

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Enforcement and Education: Cooperation between security personnel and educators on law enforcements in schools

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## ABSTRACT

Maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment requires effective collaboration among all school stakeholders. While numerous studies have explored school safety and discipline separately, there remains a significant gap in understanding the dynamics of collaboration between educators and security personnel in the enforcement of school rules and policies. This exploratory study investigated how these two groups negotiate roles, responsibilities, and communication strategies in practice, and how their cooperation influences school safety, student behavior, and the overall learning environment. The study employed a qualitative research design, using one-on-one interviews with a purposive sample of 6 teachers and 6 security personnel from Samar, Rizal, Butuan City, Legaspi City, and Taguig City, Philippines. Data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis to uncover recurring themes and patterns related to role-sharing, coordination mechanisms, and the perceived impact of collaboration on discipline and safety outcomes. The findings reveal that effective collaboration relies on clear role delineation, where teachers manage classroom behavior while security personnel handle broader safety concerns. Key coordination mechanisms identified include immediate radio communication, regular briefings, and post-incident debriefs. Ultimately, the study suggests that strong educator-security partnerships contribute to a safer, less punitive, and more conducive learning environment.

**Keywords:** Enforcement, Education, Cooperation, Security Personnel

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, growing concerns over student discipline, school violence, and overall campus security have prompted many educational institutions to increase the presence of security personnel on school

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grounds <sup>[1]</sup>. This development reflects a broader shift in the educational landscape, where ensuring safety has become a shared responsibility among various school stakeholders. Traditionally, the enforcement of school rules and the maintenance of order were responsibilities handled solely by educators and administrators. However, the inclusion of security personnel whether school-based police officers, guards, or safety officers has introduced new dynamics in the enforcement of school policies <sup>[2-5]</sup>.

Despite this significant structural change, there remains a notable gap in the research on how educators and security personnel collaborate in the practical enforcement of school rules and policies. Specifically, limited attention has been paid to how these professionals negotiate their roles and responsibilities, how they communicate and coordinate disciplinary actions, and how this cooperation impacts the broader school environment <sup>[6-9]</sup>. As such, empirical studies exploring the real-world functioning of educator-security partnerships are needed.

This study seeks to address that gap by investigating the dynamics of collaboration between educators and security personnel in enforcing school rules and policies. The research will examine how responsibilities are shared or divided, what communication strategies are employed, and how both groups perceive the impact of their cooperation on school safety, student behavior, and the overall learning environment <sup>[10,11]</sup>.

The study is situated within the broader context of ensuring student well-being and creating safe educational environments. It draws on the intersection of educational and security practices, recognizing that these domains often overlap in today's schools, particularly in response to disciplinary incidents and concerns about school violence. Problematic outcomes such as the school-to-prison pipeline and disproportionate disciplinary impacts on marginalized students highlight the need for nuanced understanding of these collaborations <sup>[12-16]</sup>.

Key variables include the nature of collaboration (such as communication, coordination, and role clarity) and the perceived outcomes (including safety levels, student conduct, and classroom climate). The main topics explored are school discipline, enforcement of rules, interprofessional cooperation, and school culture. Relevant key concepts include collaboration, enforcement, communication patterns, safety perceptions, and shared responsibility <sup>[17-18]</sup>.

Using a qualitative, exploratory research design, this study will collect data via one-on-one interviews with a purposive sample of six teachers and six security personnel. The data will be analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis, which is suitable for exploring complex social dynamics and meanings constructed by participants <sup>[19,4]</sup>.

The expected outcome is a deeper understanding of the structures, practices, and effects of cooperation between educators and security personnel. Insights from this research aim to inform the development of school policies, staff training, and collaborative protocols that can enhance school safety and promote a more positive and orderly learning environment particularly by emphasizing relational, trauma-informed approaches over punitive measures <sup>[20]</sup>.

