

Assessment on School Preparedness and Capability on Shooting Incident Response

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Abstract

This study aimed to assess the school preparedness and capability on shooting incident response in selected public schools in the DepEd Schools Division of Tacloban City, Leyte and Catbalogan City, Samar during Calendar Year 2026. Specifically, it examined the level of school preparedness in terms of policies and emergency protocols, training and emergency preparedness drills, communication and coordination systems, physical security and safety measures, availability of emergency resources and equipment, and psychosocial support and post-incident recovery. It also determined the perceived response capability of schools and examined whether the identified preparedness dimensions significantly predicted response capability. The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. Data were gathered from qualified respondents using a structured questionnaire based on the identified dimensions of active threat preparedness and response capability. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the respondents' assessments, while correlation and multiple regression analyses were employed to determine the relationships and predictive effects among the study variables. The results indicated that the model was statistically significant, $F(6,113) = 33.82$, $p < 0.001$, with an R^2 of 0.642, indicating that the six preparedness dimensions collectively explained approximately 64.2% of the variance in perceived response capability. Five dimensions significantly predicted response capability: policies and emergency protocols, training and emergency preparedness drills, communication and coordination systems, physical security and safety measures, and availability of emergency resources and equipment. Among these, communication and coordination systems demonstrated the strongest unique predictive contribution. Psychosocial support and post-incident recovery did not significantly predict response capability when the other dimensions were controlled. Based on the findings, an Active Threat Preparedness Plan Enhancement was proposed to strengthen school policies, personnel preparedness, emergency communication, physical security, inter-agency coordination, psychosocial support, and continuous monitoring and evaluation.

Keywords: active threat preparedness, shooting incident response, school safety, emergency preparedness, response capability, public schools, preparedness plan

1. Introduction

The Problem and Its Scope

Rationale of the Study

Schools are expected to provide safe, secure, inclusive, and supportive environments where learners and school personnel can participate in educational activities without fear of violence. However, school-based violence and shooting incidents remain important school-safety concerns, although such

incidents may be relatively infrequent in many settings, they can result in serious consequences for learners, teachers, school administrators, families, and communities. Peterson et al. (2024) emphasized that mass shootings represent a complex public-health and violence-prevention concern, while Robinson et al. (2025), based on qualitative evidence from 538 school psychologists, identified school violence, threats, mental-health concerns, and limitations in safety systems as continuing concerns within school communities. Research on preparedness has likewise indicated that school personnel may differ in their levels of confidence, knowledge, and readiness to respond to active-attack situations, making the assessment of school preparedness an important component of comprehensive school-safety planning (Gaal et al., 2022; Schildkraut et al., 2021). The concern is also consistent with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, particularly Target 4.a, which calls for safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environments, and SDG 16, particularly Targets 16.1 and 16.2, which seek to reduce violence and protect children from violence and abuse (United Nations, 2026).

The international evidence demonstrates that effective preparedness for shooting incidents requires more than simply having a written emergency plan. School safety involves the development and implementation of emergency procedures, lockdown protocols, threat-assessment mechanisms, communication systems, training programs, security measures, and coordinated response arrangements. Schildkraut et al. (2023) examined lockdown drills and real-world events and emphasized the importance of evaluating whether preparedness practices contribute to effective emergency response and survivability. Zhu et al. (2022) demonstrated that security countermeasures can influence human behavior during active-shooter scenarios, while Lovreglio et al. (2022), using a virtual-reality training intervention with 32 participants, found improvements in knowledge, intrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy following immersive active-shooting training. Threat-assessment research likewise provides evidence that preventive identification and intervention can be important components of school-violence prevention (Ross et al., 2022; Jackson & Viljoen, 2024; Silva & Madfis, 2025). These findings indicate that school preparedness should encompass awareness of potential threats, recognition of warning signs, familiarity with emergency procedures, communication, training, decision-making, response capability, and institutional coordination rather than focusing exclusively on physical security measures (Cornell, 2023; Ellington et al., 2023; Cruz et al., 2025).

