

Exploring the Management of School Security: A Case Study in a China High School

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Abstract—This study is a case study that aims to explore the current situation, issues, and strategies faced by leaders and managers of a regular high school in Linyi City, Shandong Province, China, about security management. This study uses qualitative method, with semi-structured interviews conducted with three faculty members and managers of a high school in Linyi City. This study reveals that safety management in this school focuses on safety education and has set up monitoring systems, alarm systems, etc., and conduct safety drills from time to time. And regular feedback is given through summary meetings and other forms. There are still issues such as inadequate staffing, lack of cooperation between teachers and students, and lack of home-school contact and monitoring systems. As a result, various measures such as increasing security guards, setting up online monitoring platforms, and enhancing security knowledge education have been proposed. The findings of this study have implications for enhancing the level of security management in schools. In future studies, the sample should be expanded and the level of security management in elementary schools and universities should also be assessed.

Index Terms—Security management, high school, Chinese school, case study.

I. INTRODUCTION

As World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have reminded us, schools must provide a safe and healthy learning environment for all members of the educational community [1]. Every school has its own school security environment, which is determined by the rules of the region in which it is located [2], and most schools are in extremely safe environments thanks to the ongoing focus on school safety in countries around the world [3]. In the China context, following education laws and regulations, as well as the relevant provisions of the State Council, the Ministry of education developed the measures for security management of primary and secondary school kindergartens. From the national level, the first guiding outline of public safety education in primary and secondary schools in China was issued in February 2007. It suggested the public security level of primary and secondary schools should be strengthened based on policy norms and the exploration of practical work. This document emphasized the importance of campus security. In 2021, the Shandong School Safety Charter, referred to in this study, was updated to emphasize the importance of risk prevention and safety education.

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Currently, most schools are given attention to safety management, but with the development of society and the increase in the number of students in schools, school safety incidents (such as school stampedes and school violence) have occurred frequently in recent years, causing concern in the community [4].

The standard of school security management is critical. A study in South Africa indicated that security concerns are important drivers in students' school choices [5]. The campus's safety conditions were regarded to be the most important consideration in the process of picking a private higher education school [6].

Due to drugs and guns in the United States in the 1990s, security measures were increased, and strong disciplinary rules were implemented, but there has been a progressive transition in recent years from reliance on security measures and punitive processes to inclusive and supporting measures [7]. According to a study conducted in the United States, some schools have security camera systems that are linked to local police stations, allowing officers to monitor student behavior and school safety immediately [8]. Over the previous 20 years, the number of dangerous incidents in schools in the United States has decreased [9]. Security personnel relates to students' perceptions of safety, and a reasonable number of levels of external security cameras are favorably associated with students' feelings of support, according to research from Maryland, USA, while inside cameras made students feel monitored [10]. According to a study conducted in Sweden, instructors who act as safety agents for their students rarely consider safety and rarely connect it to their regular work [11].

There have also been several studies that have found detrimental consequences of school safety measures [8, 9, 12, 13]. Specifically, school safety measures may have an individualized impact on kids and that prejudice against various races may promote behavioral change [9]. Mark also points out that there is no evidence that school safety measures reduce crime and violence in schools; instead, conspicuous safety measures can sometimes increase crime and violence. On the other hand, visible safety measures can sometimes have a negative impact, so punitive measures designed solely to control bad behavior rather than for the sake of student development may undermine students' trust and have a negative impact. Therefore, safety education and management must be provided in a variety of formats [13]. Increased safety measures have also been observed to diminish kids' and parents' perceptions of safety, and these additional steps can encourage parents to perceive that the school is more unsafe [12]. Using too much safety technology in schools, according to a comparable study, has the potential to heighten student fear and suspicion [8]. The

findings of these studies also indicate that proper security management has a beneficial influence, whereas ineffective security management and policy frameworks can have the opposite effect.