## **2. Literature review**

*School Safety and the Need for Collaboration.* School safety is a growing concern globally, leading many educational institutions to implement collaborative frameworks that involve both educators and security personnel in maintaining order and enforcing school rules. The integration of security measures within schools requires a nuanced understanding of how roles, responsibilities, and communication patterns are negotiated between these two professional groups. This review explores the dynamics of collaboration

between educators and security personnel and its impact on school safety, student behavior, and the overall learning environment.

*Role Clarity and Shared Responsibilities.* Research suggests that role clarity is a critical factor in successful collaboration between educators and security personnel. When responsibilities are well-defined, conflicts and overlaps are minimized [21,22]. Typically, educators manage classroom behavior and pedagogy, while security personnel are responsible for handling more serious safety threats. However, in schools with strong collaboration, these roles can become complementary. Devlin [23] emphasizes that mutual respect and understanding of each other's roles can enhance cooperation and improve the efficiency of rule enforcement. Conversely, role ambiguity can lead to tension and inconsistency in the application of school policies [24]. Chavez, Gregorio, Araneta, and Bihag [25] echo this view in their study on organizational compliance, emphasizing that well-informed personnel with clear awareness of their legal and professional responsibilities are better positioned to coordinate effectively.

*Communication and Coordination.* Effective communication is another essential element of cooperation. Schools that facilitate regular communication between educators and security staff through meetings, reports, or shared incident management protocols experience more coordinated and timely responses to disciplinary and safety issues [12]. James and McCallion [26] found that such communication practices help reduce misunderstandings, foster trust, and improve crisis management. Furthermore, open communication promotes a collaborative culture where both groups feel valued and informed [27]. This is reinforced by Leon, Jumalon, Chavez, et al. [28], who found that compliance and policy implementation improved when communication between educators and stakeholders was prioritized.

*Perceptions of School Safety.* The presence of security personnel in schools has mixed implications for perceived safety. On one hand, the visibility of security staff can provide reassurance to students and staff, enhancing feelings of safety [29]. On the other hand, excessive security measures may create a punitive, prison-like atmosphere that undermines trust and engagement [30]. Fisher and Hennessy [31] caution against relying solely on security presence without integrating the role of educators in maintaining safety, as this can lead to alienation among students.

*Proactive vs. Reactive Safety Approaches.* Moreover, a proactive rather than reactive approach to school safety tends to yield more positive outcomes. Joint strategies such as early intervention, positive behavior supports, and relationship-building contribute significantly to a safe and inclusive school climate [32]. Brown [33] advocates for training security personnel in youth development and restorative practices, enabling them to support students constructively rather than simply enforce rules. Chavez, Gregorio, Araneta, et al. [34] highlight how self-initiated protection behaviors by teachers, grounded in policy awareness, can support proactive safety measures and foster a culture of vigilance and care.

*Impact on Discipline Practices.* Cooperation between educators and security personnel also influences how discipline is managed within schools. Gastic [35] highlights that consistent discipline policies, when jointly enforced, can reduce behavioral issues and increase fairness. Rumberger and Losen [36] found that collaboration leads to fewer suspensions and more supportive disciplinary practices. However, disparities in discipline can persist if security staff are not adequately trained in equitable and culturally responsive practices [37]. Bucoy, Enumerabellon, Amilhamja, et al. [38] found that many teachers are unaware of their legal rights and responsibilities, which can lead to inconsistencies and over-reliance on punitive security responses instead of educational interventions.

*Student Perceptions and Relationships.* Student perceptions of authority figures also play a significant role in shaping school behavior. Broll and Howells [39] argue that when students see security personnel as

allies rather than adversaries, they are more likely to engage positively with school staff. Positive relationships between students and adults in school contribute to improved behavior and fewer disciplinary infractions [40]. Payne and Welch [41] emphasize that a school culture grounded in care and mutual respect enhances student cooperation and reduces misconduct. Dagoy, Ariban, Chavez, et al. [42] add that when educators demonstrate professional integrity and a clear commitment to student welfare, students respond with increased trust and cooperation.