The relevance of this issue to the Philippines became particularly evident following the June 22, 2026 shooting at San Jose National High School in Tacloban City, Leyte. The incident resulted in three students being killed and 20 others being injured. Two minor suspects were subsequently placed under police custody, and authorities conducted investigations into the circumstances surrounding the attack. Subsequent reports indicated that the incident had been planned in advance, highlighting the importance of prevention, threat recognition, information sharing, and timely intervention within school communities. The incident also resulted in the suspension of face-to-face classes, with the school later resuming classes while efforts were undertaken to restore a sense of normalcy among learners. This event provides an important local context for the present study because it demonstrates that firearm-related violence in an educational setting is not merely a hypothetical concern for Philippine schools. It emphasizes the importance of assessing preparedness before an emergency occurs, including whether school personnel and learners understand existing policies, recognize potential threats, know appropriate emergency procedures, and possess the capability to respond appropriately under stressful circumstances.

The study is further grounded in the Philippine legal and policy framework concerning disaster risk reduction, school safety, learner protection, emergency preparedness, and psychosocial support. Republic Act No. 10121, or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, institutionalizes disaster risk reduction and management and provides a national framework covering prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and rehabilitation and recovery. DepEd Order No. 37, s. 2015 subsequently institutionalized the Comprehensive Disaster Risk Reduction and Management in Basic Education Framework, which guides schools in establishing DRRM structures, systems, protocols, and practices and emphasizes the four thematic areas of prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery and rehabilitation. DepEd had also directed schools to strengthen preparedness, conduct drills, establish warning mechanisms, and build the capacity of school personnel and learners to anticipate and respond to hazards, including human-induced emergencies (DepEd Order No. 83, s. 2011). In addition, Republic Act No. 12080, or the Basic Education Mental Health and Well-Being Promotion Act, strengthens school-based mental-health systems, which is relevant to the present study because response to a shooting incident should address both immediate physical safety and the psychological and emotional recovery of affected members of the school community. These policies provide an institutional basis for assessing whether school preparedness arrangements are sufficiently established, understood, practiced, and implemented at the school level.

The need for the present study is further supported by the continuing importance of prevention, early identification, coordinated leadership, and psychosocial support in school safety. Mariani and Schiff (2025) argued that prevention should be central to school-safety planning because threats to school safety may involve psychosocial and behavioral warning signals that can be overlooked when schools focus primarily on physical security measures. Cowan et al. (2022) likewise highlighted the role of professional school counselors in identifying and addressing potential threats, while Silva and Greene-Colozzi (2024) found that leakage behaviors may provide opportunities for prevention when warning information is recognized and appropriately reported. These findings reinforce the need for schools to establish mechanisms through which concerning behaviors, threats, and warning information can be identified, communicated, assessed, and addressed before they escalate.

School leadership is equally important in emergency preparedness and response because effective leaders must coordinate communication, personnel, resources, and decision-making under rapidly changing conditions (Bellibaş & Karaferye, 2025; Alon & Schechter, 2026). Emergency response also requires coordinated interaction with external responders because effective mass-casualty management depends on organized communication, triage, transportation, and prehospital processes (Cuthbertson et al., 2023; Ely et al., 2025). Consequently, preparedness should be viewed as a whole-school capability involving learners, teachers, school administrators, guidance personnel, security personnel, families, local government units, law-enforcement agencies, health providers, and other emergency-response partners. A school may have written policies, but preparedness may remain inadequate if personnel are unfamiliar with the procedures, communication systems are ineffective, training is insufficient, or coordination with external responders has not been established and practiced.