Existing studies lack detailed explanations of the management components of school security. Some research focused into the food safety element of school safety [14–16], others only looked at school safety from the perspective of students and teachers [17]. Many previous studies used quantitative research methods, lacking qualitative research on the management dimensions of campus safety. There is an even wider study vacuum in campus safety research based on the Chinese context, thus further research is urgently needed to address this research gap and provide more evidence for future theoretical research or management practice development. This research is a case study that uses a qualitative research approach to examine the challenges faced by a regular high school in Shandong Province, China, in maintaining campus safety and to make predictions regarding potential future measures.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A. Procedure for Conducting Qualitative Research

This study uses the qualitative research method to understand, analyze, and discuss essential information on school safety management through interviews with different teachers and managers in three roles. The research sample consists of three people, including one senior teacher, one mid-level manager, and one senior manager in one high school of Linyi city. The gender composition is one female and two males. They all have over 20 years of work experience, extensive management or teaching experience, and professional ability, indicating that the sample has a solid professional background.

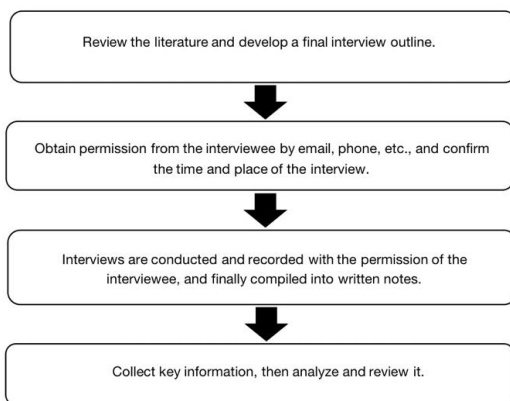


Fig. 1. Data collection process.

Fig. 1 shows the data collection process. Compared with the questionnaire survey, the interview method provides an opportunity for an in-depth understanding of information. However, because the sample of this study is not randomly selected, the results of this interview cannot be extended to all public high schools.

B. Permission to Conduct Research and Ethics

Before the interview, the interviewee's intention was

inquired about by e-mail and information. After asking for the permission of all the respondents, the consent letter was distributed to the respondents and discussed with them to determine the time and place of the interview.

The final interview place was set in the office of the school. Each interview was arranged only once, and each interview lasted about half an hour. All interviews were recorded after permission. After the interview, the recorded content was sorted into text.

C. Demographics of Study Location

According to the latest data, the population of Linyi city is about 11 million, and there are 4727 schools. Among them, there are 59 ordinary high schools with about 180,000 students and 140,00 in-service teachers.

D. Profile of Respondents and Justification

TABLE I: PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

NO.	NAME	GENDER	POSITION	STATE
1	Respondent A	Female	Senior teacher	Working
2	Respondent B	Male	Mid-level manager	Working
3	Respondent C	Male	senior manager	Working

Table I shows respondents' profile. Three persons were chosen for the study: senior teachers, mid-level managers, and senior manager from a high school in Linyi. One female and two males make up the gender mix. They have a minimum of 20 years of expertise in the field, extensive managerial or teaching experience, and professional ability. They were chosen because they have a lot of experience and can provide useful research information.

III. RESULTS

The results of this study are based on the analysis of the interview contents of the senior teacher, mid-level manager, and senior manager of this ordinary high school, mainly on the current safety management measures, challenges, and future development.

A. The Current Status of Security Management in Schools

The responses of the three respondents regarding the status of school security management are presented in Table II.

TABLE II: CURRENT STATUS OF SCHOOL SECURITY MANAGEMENT

	Particular answers	Mutual answers
Respondent A	Observe and report risky behavior of students	Lectures by experts; Emergency drills; Safety-themed class meetings;
Respondent B	Posting of safety-themed posters Broadcast of dangerous events at all times	Professional security team; Strict access registration system;
Respondent C	Night patrols of key areas of the school Managers hold regular summary and reflective meetings. Actively implement the school safety policy issued by the local government	Installation of monitoring equipment; Alarm devices.

As the table shows, at present, the security management of

the high school mainly focuses on strengthening the security education of students and teachers and carrying out security knowledge publicity. These measures mainly include inviting experts to carry out security education lectures, broadcasting on campus, and organizing security drills for students and teachers in emergencies. In addition, teachers will also be required to carry out theme class meetings and put-up publicity posters and columns on campus in schools. All these efforts show that the school attaches great importance to security education. The interviewees also mentioned that the school will give priority to strengthening security education for teachers and students.

