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REVIEW ARTICLE

SCHOOL SECURITY PRACTICES: INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF HIRING PRIVATE SECURITY SERVICES TO THE STUDENTS' SENSE OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

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ABSTRACT

Security services are an imperative component of keeping people safe in public spaces, whether in office buildings, school, or in any private and public places. In every establishment, security is like a commodity, private security guards are tasked in keeping each day running smoothly and safely. This study aims to determine and analyses the effect of hiring private security services to the students' sense of safety and security. To test the hypothesis that the effect of hiring security services is significant in students' sense of safety and security, a survey was undertaken and interviews to the selected students at senior high school and selected college students of (2) private institutions and two (2) public institutions in San Pablo City. The results showed that the effect of hiring private security services in the school premises has a significant effect to the students' sense of safety and security as private security services help the school in fostering a safety, secure and positive school environment. Relative to this, the researcher recommends the continuation and improvement of school security practices by hiring security services and explore other aspects of security guards' presence.

KEYWORDS

School Security Practices, Sense of Safety and Security, Private Security Services

1. INTRODUCTION

Safety is a fundamental human need. In everyday life, we take safety measures with our children by making sure that they are safe and sound in their daily activities (Morgan, 2022). But what about when the safety measures are out of our hands? What is being done to alleviate our worries and take care of our children secure when we send our children to school?. Nowadays, many students experienced bullying in school or become victim to certain kinds of abuse in and around their school premises. All these issues can hamper with their academic growth and make them less focused on their studies. To deal with any sort of violence, be it bullying or fights between schoolmates, schools are recommended to hire school security services.

Today, school security has become one of the top priorities of the Department of Education (DepEd), with the primary goal of keeping students and staff safe. DepEd with their recent pronouncement, planning to hire at least one security guard for every public school in the country. DepEd is drafting a joint memorandum circular with the Department of the Interior and Local Government and Department of Budget and Management, to allow the local governments to use their Special Education Fund to hire at least one security guard per school (Cabalaza, Philippine Daily Inquirer, August 2022).

By investing in private security services, there is always going to be someone who is guarding the campus and ensuring the safety of everyone in and around it. Hiring private security services, gives a feeling of safety and security to not only the students but also the parents. Parents can be less worried about their child's safety when the school has a security

system that can be trusted. Private security guards have a variety of responsibilities that they must fulfil to keep all members of the school safe. They act as a deterrent to criminal activity, patrol the grounds and monitor entrances, provide emergency response services in case of an emergency, and prevent any prohibited items from entering the school building (Quigley, 2021).

The objective of this study is to determine and analyse the effect of hiring private security services to the students' sense of safety and security. Significantly this study will benefit the private and public institutions in sustaining and improving their security measures and practices. For private security services in improving and enhancing their performance in keeping the safety of the school for the students. lastly, for future researchers to investigate other factors and variables in relation to school security measures and further study about private security services.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The need for safety was acknowledged as a basic human need (Maslow 'Hierarchy of Needs', Pichère and Cadiat, 2015). According to a study, security can be defined as "the perceived or actual ability to prepare for, adapt to, withstand, and recover from dangers and crises caused by people's deliberate, intentional, and malicious acts such as terrorism, sabotage, organized crime, or hacking." (Jore, 2019).

Violence is defined by the World Health Organization in the world report on violence and health as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in

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injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation (Krug et al., 2022). At school, the violence can also be presented among students' acts of violence like persecution, disqualification, stigmatization, or aggression against another, which can also be recognized as "bullying", a term that refers to the establishment and maintenance of unbalanced power relations between subjects (Peña et al., 2018).

School violence covers all activities and actions that cause pain or physical or mental injuries to people who act in the school environment, or who seek to damage objects that are in that area (Tijmes, 2012). The definition allows us to think various manifestations of violence and the involvement of distinct people in schools. According to UNESCO, all forms of violence and bullying in schools infringe the fundamental right to education and unsafe learning environments reduce the quality of education for all learners, Plan International suggests that 246 million children and adolescents experience violence in and around school every year (UNESCO, 2017). However, there is no decent data yet on school violence in the Philippines but based on the National Baseline Survey on Violence Against Children, eight (8) in ten (10) Filipino children experience some form of violence at home, in school, and in their community (Peña, Inquirer.net January 2023).