*Influence on the Learning Environment.* The broader learning environment is also affected by educator-security collaboration. Safe and orderly environments are conducive to academic engagement and student achievement [43]. Research by Cornell et al. [44] shows that schools with integrated safety strategies report higher academic performance and lower rates of absenteeism. Additionally, when educators and security personnel operate as a cohesive team, students experience more consistency in expectations and behavioral norms across classrooms and common areas [45].

*Fostering a Positive School Culture.* Finally, collaboration contributes to a stronger sense of community within the school. Integrated teams of educators and security personnel foster a shared mission focused on student well-being and academic success [46]. Osher et al. [47] argue that comprehensive approaches, which incorporate mental health support, equitable discipline, and student engagement strategies, create inclusive and effective learning environments. In conclusion, the literature underscores the value of cooperative relationships between educators and security personnel in promoting safety, discipline, and positive school culture. Successful collaboration hinges on role clarity, open communication, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to student development. As schools continue to address safety concerns, fostering these partnerships will remain a critical component of effective educational leadership and policy. Chavez, Gregorio, Araneta, and Bihag [25] and Chavez et al. [34] both stress the importance of legal frameworks and teacher protection policies, suggesting that strong institutional backing can reinforce collaborative safety strategies and lead to more stable, policy-driven school environments.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Research design**

This study employed an exploratory qualitative research design to gain an in-depth understanding of the cooperation between security personnel and educators in enforcing school rules and policies. Given the limited existing literature on the topic, an exploratory approach was deemed appropriate for uncovering the nature of this collaboration, its operational dynamics, and its perceived effects on school safety, student behavior, and the learning environment.

#### **3.2. Population and sampling**

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants from Samar, Rizal, Butuan City, Legaspi City, and Taguig City, Philippines, who were directly involved in the enforcement of school rules and safety protocols. The sample included 6 teachers who were actively engaged in student discipline and the implementation of school policies, as well as 6 security personnel responsible for maintaining school safety and enforcing regulations. Participants were chosen based on their relevant experience, current role within the school setting, and their willingness to take part in in-depth interviews. To ensure a diverse perspective, the participants represented varied years of experience ranging from 2 to 5 years and were drawn from both public and private institutions.

### 3.3. Instrument

The main research instrument for this study was an interview guide developed in alignment with the study’s objectives. The guide contained questions designed to explore the dynamics of collaboration between educators and security personnel, as well as the influence of this collaboration on various school outcomes. These questions were formulated to elicit detailed narratives and reflective insights from participants, enabling the collection of rich, qualitative data. Table 1 presents the list of guide questions used in this research study, mapped explicitly to the research objectives.

**Table 1.** Interview guide questions.

Objectives	Interview Questions
To investigate the dynamics of collaboration between security personnel and educators in the enforcement of school rules and policies, focusing on how roles, responsibilities, and communication patterns are negotiated and carried out in practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How would you describe the working relationship between educators and security personnel when it comes to enforcing school rules?</li> <li>2. In what ways are roles and responsibilities shared or divided between educators and security personnel?</li> <li>3. What forms of communication or coordination do you usually rely on to ensure effective cooperation in handling discipline and safety concerns?</li> </ol>
To examine the effects of collaboration between educators and security personnel on school safety, student behavior, and the overall learning environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Based on your experience, how has the cooperation between security personnel and educators influenced the level of safety in the school?</li> <li>2. In what ways do you think this cooperation has affected student discipline and behavior?</li> <li>3. How do you perceive the overall impact of this collaboration on the learning environment and relationships within the school community?</li> </ol>

### 3.4. Data gathering procedure

Data were gathered through semi-structured one-on-one interviews, which provided the flexibility to explore participants’ personal experiences and perceptions while ensuring that key topics relevant to the research objectives were thoroughly addressed. An interview guide was utilized to steer the conversation, featuring open-ended questions grouped according to the study’s two main objectives. The interviews covered several key areas, including the nature of collaboration between educators and security personnel, the division of roles and responsibilities in enforcing school rules, communication and coordination strategies, and the perceived impact of this cooperation on school safety, student behavior, and the overall learning environment. Each interview lasted between 30 to 45 minutes and was audio-recorded with the participant’s informed consent to ensure accurate documentation and facilitate later transcription for analysis.