On the other hand, the security management measures are about staffing and the implementation of regulations. This high school has set up a complete security team, which is responsible for accepting alarm, rescue, complaints, fire alarm, patrol, etc. When students or other staff encounter danger or abnormal situation; they can come to the scene as soon as possible to ensure the safety of personnel. At the same time, the school strictly controls the entry and exit of people, and strictly controls the whereabouts of all outsiders in the school, with a dedicated record keeper. Senior management mentioned that the school has a well-developed visitor registration system and a liaison system, and that outsiders cannot enter the campus without the consent of the liaison. At the same time, the senior manager interviewed said: “we cooperated with the guard to strengthen the night security work of the key parts of the teaching building area, to ensure the property safety of the school. “This implies that managers did not ignore the security review on school nights.

This high school also has several facilities to ensure security. Many places in the school display the alarm telephone, the contact information of the security team, and the rapid alarm device. The use of these devices can ensure that students can report and contact the key person in charge whenever they encounter danger, bullying, or safety accidents on campus. The security team of the school has the responsibility to rush to the scene quickly to deal with them. The public area of the school has a complete monitoring system and has set up a special monitoring room with dedicated staff on duty to observe the situation in each area on a 24-hour rotation to ensure that abnormal situations in the school are kept up to date. For example, in the corridor, stairs, dormitories, elevators, staircases, and gates are installed with all-weather monitoring, but also deliberately canceled the monitoring in the corridor, to protect the privacy of students.

At the leadership level, managers will hold regular summary meetings on school safety issues, and managers and headteachers will report the existing problems and current situation at the meetings. This timely feedback mechanism can also effectively promote the strengthening of security management. This form of feedback is the only form of communication and information exchange between mid-level managers and senior managers mentioned in the interview, which shows that the feedback and communication system in safety management is not very sound. In addition, the senior leaders interviewed mentioned that the school had been actively enforcing the local authority's school safety regulations. “We are always aware of the relevant documents and policies issued by the Linyi Education Bureau and the

Shandong Education Department, and make timely adjustments and updates to our school's safety management practices”, the senior manager said.

B. The Challenges of School Security Management

The responses of the three respondents to the issue of school safety management are presented in Table III.

TABLE III: SCHOOL SECURITY MANAGEMENT ISSUES

	Particular answers	Mutual answers
Respondent A	Some safety rules are confusingly implemented	Low number of security guards; Lack of cooperation from some students
	Food safety issues arise	
Respondent B	The lack of cooperation of many teachers with safety activities	
Respondent C	Lack of monitoring mechanisms	
	Management approach is passive	
	Inadequate home-school contact	
	Formalization of safety education	

As the table shows, in the interview focusing on the current problems of school security management, several main problems are found. First, the teacher reflected on the shortage of security personnel and improper management, stating, “I feel that there are not enough security guards, and the management is disorganized. Secondly, the locking time of the teaching building is not fixed, and some teachers are locked in the teaching building. This, I believe, poses a risk to the school's teachers, staff, and students. If there are students and teachers locked in the teaching building for a long time, it is not safe, so the school still needs to strengthen the staff in this aspect, or strictly enforce the relevant system. “

According to the teacher's statement, it can be found that the school security team has caused some negative effects due to understaffing or disorganized management. As of the end of this interview, this problem still exists. When interviewing the grade director, that is, the mid-level manager, he also mentioned the same problem, which shows that the problem has become so serious that it cannot be ignored. This issue is obvious and needs to be addressed urgently.