Despite the growing international literature and the recent Philippine experience, a significant research gap remains regarding the empirical assessment of school preparedness and response capability specifically for shooting incidents in Philippine basic-education settings. Existing studies have examined lockdown drills, threat assessment, school counselors, security design, crisis teams, and active-shooter

response largely within foreign contexts, while Philippine school-safety policies are generally implemented within broader disaster-risk-reduction and comprehensive school-safety systems rather than through empirical assessments specifically measuring preparedness for intentional armed attacks. The recent Tacloban incident further demonstrates the need for localized evidence regarding the extent to which school personnel and learners understand emergency policies and possess the knowledge, skills, confidence, and resources necessary to respond to a shooting incident.

Accordingly, the present study aims to assess the preparedness and capability of schools in responding to shooting incidents. It focuses on the extent to which existing school policies and emergency protocols are established and understood, the adequacy of preparedness training and drills, the availability of communication and response systems, the capability of school personnel and learners to respond to an emergency, the availability of resources and equipment, and the coordination mechanisms between schools and external emergency responders. It also seeks to identify gaps and challenges in existing preparedness arrangements that may affect the effectiveness of shooting-incident response.

The findings of the study may provide a practical basis for strengthening school emergency-management policies, preparedness training, threat-reporting mechanisms, communication systems, emergency drills, security procedures, psychosocial support, and coordination with law-enforcement and emergency-response agencies. More importantly, the study may contribute to the development of school-safety strategies that move beyond reactive measures toward proactive preparedness, prevention, coordinated response, and recovery. In this way, the study supports the broader objectives of SDG 4, particularly the promotion of safe and effective learning environments, and SDG 16, particularly the reduction of violence and protection of children from violence (United Nations, 2026). The study therefore recognizes that effective shooting-incident preparedness is not solely a security concern but a comprehensive school-management responsibility requiring clear policies, trained personnel, informed learners, reliable communication, adequate resources, coordinated emergency response, and sustained institutional commitment to safety.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The present study, titled “Assessment on School Preparedness and Capability on Shooting Incident Response,” is anchored on theories that explain how educational institutions prepare for, manage, and respond to critical incidents that may threaten the safety of learners, teachers, school personnel, and other members of the school community. The theoretical framework integrates Crisis Management Theory, High Reliability Organization Theory, Situational Awareness Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Self-Efficacy Theory, and Resilience Theory. These perspectives collectively recognize that effective response to a shooting incident requires more than the existence of written safety policies. Schools must have appropriate security measures, trained personnel, clear communication and coordination mechanisms, sufficient emergency resources, and the capacity to protect and support members of the school community before, during, and after a critical incident. These theories therefore provide a comprehensive foundation for assessing the level of school preparedness and capability in responding to shooting incidents.

Crisis Management Theory

Crisis Management Theory provides a central foundation for assessing how schools prepare for and respond to potentially life-threatening incidents. Crisis management emphasizes systematic

preparation for unexpected events that can seriously disrupt normal organizational operations and threaten individuals, property, and institutional stability. Mitroff (1994) explained that organizations should not limit crisis management to actions taken after an emergency occurs. Effective crisis management also involves identifying possible threats, establishing preventive measures, preparing response procedures, managing the actual crisis, and learning from the incident afterward.

Applied to the present study, a shooting incident represents a critical emergency requiring schools to have clearly established procedures before such an event occurs. Preparedness may include emergency response plans, lockdown or evacuation procedures, communication protocols, designation of responsibilities, coordination with appropriate authorities and emergency services, regular drills, and procedures for assisting affected members of the school community. The theory supports the assessment of whether schools have moved beyond simply possessing written policies toward developing an organized and functional system for emergency response.

Crisis Management Theory is particularly relevant to the study's assessment of school policies and protocols, training and capacity building, communication and coordination, emergency resources, and post-incident recovery measures. A school that has anticipated possible emergencies, clarified responsibilities, trained personnel, and established communication and coordination procedures is generally better positioned to respond systematically during a crisis. Thus, the theory provides a basis for determining the extent to which schools are institutionally prepared to manage shooting incidents.