### 3.5. Data analysis

Data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis, guided by Braun and Clarke’s [48] framework. This approach involved several key phases: first, familiarization with the data through repeated reading of interview transcripts; second, the generation of initial codes across the dataset; third, identifying patterns to develop preliminary themes; fourth, reviewing and refining these themes to ensure they accurately represent the data; fifth, defining and naming the final themes; and finally, producing a coherent and meaningful report based on the findings. Reflexive thematic analysis emphasized the active role of the researcher in interpreting the data and constructing meaning, recognizing that researcher subjectivity is an integral part of the analytical process rather than a bias to be eliminated.

## 4. Results

**Research Objectives 1.** To investigate the dynamics of collaboration between security personnel and educators in the enforcement of school rules and policies, focusing on how roles, responsibilities, and communication patterns are negotiated and carried out in practice.

**Question No. 1.** How would you describe the working relationship between educators and security personnel when it comes to enforcing school rules?

### 1.1 *Mutual Support and Partnership*

Ten respondents (comprising 5 teachers and 5 security personnel) viewed each other as essential partners in maintaining school order. Teachers noted that security personnel assisted them by monitoring areas where they could not always be present, like hallways or gates. This presence made it easier to maintain order, especially during dismissals or events, allowing educators to focus more on teaching rather than safety enforcement. Furthermore, participants valued when security personnel approached students with respect. One teacher emphasized that while rules are important, the manner of enforcement is equally critical.

" I see security personnel as our partners. They help us by monitoring areas we can't always be present in, like hallways or gates. Their presence makes it easier to maintain order, especially during dismissals or events."

" I value when security personnel approach students with respect. Rules are important, but so is the way they're enforced."

### 1.2 *Collaborative Engagement*

Similarly, ten respondents (5 teachers and 5 security personnel) shared that they worked closely together, with security personnel respecting the educators' deeper knowledge of the students. Security personnel described their role as backing up teachers, particularly when a rule was being ignored outside the classroom. They reported deferring to teachers on matters of academic discipline but stepping in firmly when safety was at risk or when students tested limits. This boundary-setting was seen as crucial for a smooth working relationship.

" We work closely with teachers, and I respect that they know the students better. Our role is to back them up, especially when a rule is being ignored outside the classroom."

" There are times when students test limits. I step in firmly when safety is at stake, but I avoid interfering in matters that are clearly for teachers, like academic discipline."

### 1.3 *Navigating Divergences in Enforcement Approaches*

However, five respondents (primarily teachers) expressed that they sometimes felt a mismatch in disciplinary styles. These educators noted that while their goal was to guide students and turn mistakes into learning opportunities, security staff occasionally approached situations more strictly, viewing misbehavior primarily as a rule violation. Some teachers felt this could be intimidating to students and suggested that shared training would help align their approaches.

" Sometimes I feel there's a mismatch. As teachers, we enforce rules with the goal of guiding students and helping them learn from mistakes, but security staff may approach it more strictly."

" We all want discipline, but we differ in approach. Teachers often see misbehavior as a learning opportunity, while security tends to see it as a rule violation."

**Question No. 2.** In what ways are roles and responsibilities shared or divided between educators and security personnel?

### *2.1 Delineation of Academic and Security Roles*

Ten respondents (comprising 5 teachers and 5 security personnel) emphasized that their primary role was to handle the academic and personal growth of students, while security focused on maintaining order and safety in the campus environment. Participants noted that they often overlapped during incidents, such as when a student refused to follow rules, but the first line of discipline usually came from the educators. Notably, teachers expressed a strong desire to balance safety with a welcoming atmosphere, fearing that excessive security could negatively impact the school climate. This sentiment highlights a critical tension in school safety: the need to ensure security without creating an environment that feels punitive or carceral to the students.

" Our primary role is to handle the academic and personal growth of students, while security focuses on maintaining order and safety in the campus environment."

" We don't want students to feel like school is a police state. That's why we prefer security to be a supportive presence, stepping in only when situations can't be resolved in class."

