially in large events and crisis situations, crowd control requires strategic approaches to minimize potential risks and ensure safety (Still, 2014). This study aims to address crowd management strategies from a theoretical and applied perspective.

3.2. Misconduct of Authorities in Crowd Management

Some attitudes and actions of security forces during crowd management can lead to uncontrolled reactions and trigger chaos. Mistakes made by authorities in crowd management can have a significant impact on public safety and the outcomes of events (Kara & Yıldırım, 2023). Mistakes made by authorities in crowd management can have a significant impact on public safety and the outcomes of events. Several studies emphasize the need to improve training, better understand crowd dynamics and apply contemporary crowd theories to reduce the risks associated with large crowds. (Drury et al., 2003; Reicher et al., 2004).

The mistakes made by authorities in crowd management have a significant impact on public safety and the outcomes of events. Several studies highlight the importance of enhancing professional training and integrating contemporary crowd theories with a deeper understanding of crowd dynamics to mitigate risks in large gatherings (Brewer & Wollman, 2011; Fourati et al., 2017). The 2011 UK riots, which started in London and spread to other cities such as Manchester and Liverpool, triggered important debates about their causes and how to prevent similar violence in the future (Borch, 2013). John Brewer and Howard Wollman (2011) argued that sociology can help explain these riots by emphasizing that crowd behavior is complex and often irrational. Authors argue that crowds do not have clear motivations and therefore their behavior is unpredictable. This view that crowds are irrational has been criticized by some sociologists. According to the critical perspective, mass protests often occur in response to perceived injustices and are often based on meaningful reasons. However,

the image of irrational crowds continues to shape police tactics (Brindal et al., 2022). As historical examples show, the same theoretical approaches can lead to different practical applications; for example, urban reforms and totalitarian mobilizations can draw on the same theoretical foundation (Borch, 2013).

The persistence of the notion that crowds are irrational makes it difficult to adopt rational strategies and ignores the emotional dynamics that play an important role in crowd behavior (Marsden, 2013). In this context, a more nuanced understanding of crowd behavior that includes both rational and emotional elements is needed (Sa'ad et al., 2023).

3.3. Some Wrong Attitudes and Behaviors of Security Forces in Crowd Management

As observed in the incidents mentioned above, the manner in which security forces intervene can significantly influence the outcome. Examples of inappropriate attitudes and behaviors during crowd management that may escalate incidents include the following:

3.3.1. Excessive Use of Force

The disproportionate use of force by security forces can create fear and anger in crowds, which can lead to panic or violent reactions. In particular, mistakes made by law enforcement officers in response to provocation can facilitate the work of provocateurs seeking to unite and mobilize crowds against state authority. The disproportionate use of force can create fear and anger in individuals and cause crowds to panic or fight back (Hoggett & Stott, 2010). Security forces' excessive use of intervention tools such as batons, pepper spray or rubber bullets against protests or public events can lead to escalation.

3.3.2. Misdirection, Lack of Information and Contradictory Instructions

Information needs to be consistent and clear in order to guide the crowd safely. Misleading or incomplete information can cause chaos (Helbing & Mukerji, 2012). Conflicting or inadequate information from security guards can cause the crowd to act in the wrong way and expose them to potential dangers. Especially in emergencies, clear and accurate information is vital. Fear and panic in crowded areas as a result of any incident can negatively affect public safety (Kara & Çamur, 2024). Conflicting or incorrect guidance by security guards may cause the crowd to act in the wrong way. Especially in emergency evacuation processes, such mistakes can pose great risks (Helbing & Mukerji, 2012). For example, in the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster of 1989, misdirection by police and security forces led to the crowd getting trapped in one area, resulting in 96 deaths and 766 injuries (Still, 2014). Such incidents demonstrate that the behavior of security forces directly affects crowd dynamics.

3.3.3. Lack of Preventive Dialogue

Failure by authorities to communicate meaningfully with protest groups, especially early in the mobilisation process, can contribute to escalation and conflict between security forces and demonstrators (Richards, 2017). Negotiation and mediation are important in the management of social incidents (Ministry of Interior, 2020).

3.3.4. Aggressive or Provocative Behavior

Harsh hand gestures, shouting or using a condescending tone by security personnel may provoke individuals in the crowd and increase anger. Such behavior makes crowd control difficult and may trigger unwanted incidents. For example, insults, written and verbal provocation, throwing objects, etc. are among the crowd provoking elements. Harsh hand gestures, shouting directions or using a condescending tone can provoke individuals in the crowd and increase anger (Reicher, 2001). Harsh

and imperative language is a misbehavior that provokes the crowd. Shouting loudly at the crowd, using a condescending or commanding tone can cause individuals to resist (Drury & Reicher, 2000)

3.3.5. Unnecessary Provocative Actions

Physical gestures such as rough gestures, provocative glances or direct challenges to individuals can provoke a crowd.

3.3.6. Rapid and Immediate Interventions

A sudden attack on the crowd, a hard push or uncontrolled interventions can trigger panic and lead to stampedes (Still, 2014).