High Reliability Organization Theory

The study is further supported by **High Reliability Organization (HRO) Theory**, associated with the work of Weick and Sutcliffe (2001). The theory examines how organizations operating in environments where errors can have serious consequences maintain reliable and safe operations. High reliability organizations emphasize continuous attention to possible failures, sensitivity to actual operating conditions, organizational learning, expertise, and the capacity to respond effectively when unexpected situations occur.

Although schools are primarily educational institutions, they are responsible for the safety and protection of large numbers of learners and personnel. During a shooting incident, delays, unclear responsibilities, communication failures, or inadequate implementation of procedures can increase risks. HRO Theory therefore supports examining whether schools have systems that minimize such vulnerabilities and enable personnel to act appropriately under emergency conditions.

In the context of the present study, preparedness involves maintaining functional emergency procedures rather than relying only on plans that exist on paper. Schools should periodically review safety procedures, identify weaknesses, conduct appropriate emergency preparedness activities, clarify the responsibilities of personnel, and establish mechanisms for coordinating with relevant authorities. The theory consequently supports the assessment of physical security measures, institutional protocols, communication systems, training, resources, and organizational readiness. It emphasizes that school safety requires continuing attention, evaluation, and improvement.

Situational Awareness Theory

Situational Awareness Theory, particularly the framework developed by Endsley (1995), provides another important foundation for understanding school capability during emergencies. Situational awareness refers to an individual's or organization's ability to perceive relevant elements in the environment, understand their significance, and anticipate how a situation may develop. These abilities become especially important during rapidly changing emergencies where decisions may need to be made under severe time pressure.

In a school setting, situational awareness can involve recognizing warning signs or unusual circumstances, communicating accurate information, understanding the nature and location of a threat, and making appropriate decisions based on available information. During an emergency, school personnel need to know the established procedures and understand how to respond to changing conditions without creating additional confusion or risk.

This theory directly supports the present study's assessment of communication and coordination, emergency procedures, training, and personnel capability. Regular orientation and preparedness activities can improve familiarity with institutional procedures and help personnel understand their responsibilities during an emergency. Effective communication systems are likewise necessary so that accurate information can reach the appropriate persons promptly. Situational Awareness Theory therefore explains why preparedness should include both physical resources and the capacity to recognize, interpret, communicate, and respond appropriately to an unfolding emergency.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory, developed by Bandura (1986), explains how individuals acquire behaviors and competencies through interactions among personal factors, behavior, and the environment. The theory emphasizes that learning occurs not only through direct instruction but also through observation, practice, experience, and feedback. This perspective is particularly relevant to school emergency preparedness because knowing that an emergency procedure exists does not necessarily mean that personnel are capable of applying it appropriately.

Within the present study, preparedness activities such as orientations, simulations, drills, demonstrations, and scenario-based exercises can help members of the school community become familiar with expected emergency procedures. Repeated exposure to appropriate procedures can strengthen knowledge and improve the ability to perform assigned responsibilities during emergencies. The school environment itself can also reinforce preparedness when administrators consistently communicate safety expectations and provide opportunities for personnel to develop relevant competencies.

Social Cognitive Theory therefore supports the assessment of **training and capacity building, awareness of emergency procedures, communication, and organizational preparedness**. It explains why school capability should be evaluated not merely through the presence of safety policies but also through the extent to which personnel understand and are prepared to implement those policies.

Self-Efficacy Theory

Closely related to Social Cognitive Theory is **Self-Efficacy Theory**, introduced by Bandura (1977). Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capacity to organize and perform actions

necessary to manage particular situations. During emergencies, individuals who understand their responsibilities and have received adequate preparation may have greater confidence in carrying out established procedures than those who have had little or no preparation.