### *2.2 Escalation Protocols and Consistency*

Similarly, ten respondents (5 teachers and 5 security personnel) noted that educators enforced classroom and behavior expectations, but if a situation escalated beyond their authority or safety capabilities, security stepped in. Respondents observed that sometimes students tested boundaries, but when they saw that security worked with the teachers, they realized rules were consistent and not just about one teacher's authority. Security personnel provided the necessary support when students became aggressive or when emergencies occurred.

" We enforce classroom and behavior expectations, but if a situation escalates beyond our authority or safety, security steps in."

" Having security step in doesn't mean we give up responsibility; it means we recognize when the situation needs a level of intervention beyond teaching."

### *2.3 Complementary Disciplinary Functions*

Five respondents (primarily teachers) highlighted that teachers were more concerned with understanding the 'why' behind a student's behavior, while security tended to handle the immediate consequences. Ideally, participants felt these roles complemented each other: teachers knew the students better and understood their behavior patterns, while security personnel backed them up when rules were ignored or when students tested limits beyond what a teacher could handle.

" Teachers are more concerned with understanding the 'why' behind a student's behavior, while security tends to handle the immediate consequences."

" We see discipline as part of teaching, helping students learn from mistakes, not just punishing them. That's why we focus on the 'why' behind behaviors, whether it's stress at home, peer influence, or academic struggles."

**Question No. 3.** What forms of communication or coordination do you usually rely on to ensure effective cooperation in handling discipline and safety concerns?

### 3.1 Immediate Communication Protocols

Ten respondents (comprising 5 teachers and 5 security personnel) indicated that if a situation felt like it might escalate, they immediately contacted security through the school's radio system. Participants described this as the fastest way to get help without leaving their class. Teachers noted that sometimes just knowing security was on the way helped calm a student down. They alerted the student that they had called for support, and it often diffused the tension. Additionally, respondents emphasized that having the option to call security right away allowed them to continue focusing on the rest of the class.

*" If a situation feels like it might escalate, I immediately call security through the school's radio system. It's the fastest way to get help without leaving my class."*

*" It gives me peace of mind to know that I'm not handling difficult behavior alone. When I call on the radio, security responds quickly and professionally."*

### 3.2 Scheduled Coordination Meetings

Similarly, ten respondents (5 teachers and 5 security personnel) stated that they met with security staff during weekly briefings so they were aligned on policies and aware of any students who needed closer monitoring. Participants noted that the weekly briefings helped clear up gray areas in discipline. Sometimes teachers interpreted rules differently, but when they talked with security, they aligned on how they should be enforced. Furthermore, respondents mentioned that a lot of issues were avoided because they could alert security early if they knew a student had been struggling that week.

*" We meet with security staff during weekly briefings so we're aligned on policies and aware of any students who need closer monitoring."*

*"A lot of issues are avoided because we can alert security early if we know a student has been struggling that week. They can discreetly keep an eye out."*

### 3.3 Post-Incident Debriefing

Five respondents (primarily security personnel) mentioned that after they responded to an incident, they usually spoke directly with the teacher involved to make sure they were on the same page moving forward. Security staff noted that sometimes what they saw during the incident was only part of the story, and talking to the teacher afterward helped them understand what led up to the situation. Additionally, participants highlighted that debriefing built trust. Teachers knew security personnel were not just stepping in to take over, but were working with them to prevent the same problem from happening again.

*"After we respond to an incident, we usually talk directly with the teacher involved to make sure we're on the same page moving forward."*

*" Debriefing builds trust. Teachers know we're not just stepping in to take over, we're working with them to prevent the same problem from happening again."*

**Research Objectives 2.** To examine the effects of cooperation between educators and security personnel on school safety, student behavior, and the overall learning environment.

**Question No. 1.** Based on your experience, how has the cooperation between security personnel and educators influenced the level of safety in the school?