3.3.7. Unplanned and Uncoordinated Interventions

Lack of prior preparation on how to manage incidents and uncoordinated security measures can make the response unsuccessful. Harsh interventions against non-criminals at the scene can increase the anger of crowds. Excessive interference in the internal workings of organizations can also have negative consequences.

3.3.8. Inadequate Intervention

A delayed or indecisive response by security forces in the face of potential danger creates uncertainty in the crowd and can lead to a loss of control. Timely and decisive intervention is critical in preventing potential chaos.

3.3.9. Blocking Escape Routes

Incorrectly positioned barriers or narrow passages by security forces can cause crowd congestion. Incorrectly positioned security barriers or narrow passages can create congestion and panic in the crowd (Fruin, 1993). Especially in emergencies, it is vital that escape routes are clear and accessible. It is recommended that organizations develop Crowd Movement Models and Evacuation Plans, Evacuation strategies and have them ready. ensures that crowds are directed to exit points in an orderly manner (Still, 2014). When constructing large public spaces, easy evacuation of crowds should also be taken into account (Görer Tamer, 2021).

4. Results and Discussion with Case Examples

Some behaviors of authorities during social events can lead to large-scale protests, popular uprisings and social unrest. In particular, excessive use of force, miscommunication strategies or provocative rhetoric by security forces can lead to escalation and mass reactions. Table 2 mentioned that some notable incidents of provocative actions by the authorities, based on media reports and academic sources:

Table 2. Case Study Examples (International).

Case Study	Description	Source
London 2011 Riots	The riots in London spread as a result of inadequate police response and disproportionate use of force. This shows how crowds can get out of control.	Brewer & Wollman (2011)
2019 Hong Kong Protests	During the 2019 Hong Kong protests, organisers estimated that nearly two million participants joined the demonstrations at their peak, illustrating how	Borch (2013; Shek, 2020)

	inadequate police response and political rhetoric can rapidly escalate crowd movements.	
Pilgrimage (2006 and 2015)	Crowd management failures during the Hajj pilgrimage, especially inadequate intervention by security guards and miscommunication, led to a major disaster.	Fourati et al. (2017); BBC Turkish (2015).
2013 Taksim Gezi Park Protests	During the 2013 Gezi Park protests in Turkey, disproportionate use of force by security forces reportedly escalated into violent clashes involving thousands of participants and numerous injuries (Brindal et al., 2022).	Brindal et al. (2022)
2005 French Riots	Riots by young people in the French suburbs have grown as police have become more aggressive in their approach to society and crowd control has been lost.	Marsden (2013)
2011 Egypt Tahrir Square Protests	The uprisings in Tahrir Square in Egypt have spiraled out of control due to a lack of response from the rulers and a botched intervention by security forces.	Sa'ad et al. (2023)
White House Raid (2021)	Supporters of former President Donald Trump, who refused to accept the results of the 2020 presidential election, attacked the Congress building. The unprepared and inadequate response of the security forces led to the escalation of the incident.	Anadolu Agency (2021)
The Tyre Nichols Case (2023)	On January 7, 2023, Tyre Nichols, a young black man in Memphis, was stopped by police officers for reckless driving and then beaten with excessive force by five officers. three days The death of Nichols, who died later, sparked widespread protests in many US cities. Following the incident, Memphis police announced that five officers were suspended and an investigation was launched	(VOA Turkish, 2023).
George Floyd Incident and Aftermath (2020)	On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, an African American man, died in Minneapolis as a result of prolonged knee pressure on his neck while being detained by police officer Derek Chauvin. Footage of the incident spread on social media, sparking large-scale protests across the US and around the world. During the protests, looting, clashes with police and vandalism took place in some areas. This incident demonstrated how social reaction to police brutality can quickly turn into a global movement.	(Associated Press, 2020).
1989 Hillsborough Stadium Disaster	In the 1989 Hillsborough Stadium Disaster in England, misdirection by police and security forces caused entrapment of fans, resulting in 96 fatalities and approximately 766 injuries (	(Britannica, 2025; Still, 2014)

2010 Duisburg Love Parade Disaster	At the Love Parade music festival in Duisburg, Germany, 21 people were killed and more than 500 injured in a panic caused by inadequate crowd management and security measures. This incident demonstrates that inadequate crowd management by security forces can lead to tragic consequences.	(BBC Turkish, 2010).
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The comparative evaluation of the following cases provides analytical insights into common weaknesses and effective practices in crowd management. These cases collectively highlight that failures in communication, misjudgment of risk, and inadequate preparedness consistently exacerbate crowd crises. A cross-case analysis indicates that early dialogue, proportional use of force, and spatial planning are the most effective preventive strategies across contexts. Social unrest and protests at the local level often start as small-scale incidents but can escalate into serious security problems when authorities respond in a provocative or disproportionate manner.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study combines current media reports and academic sources to show how missteps by the authorities can lead to social movements. Such incidents, usually start with individual or small group actions, but the wrong interventions of the authorities both in and around the world can turn into large mass movements as a result of. Excessive use of force by security forces or irresponsible rhetoric by the authorities further exacerbate social provocative behavior. In fact, any crowd, regardless of the purpose of gathering, carries the risk of an incident. To address, manage, crowds Those who have the authority and responsibility to instruct and organize should not be ordinary individuals. A movie theater operator, a clergyman addressing a crowd, a school principal, a district governor, a mayor and all politicians should be very careful when speaking to a crowd.