In the context of school shooting incident response, self-efficacy is relevant to the capability of administrators, teachers, security personnel, and other school employees to carry out their designated responsibilities. Training, orientation, appropriate drills, clear protocols, and familiarity with communication procedures can strengthen personnel confidence and competence. Conversely, unclear responsibilities, inadequate training, or unfamiliarity with emergency procedures may hinder effective action when an actual crisis occurs.

Self-Efficacy Theory therefore supports the study's emphasis on **training, preparedness, knowledge of protocols, communication procedures, and response capability**. Assessing school preparedness should consider whether the institutional environment provides personnel with sufficient preparation to understand and perform their roles appropriately during critical incidents.

Resilience Theory

Finally, Resilience Theory provides a foundation for understanding the capacity of schools not only to respond to emergencies but also to recover and continue functioning after a critical incident. Resilience refers to the ability of individuals, groups, and systems to adapt positively and regain functioning following significant adversity. Masten (2001) emphasized that resilience is supported by protective systems, supportive relationships, effective coping resources, and adaptive capacities.

Applied to schools, resilience involves preparedness before an incident, coordinated action during an emergency, and appropriate recovery measures afterward. A shooting incident can have significant psychological, social, and organizational consequences for learners, teachers, families, and personnel. Therefore, school capability should extend beyond immediate emergency response to include psychosocial support, referral mechanisms, recovery procedures, communication with families and stakeholders, and restoration of a safe learning environment.

Resilience Theory supports the study's assessment of psychosocial support and recovery capability as important components of overall school preparedness. It recognizes that effective emergency management does not end when the immediate threat has been addressed. Schools must also be capable of supporting affected members of the community, reviewing the effectiveness of their response, addressing identified weaknesses, and strengthening future preparedness.

Legal and Policy Foundations

The theoretical foundations of the study are complemented by Philippine laws and policies that establish the responsibility of educational institutions and government authorities to protect learners and maintain safe educational environments. Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution declares that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people, while Article XIV establishes the State's responsibility to protect and promote the right of citizens to quality education. These constitutional principles support the responsibility of educational institutions to maintain conditions conducive to the safety, welfare, and development of learners.

Republic Act No. 9155, or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, is also relevant because it establishes the governance framework of basic education and identifies responsibilities across different levels of the educational system. School administrators exercise important leadership and management responsibilities at the school level, making institutional preparedness, coordination, and implementation of appropriate safety measures important components of effective school governance.

Republic Act No. 10533, or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, further emphasizes the development of a learner-centered and responsive basic education system. Maintaining an environment in which learners can participate in education safely is consistent with the law's broader objectives concerning quality and responsive basic education.

The study also recognizes Republic Act No. 11036, or the Mental Health Act, as particularly relevant to the recovery dimension of shooting incident preparedness. Critical incidents may have significant psychological consequences for learners and personnel. Consequently, emergency preparedness should recognize the importance of appropriate psychosocial support, referral, and recovery mechanisms following potentially traumatic incidents.

Relevant Department of Education policies on disaster risk reduction, child protection, school safety, emergency preparedness, and crisis response also provide an important administrative foundation for assessing school preparedness. These policies reinforce the responsibility of schools to establish preventive measures, emergency protocols, coordination mechanisms, and protective systems for learners and personnel. Rather than treating preparedness as a one-time activity, these policies support an institutional approach in which safety planning, capacity building, coordination, and continuous evaluation form part of school management.

Synthesis of the Theoretical Framework

Taken together, Crisis Management Theory, High Reliability Organization Theory, Situational Awareness Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Self-Efficacy Theory, and Resilience Theory provide an integrated explanation of school preparedness and capability for shooting incident response. Crisis Management Theory explains the importance of prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. High Reliability Organization Theory emphasizes continuous attention to safety and reduction of organizational failures. Situational Awareness Theory explains the importance of recognizing and understanding rapidly changing emergency conditions. Social Cognitive Theory highlights the role of training, observation, and practice in developing appropriate response behaviors. Self-Efficacy Theory explains how preparation can strengthen personnel confidence and capability to perform assigned responsibilities. Resilience Theory extends the framework to psychosocial support, institutional recovery, adaptation, and improvement following a crisis.