### *Shared Safety Ownership*

Ten respondents (comprising 5 teachers and 5 security personnel) expressed that while they initially viewed security as solely focused on enforcing rules, they came to see them as partners in creating a safe learning environment. Teachers noted that this partnership allowed them to focus on teaching instead of constantly worrying about discipline. Furthermore, respondents emphasized that the security personnel's visible presence reduced tension in the hallways and prevented small conflicts from escalating.

" At first, I felt security was only about enforcing rules, but now I see them as partners in creating a safe learning environment. Their presence lets me focus on teaching instead of constantly worrying about discipline."

" Their visible presence reduces tension in the hallways and prevents small conflicts from escalating. It reassures me that the school is prioritizing both student and teacher safety."

### *1.2 Contextualized Guidance*

Five respondents (specifically security personnel) highlighted that teachers helped them understand which students needed more guidance rather than strict enforcement. Security staff noted that this input shifted their role from punishment to prevention. With teacher insight, they could step in early to prevent fights or bullying instead of waiting for situations to spiral out of control.

" Teachers help us understand which students may need more guidance instead of strict enforcement. This makes our job less about punishment and more about prevention."

" Teachers know the students better than we do, especially their personalities and backgrounds. When they share this with us, we can respond with more patience and guidance instead of reacting harshly. "

### *1.3 Enhanced Rule Respect*

Additionally, ten respondents (5 teachers and 5 security personnel) observed that the cooperation improved student respect for rules. Participants noted that when students saw teachers and guards united, they were less likely to test boundaries. Previously, some students would behave in class but act out in hallways; however, with aligned enforcement, they respected rules throughout the campus. Respondents believed that this consistency built a culture of accountability.

" The cooperation has improved student respect for rules. When students see teachers and guards united, they're less likely to test boundaries."

"Students tend to respect rules more when they see fairness. Security and teachers discussing and agreeing on how to handle issues shows that rules are applied equally."

**Question No. 2.** In what ways do you think this cooperation has affected student discipline and behavior?

#### *2.1 Increased Behavioral Awareness*

Ten respondents (comprising 5 teachers and 5 security personnel) reported that students were more mindful of their actions because they saw teachers and guards working together. Participants noted that this created a consistent message about discipline. Furthermore, respondents observed that students focused more on academics because they were less distracted by rule-breaking or disorder.

"I noticed that students are more mindful of their actions because they see teachers and guards working together. It creates a consistent message about discipline."

" When students realize that teachers and security share the same expectations, they stop trying to play one side against the other."

### *2.2 Reduction in Aggressive Behavior*

Five respondents (primarily security personnel) observed that students were less aggressive and more cooperative because they sensed unity between faculty and security. Security staff noted that this discouraged negative behavior and made their role easier, as they did not have to rely on force or strict measures as much. Even in tense situations, students calmed down faster because they recognized that discipline was fair and supported by everyone.

" Students are less aggressive and more cooperative because they sense unity between faculty and security. It discourages negative behavior."

"This cooperation also makes our role easier, we don't have to rely on force or strict measures as much, because the presence of teamwork already discourages bad behavior."

### *2.3 Respectful Engagement*

Ten respondents (5 teachers and 5 security personnel) indicated that students became more respectful, especially when they realized that rules were not just enforced but explained by both security and teachers. Participants shared that when they took time to explain the reasons behind the rules, students were more willing to follow them. Teachers noted that students asked more questions about rules, showing engagement rather than resistance.

" Students have become more respectful, especially when they realize that rules are not just enforced but explained by both security and teachers."

"Students also ask more questions now about rules, which shows they are more engaged in understanding rather than simply resisting."

**Question No. 3.** How do you perceive the overall impact of this collaboration on the learning environment and relationships within the school community?

### *3.1 Calmer School Climate*

Ten respondents (comprising 5 teachers and 5 security personnel) expressed that collaboration made the environment calmer. Students knew that expectations were consistent, whether inside the classroom or outside in the hallways. Participants noted that because of this collaboration, they noticed fewer disruptions during class transitions. Students moved more orderly since they knew both teachers and guards were aligned in enforcing discipline.