Second, both interviewees mentioned that some students or teachers did not cooperate. These kinds of problems include students' rebellious mood, teachers' attitude of not paying attention, and students' illegal use of electrical appliances in dormitories. The mid-level manager said: “This may also be a fluke mentality. Some people always neglect the safety issue. Many teachers may consider that the college entrance examination is coming, and they will take the time to hold the safety class meeting to give test papers to students. Of course, I can understand that teachers may pay more attention to the students' achievements, especially in such a critical period, but this kind of behavior is not desirable, which directly leads many students to encounter campus violence and do not know how to seek help from the school. It also indirectly affects the students' psychology and academic performance. In this interview, the mid-level manager also raised such a problem, that is, the head teacher's neglect of safety education and improper attitude, As the

interviewee mentioned, this will inevitably affect the quality and effect of school security management. Students, who constitute most security management objects, are another group that does not cooperate. Students' consciousness and ability are limited by their age, and they can't be aware of the importance of school safety, which will lead to illegal use of electrical appliances, violation of school rules, fighting, and other adverse phenomena. This requires schools and teachers reconsider the form of safety education and control, rather than leaving all the responsibility on the shoulders of students.

Another problem is the lack of security management supervision and evaluation system. The lack of supervision and evaluation has resulted in employee indifference, making it impossible to improve the quality of security management and education, and for managers to understand the specific effects and feedback of security education, and to make targeted arrangements for the next step.

The senior manager mentioned that security management at the school is currently still passive. The interviewed leader mentioned: "Only when vicious wounding incidents have occurred can we find out the problems and hidden dangers, which has caused some negative effects." As it appears, this high school does not have adequate proactive prevention and risk identification efforts, and the identification of problems depends solely on the occurrence of accidents. Taking preventative measures before dangerous incidents occur will reduce the likelihood of them occurring.

The interviewees mentioned that the linkage between school and family is not ideal. Because the school security management involves minors, it is unscientific to break away from the family.

Safety management is easy to be formalized. In the campus work, some managers are tired of dealing with the work, just simply carry out safety education in the form of documents, meetings, and so on, and turn a blind eye to the existing security risks. The reason is that they do not put safety education in an important position. This also shows that some of the staff's safety awareness is weak, and the school safety management is slack, which cannot make students realize the importance of school safety and affect the efficiency of management.

In addition, the teacher interviewed raised the issue of food safety and she said, "As summer is approaching and the weather is getting hotter, many students have reflected that the food in the school cafeteria is not fresh enough, and I think this is also an issue of concern." Apparently, food safety issues are also part of the safety management process at this school and have been brought to the attention of students and teachers.

C. Future Development Measures for Security Management

The responses of the three interviewees regarding school management suggestions are presented in Table IV.

As the Table IV shows, the three interviewees have given some suggestions and explanations of the development direction. First, schools should strengthen publicity and enhance the degree of attention. Each position should be clear about the corresponding safety responsibility

requirements. The principal should repeatedly emphasize the importance of safe work in the school managers' meetings, the regular meeting of the whole school staff, and the class teacher's meetings, so that every staff will pay high attention to it. At the same time, the headteacher is required to have a comprehensive and detailed understanding of the contradictions between students and resolve them in time to eliminate hidden dangers. Regularly check and update the safety equipment and facilities, to take precautions. In addition, the local government should also be responsible for the supervision of schools and training institutions. On safety issues, there must be a sound organization, a sound working mechanism, a clear division of responsibilities, and a strict assessment system.

TABLE IV: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL SECURITY MANAGEMENT

	Suggestions for improvement
Respondent A	Regularly check safety equipment and alarm devices
	Enhancing safety education for students
	Regulating the implementation of safety management
Respondent B	Enhanced quality and quantity of security personnel
	Increase the number of safety-themed activities
	Increased communication with teachers
Respondent C	Increased monitoring mechanisms
	Strengthening home-school links
	Using an online security management platform
	Regular inspection and updating of safety facilities

It is necessary to strengthen the home school contact of safety management. For the key safety issues and policies, the school needs to inform each student's parents through parents' meetings, home visits, and other ways, to form a home school linkage prevention system to prevent the occurrence of student injury accidents. Regarding this proposal, the senior manager explained: "We should also urge the headmaster to communicate with the parents, considering that the students are minors, we should cooperate with the parents to do a good job in the safety and security of the students. The school should not only strengthen the technical security, but also strengthen the safety education for the students, and create a safe learning and living environment for the students through the "triple combination" of school, family and community.