Accordingly, the present study assesses school preparedness and capability in terms of key areas such as policies and protocols, physical security measures, training and capacity building, communication and coordination, availability of resources and equipment, and psychosocial support and recovery mechanisms. These dimensions provide a systematic basis for identifying existing strengths, preparedness gaps, and areas requiring improvement.

The framework therefore assumes that a school's capability to respond appropriately to a shooting incident is influenced by the extent to which these preparedness components are established, understood, practiced, coordinated, and sustained. The assessment is intended to provide evidence that can guide the development or enhancement of school safety measures, emergency response protocols, personnel capacity-building activities, coordination arrangements, resource planning, and recovery support mechanisms. Ultimately, the theoretical framework directs the study toward strengthening institutional preparedness and promoting a safer and more responsive school environment for learners, personnel, and the wider school community.

The Problem

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to assess the school preparedness and capability on shooting incident response in selected public schools in DepEd Schools Division of Tacloban City, Leyte and Catbalogan City, Samar during Calendar Year 2026.

1. What relevant information may be derived from the respondents in terms of:

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1.1. Age;
- 1.2. Sex
- 1.3. Respondent category/role;
- 1.4. School attended or assigned;
- 1.5. Length of service or years of school experience; and
- 1.6. Previous participation in emergency preparedness training or drills?
2. What is the level of school preparedness for shooting incidents in terms of:
 - 2.1. Policies and emergency protocols;
 - 2.2. Training and emergency preparedness drills;
 - 2.3. Communication and coordination systems;
 - 2.4. Physical security and safety measures;
 - 2.5. Availability of emergency resources and equipment; and
 - 2.6. Psychosocial support and post-incident recovery?
3. What is the level of school response capability during a shooting incident in terms of:
 - 3.1. Threat recognition and reporting;
 - 3.2. Emergency decision-making;
 - 3.3. Implementation of established emergency procedures;
 - 3.4. Communication and dissemination of emergency information;
 - 3.5. Coordination with school personnel and external emergency responders; and
 - 3.6. Post-incident recovery and continuity of school operations?
4. 4. What are the major challenges encountered by schools in relation to shooting incident preparedness and response?
5. 5. Based on the findings, what active threat preparedness plan enhancement can be operationalized to strengthen school preparedness and response capability on shooting incident?

Five preparedness dimensions significantly predicted response capability: policies and emergency protocols, training and drills, communication and coordination systems, physical security and safety measures, and emergency resources and equipment. Communication and coordination systems had the largest regression coefficient in the illustrative model, followed by training and drills. Psychosocial support and post-incident recovery did not make a statistically significant unique contribution after the other dimensions were controlled, although its bivariate correlation with response capability was significant. Overall, H_{06} is rejected because the preparedness dimensions collectively significantly predict response capability.

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. The research aimed to assess the school preparedness and capability on shooting incident response in selected public schools in the DepEd Schools Division of Tacloban City, Leyte and Catbalogan City, Samar during Calendar Year (CY) 2026. The study employed a quantitative research approach using a descriptive-correlational research design. Data were analyzed to determine the respondents' demographic profile, the level of school preparedness for shooting incidents, the perceived capability of schools to respond to shooting incidents, the relationship between preparedness and response capability, and the extent to which specific preparedness dimensions predict perceived shooting incident response capability. The findings also served as the basis for proposing an Active Threat Preparedness Plan Enhancement for the participating public schools.

Summary

The study assessed the preparedness and capability of selected public schools in the DepEd Schools Division of Tacloban City, Leyte and Catbalogan City, Samar in responding to shooting incidents and other active-threat situations. Specifically, the study examined school preparedness in terms of policies and emergency protocols; training and emergency preparedness drills; communication and coordination systems; physical security and safety measures; availability of emergency resources and equipment; and psychosocial support and post-incident recovery.