" The collaboration makes the environment calmer. Students know that expectations are consistent, whether it's inside the classroom or outside in the hallways."

" It reduces tension in the school. Students don't feel singled out, because they see the same set of rules applied everywhere, not just in certain classrooms. "

### *3.2 Promotion of Mutual Respect*

Ten respondents (5 teachers and 5 security personnel) shared that students were less likely to argue when rules were reinforced consistently by both teachers and security staff. Mutual respect grew because students recognized that teachers and guards valued fairness. Participants observed fewer arguments between students and staff as the consistent approach prevented misunderstandings.

" Students are less likely to argue when rules are reinforced consistently by both teachers and security staff."

" I've observed fewer arguments between students and staff. The consistent approach prevents misunderstandings and shows students that discipline is not personal, it's for everyone's benefit."

### *3.3 Strengthening of Relational Trust*

Five respondents (primarily security personnel) mentioned that students approached them not only for discipline concerns but also for advice or help, which improved relationships. Participants noted that students saw them as approachable figures, asking for directions or guidance, or even sharing personal concerns. Respondents emphasized that this trust helped prevent bigger problems, as students sometimes alerted them to conflicts early, allowing them to step in before situations escalated. Participants described their relationship with students as more positive, making the environment friendlier.

"Students approach us not only for discipline concerns but also for advice or help, which improves relationships."

"This trust helps prevent bigger problems. Students sometimes alert us to conflicts early, and we can step in before situations escalate."

## **5. Discussion**

This study set out to explore the nature of collaboration between security personnel and educators in enforcing school rules and policies, as well as the effects of such collaboration on school safety, student behavior, and the overall learning environment. Through one-on-one interviews with six teachers and six security personnel, the research sought to capture lived experiences and personal reflections from those directly involved in the day-to-day practice of maintaining school order and safety. The results highlight a complex but generally positive relationship between educators and security staff. Across interviews, participants shared that their working relationships were built on mutual respect, role clarity, and shared responsibility, echoing Devlin's <sup>[23]</sup> assertion that understanding each other's roles is a prerequisite for efficient rule enforcement.

Teachers often viewed security personnel as essential partners who helped maintain order in school spaces beyond the classroom, such as hallways, school grounds, and entrances. This partnership allowed educators to concentrate more fully on teaching and learning, knowing that safety concerns were being monitored and addressed elsewhere. Conversely, security personnel recognized the authority and deeper relational knowledge teachers had with students. Many respondents from both groups noted that the most effective collaborations occurred when roles were well-defined yet flexible, with teachers managing academic and behavioral expectations in class, and security stepping in when situations escalated. This aligns with findings by Theriot <sup>[27]</sup> and May et al. <sup>[22]</sup>, who suggest that when responsibilities are clearly delineated, conflicts are minimized and safety protocols are more effective. Furthermore, this clarity supports the

observation by Chavez, Gregorio, Araneta, and Bihag <sup>[25]</sup> that personnel who are well-informed of their professional responsibilities are better positioned to coordinate effectively.

The study also found that communication was a critical component of effective cooperation. Participants reported relying on tools like two-way radios, regular briefings, and face-to-face debriefs after incidents to ensure alignment and timely response. These findings corroborate Kupchik and Monahan's <sup>[12]</sup> conclusion that regular communication channels lead to more coordinated responses to safety issues. These mechanisms fostered not only real-time coordination during crises but also proactive planning. As James and McCallion <sup>[26]</sup> noted, such practices are essential for reducing misunderstandings and improving crisis management. Moreover, the emphasis on open dialogue reported by participants supports Theriot and Orme's <sup>[27]</sup> view that communication promotes a collaborative culture where both groups feel valued, and reinforces Leon, Jumalon, Chavez, et al.'s <sup>[28]</sup> finding that policy implementation improves when communication is prioritized.