The above principles are relevant to the current study because they are the basis for the school security practices. It is agreeable that safety and security play a very significant role in our society. School security practices are integral in keeping the student safe and free to any form of violence. Hiring private security is one of the school security practices to keep the school and student environment safe.

3. METHODS

To conduct this research, a mixed-methods approach was adopted. The study used descriptive research method through the survey strategy. The descriptive survey method research is a fact-finding study with sufficient and correct interpretation of the findings. This study used a researcher-made questionnaire as the primary device in gathering data and information. An online survey via google form was randomly administered to fifty (50) students from Private schools and fifty (50) Public institutions. It is divided into two parts. Part I focused on the student's perception about school security measures and practices and Part II focused on the student's perception on hiring private security services in the school premises. Selected participants were also involved in in-depth interviews to gather qualitative data on their experiences and feelings regarding the presence of private security services.

Applicable statistical tools were established to analyse the data generated by the answers. The data obtained were tallied, analysed, and organized in tabular format in preparation for statistical analysis. The mean and standard deviation were used to evaluate the students' perception about school security measures and practices and students' perception on hiring private security services in school premises.

The measures of each criterion are presented below:

Measure the Students' perception on the school security measures and practices	Measure the Students' perception on hiring private security services in school premises
5-Very Satisfactory	5-Strongly Agree
4-Excellent	4-Agree
3-Satisfactory	3-Neutral
2-Fair	2-Disagree
1-Poor	1-Strongly Disagree

4. RESULTS

The data collected from the participants indicated a significant positive impact of hiring private security services on students' sense of safety and security. Analysis of the quantitative data revealed that 81% of the participants reported very satisfactory on their respective school's security measures and practices. The data also showed that 96% of the respondents are feeling safer and more secure inside the campus because of the presence of private security services. Moreover, the qualitative data obtained through in-depth interviews offered valuable insights into the reasons behind the positive impact. Students expressed that the presence of private security services created a visible deterrent for potential security threats, making them feel less vulnerable. Increased patrols and improved surveillance systems were also highlighted as major contributors to their

enhanced sense of safety and security on campus. In this context, the results ultimately demonstrated that the hiring of private security services in school premises has a significant effect on the students' sense of safety and security.

5. CONCLUSION

The findings of this research highlight the positive impact that hiring private security services can have on students' sense of safety and security within educational institutions. The implementation of these services led to a significant improvement in students' perceptions of safety, resulting in a higher level of peace of mind and overall satisfaction. The visible presence of security personnel, regular patrols, and improved surveillance systems enhanced the overall safety climate on campus.

It is important to acknowledge that while the results overwhelmingly support the effectiveness of hiring private security services, it is still recommended that the school should improve their security measures and in order to do that, the Schools can revisit the following Department of Education - Department Orders as guide in security and safety measures, (a) DO 37, S. 2015 - The Comprehensive Disaster Risk reduction and management (DRRM) in Basic Education Framework; (b) DO 40, S 2012 - DEPED Child Protection Policy.

In addition, the study also suggests that the school can consider adopting the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSS) initiated by Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction & Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES). The goals of CSS are to take a participatory risk-informed approach to: (a) Protect learners, educators and staff from death, injury, violence and harm in schools and other learning spaces; (b) Plan for education and protection continuity, and limit disruptions to learning in the face of shocks, stresses, hazards and threats of all kinds; (c) Promote knowledge and skills of learners and duty-bearers, to contribute to risk reduction, resilience building, and sustainable development.

Overall, this study provides evidence that the hiring of private security services positively contributes to students' sense of safety and security on educational campuses. Institutions seeking to prioritize the safety and well-being of their students should consider investing in such services.

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