Provocative actions by the authorities can lead to crises not only locally but also nationally and internationally. Security forces and authorities need to use careful language, avoid violent interventions and take into account public sentiment. The media, social media platforms and public pressure cause such incidents to spread faster and provoke widespread reactions.

The attitudes and behaviors of security forces in crowd management directly affect the course of events. Avoiding excessive use of force, providing clear and accurate information, displaying a calm and professional attitude, intervening in a timely and effective manner and keeping escape routes open contribute to the safe and controlled management of crowds.

In particular, politicians should avoid inflammatory statements about their opponents when addressing crowds. When politicians, whose main purpose is to get the votes of the public, provocative statements make, such as "booing the crowd", it not only increases the risk potential of the crowd at that moment, but may also deepen hatred and enmity within the society. The solution to this issue the of politicians is up to conscience, ethics and morality.

In this study, crowd management strategies from theoretical and practical are discussed perspectives. Effective crowd management requires psychological approaches, risk analysis, technological solutions and coordination of law enforcement agencies (Fourati et al., 2017). Professional and strategic actions of security forces in crowd management can prevent potential conflict and chaos. Excessive use of force should be avoided, effective communication strategies should be implemented, and security personnel should be supported with regular training. In the future, the use of AI-assisted crowd analysis and simulation techniques will help security forces to manage incidents more effectively. Above all, it is recommended that those with the authority and responsibility to address and organize

crowds should receive training in crowd management. School administrators and law enforcement officers should be required to include such a course in their training programs. Continuously updated training modules officials changing crowd dynamics and are critical to ensure that are knowledgeable about intervention and control strategies (Marsden, 2013).

Recent work in crowd safety research has emphasized the importance of multilayered safety systems and the integration of artificial intelligence and data-driven analytics in crowd monitoring and risk assessment (Haghani et al., 2023; Alasmari et al., 2024). These advances point to the potential for real-time prediction of crowd behavior shifts and more effective preventive interventions. Therefore, it is recommended that national and local crowd management policies be aligned with international best practices through the adoption of AI-supported surveillance systems, structured evidence-based training programmes, and cross-agency coordination. Establishing dedicated “Crowd Safety Units” within law enforcement institutions could further enhance operational readiness and institutional learning.

5.1. What should be the Strategic Approach in the Face of the Crowd?

Crowd management is a critical process that requires a professional and deliberate approach by security forces. Provocative behaviors can increase crowd unrest and lead to chaos. This study examines how security forces should behave in the face of crowds, which attitudes can be provocative, and strategies that can be implemented to avoid such negative effects.

Brindal et al. (2022) draw attention to the importance of understanding crowd behavior in the context of responses to social events and argue that this information is critical for developing effective crowd management strategies.

Mass crowds are a natural consequence of social movements, major events or emergencies. The attitudes and actions of security forces in the face of crowds can directly affect the course of events (Reicher, 2001). The wrong strategies of security forces can lead to chaotic situations by creating anger and unrest in the crowd. Therefore, it is of great importance that security personnel exhibit trained and controlled behavior.

The following strategies can be for security forces to be successful in crowd management suggested:

- Empathy and Calmness: It is important that security personnel try to understand the emotions of individuals in the crowd and use a calm tone (Waddington, 2007).
- Communication and Information: Clear, understandable and consistent information can prevent uncontrolled behavior of individuals in a crowd (Cooper & Innes, 2009).
- Visual and Auditory Stimuli: Guidance through tools such as mega speakers, digital signage or mobile notification systems enables individuals to move in a more organized manner (Helbing & Johansson, 2011).
- Gradual Intervention Strategy: Following a gradual intervention plan, verbal warnings should be given first, followed by low level use of force if necessary (Hoggett & Stott, 2010).
- Planning for Human Density: Security forces should analyze crowd density and ensure the correct positioning of barriers and crossing points (Still, 2014).
- Special Training Programs: Psychological and strategic training of security personnel on crowd management will enable them to act consciously in the face of incidents (Fruin, 1993).

There are successful practices for the management of mass crowds around the world. For example, in the US, emergency evacuation scenarios are tested in stadiums and practical trainings are organized. Intelligent evacuation systems used in the London Marathon, density management algorithms applied for subway safety in Tokyo, and real-time analysis systems used in large events in the USA offer

effective solutions in crowd management (Marsden, 1998). At the very beginning, it is also important that the planning of cities is planned in a way that facilitates crowd management (Kılıç, 2024).

Compliance with Ethical Standard

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