However, the study also revealed a notable divergence in disciplinary perspectives. Some teachers expressed the need for greater alignment, noting that while they often took a developmental approach, security personnel occasionally leaned toward strict enforcement. This finding reflects the broader tension in school safety literature between punitive measures and supportive frameworks, such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) <sup>[46,17]</sup>. While security personnel may naturally default to rule enforcement, the educators' preference for guidance suggests that a hybrid model, where security staff are trained in restorative and educational strategies <sup>[41]</sup>, could bridge this gap. This supports Brown's <sup>[33]</sup> argument that security personnel are most effective when trained in youth development rather than solely in policing.

Crucially, the study found that when educators shared background knowledge about students with security staff, it shifted interventions from reactive punishment to preventive guidance. This dynamic aligns closely with trauma-informed practice <sup>[20]</sup>, which emphasizes understanding the context of a student's behavior (the "why") rather than simply penalizing the action. By collaborating to address underlying issues, such as family stress or academic struggles, the partnership described by participants potentially serves as a buffer against the school-to-prison pipeline <sup>[12,37]</sup>. Instead of criminalizing minor infractions or creating a police state atmosphere <sup>[30]</sup>, the cooperative approach ensures that discipline remains internal and educational. This validates findings by Rumberger and Losen <sup>[36]</sup> that collaboration can lead to more supportive, rather than exclusionary, disciplinary practices.

The second objective focused on the impact of educator-security cooperation on broader school outcomes. Overall, the findings indicate that effective collaboration contributes to a safer, more disciplined, and more conducive learning environment. Respondents shared that the visible and cooperative presence of security personnel reduces incidents of misbehavior and enhances perceptions of safety. This corroborates Na and Gottfredson's <sup>[29]</sup> finding that security visibility can provide reassurance when balanced with educational support. When educators and security staff work together consistently, students are less likely to test boundaries. This consistency promotes fairness, aligning with Gastic's <sup>[35]</sup> observation that jointly enforced policies reduce behavioral issues and increase perceived equity. Furthermore, the research suggests that this partnership enhances the overall school climate. With fewer disruptions, classrooms become calmer, supporting Bryk et al.'s <sup>[43]</sup> assertion that safe and orderly environments are prerequisites for academic engagement.

Finally, the collaboration contributes to a stronger sense of community within the school. As relationships between students and staff improve, trust builds, students increasingly see security personnel not just as enforcers, but as approachable figures. This shift strengthens emotional safety, validating Payne and Welch's <sup>[41]</sup> argument that a school culture grounded in care enhances student cooperation. By

integrating security personnel into the educational mission, schools foster a shared commitment to student well-being. This supports Sugai and Horner's <sup>[46]</sup> view that integrated teams are essential for fostering a positive school culture.

## 6. Limitations and recommendations

Despite these contributions, this study has limitations. First, the sample was restricted to specific urban and semi-urban areas in the Philippines (Samar, Rizal, Butuan, Legaspi, and Taguig); thus, findings may not fully generalize to rural school contexts. Second, the reliance on self-reported data from professionals may introduce social desirability bias, where participants might underreport conflict to present a professional image. Third, this study focused exclusively on the perspectives of adults. Future research should prioritize including student voices, as advocated by Broll and Howells <sup>[39]</sup>, to understand how these collaborations are experienced by the youth themselves. Additionally, quantitative follow-up studies could test the prevalence of these collaborative themes across a broader population to further inform policy development.

## 7. Conclusion

This study found that effective collaboration between educators and security personnel plays a key role in maintaining school safety and discipline. Both groups viewed each other as partners, with clearly defined but complementary roles: teachers focused on student growth and classroom management, while security staff supported order and safety, especially in non-classroom areas. Strong communication practices, such as quick radio calls, regular briefings, and post-incident debriefs, were found to enhance coordination and build mutual trust. While some differences in disciplinary approaches existed, both parties agreed that better alignment through joint training could improve consistency.

Ultimately, this cooperation serves as a vital strategy for shifting school discipline from purely punitive measures toward more supportive, preventive frameworks. By integrating security personnel into the educational mission, schools can foster a calmer, more trusting environment that supports student well-being rather than criminalization. Future research should expand on these findings by incorporating student perspectives and employing quantitative measures to test the generalizability of these collaborative models across different school contexts.

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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