An online information platform and change management model should be developed. At present, the management system of the high school is passive, so it is necessary to speed up the transformation of the management mode. In the interview, the senior manager mentioned the need to introduce an online information platform, learn from the online software that has been used in other provinces, and use information technology to help staff conduct safety inspections on campus. This can facilitate the solution of risk control and hidden danger investigation problems, from the current passive management to the advanced active management mode of prevention and process control and establish a dual prevention system online and offline.

There should be timely communication and feedback between the school and the local government. The school should keep close communication and timely feedback with Linyi Education Bureau, at the same time, promote inter-school communication and learn experiences and suggestions from different schools, which is of great

significance to the safety management of all the high school.

Focus on the maintenance and update of safety equipment. The school must regularly arrange for professionals to check the monitoring equipment and other basic equipment for safety management, which will cause the loss of personnel and property in an emergency. This also means that schools need to invest more money in this aspect. The headmaster should urge the mid-level managers of the school to implement the main responsibility of campus safety, promote the construction of school infrastructure safety facilities, organize the investigation of hidden dangers, and constantly improve the level of school safety management.

IV. DISCUSSION

From the results of the study, it can be found that schools are managed in terms of security education and awareness, staffing, visitor registration, and the provision of appropriate facilities (e.g., alarm devices, monitoring systems, etc.) and regular meetings. Problems in the current security environment include inadequate staffing, inflexible and unclear implementation of measures, lack of cooperation from students and teachers, lack of monitoring systems, inadequate prevention mechanisms, poor home-school contact, food safety issues and lax management. The findings indicated that current security measures in this school are still inadequate, that current measures do not adequately address management challenges, and that current measures are predominantly human-based and lack the appropriate use of more advanced information technology.

In addition, the results of this study revealed that teachers were the only respondents who raised the issue of mismanagement of food safety, suggesting that teachers can relate more closely to student practice and feedback than more senior managers. There are issues that have not been brought to the attention of management staff. Although there are regular school security summaries and feedback meetings, and the current form of communication is not perfect.

What can be found through the responses of the three interviewees is that there is some consensus on the challenges they face in two areas: security staffing and cooperation between teachers and students. This indicated that the problems in these two areas are relatively serious and obvious. In addition, the common responses of the three interviewees regarding the current state of school security management can also be found that the school attaches great importance to promoting and educating safety education. Each respondent indicates that the school currently has several talks, posters, and safety awareness activities aimed at security education.

Furthermore, as a senior manager, the respondent suggested the introduction of information technology software to participate in safety management, and the introduction of online platforms to identify safety hazards and achieve double prevention both online and offline. This respondent also suggested new measures to strengthen home-school contact, establish an evaluation and monitoring system, closely follow government policies, and strengthen inter-school liaison. This shows that senior managers have a broader perspective than mid-level managers and teachers.

The teachers' perspective is relatively more concrete and relevant to students' practice, and therefore communication and information exchange between teachers and managers need to be strengthened so that overall improvements in safety management can be achieved at different levels.

On the other hand, it is clear from the suggestions made by the managers that the school's security management system is now gradually moving towards online management, which will make security management more efficient and will reduce the waste of human resources.

The limitation of this study is that as a case study, the sample size is relatively small, and the findings cannot be generalized to other high schools. Therefore, in further studies in the future, there is a need to expand the sample size and investigate the safety management mechanisms in more high schools to provide more information to the field. Another limitation of the study is that it only collected information on school security management at the high school level and did not consider the current state of security management in junior high schools and higher education institutions, lacking a cross-sectional comparison. In further research, consideration should be given to collecting information on security management in basic schools and higher education institutions to compare the state of security management in schools at different stages and to improve the practical significance of the study.

V. CONCLUSION

In summary, researchers discovered that the existing school security management procedures are thorough through interviews with three respondents in a Linyi City high school, measures are well established at most levels. However, there are still certain issues, such as insufficient personnel, institutionalized safety instruction, and many teachers ignoring safety education, etc. As a result, specialists may make progress in the future in terms of management mode and staffing, thereby improving the quality of security management.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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