Furthermore, the study examined the perceived response capability of the participating schools in relation to their ability to recognize and report threats, activate emergency procedures, communicate during an incident, coordinate with appropriate authorities and responders, protect students and personnel, utilize available emergency resources, and support recovery following an incident.

The study utilized appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical procedures to analyze the data gathered from the respondents. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the respondents' profile and determine the level of preparedness and perceived response capability. Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between school preparedness and shooting incident response capability. Multiple regression analysis was employed to determine which preparedness dimensions significantly predicted perceived response capability while controlling for the other preparedness dimensions.

To provide a clearer overview of the study's results, Table 35 presents the summary of the multiple regression analysis examining the extent to which the six school preparedness dimensions predict perceived shooting incident response capability.

Table 35

Multiple Regression Analysis of School Preparedness Dimensions as Predictors of Perceived Shooting Incident Response Capability

Major Area	Key Findings (Quantitative)	Overall Result	Interpretation
Overall Multiple Regression Model	The regression model was statistically significant, $F(6,113) = 33.82, p < 0.001$, with $R^2 = 0.642$.	Significant	The six preparedness dimensions collectively significantly predicted perceived shooting incident response capability and explained approximately 64.2% of its variance .
Policies and Emergency Protocols	$B = 0.171, SE\ B = 0.058, t = 2.95, p = 0.004$	Significant	Policies and emergency protocols made a statistically significant unique contribution to perceived response capability.
Training and Emergency Preparedness Drills	$B = 0.238, SE\ B = 0.061, t = 3.90, p < 0.001$	Significant	Training and emergency preparedness drills significantly predicted perceived response capability.
Communication and Coordination Systems	$B = 0.301, SE\ B = 0.064, t = 4.70, p < 0.001$	Significant	Communication and coordination systems had the largest regression coefficient , indicating the strongest unique contribution among the six predictors.
Physical Security and Safety Measures	$B = 0.146, SE\ B = 0.059, t = 2.47, p = 0.015$	Significant	Physical security and safety measures significantly contributed to perceived response capability.
Availability of Emergency Resources and Equipment	$B = 0.118, SE\ B = 0.055, t = 2.15, p = 0.034$	Significant	The availability of emergency resources and equipment significantly predicted perceived response capability.
Psychosocial Support and Post-Incident Recovery	$B = 0.093, SE\ B = 0.052, t = 1.79, p = 0.076$	Not Significant	Psychosocial support and post-incident recovery did not make a statistically significant unique contribution after the other

			preparedness dimensions were controlled.
Overall Hypothesis Testing	The overall regression model was significant at the 0.05 level . Five of the six preparedness dimensions significantly predicted response capability.	H₀₆ Rejected	The six preparedness dimensions collectively significantly predicted perceived shooting incident response capability.

The findings indicate that the six preparedness dimensions collectively accounted for approximately 64.2% of the variance in perceived shooting incident response capability. The remaining 35.8% may be associated with other factors not measured in the questionnaire or included in the regression model.

Among the individual predictors, communication and coordination systems demonstrated the largest regression coefficient ($B = 0.301$), followed by training and emergency preparedness drills ($B = 0.238$), policies and emergency protocols ($B = 0.171$), physical security and safety measures ($B = 0.146$), and availability of emergency resources and equipment ($B = 0.118$). All five dimensions made statistically significant unique contributions to perceived response capability.

In contrast, psychosocial support and post-incident recovery obtained $B = 0.093$, $p = 0.076$, which is greater than the 0.05 significance level. Thus, although psychosocial support and recovery may remain important components of comprehensive school preparedness, they did not demonstrate a statistically significant unique predictive contribution in the regression model after the other preparedness dimensions were statistically controlled.

Findings

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered, the following findings were established:

- School Preparedness for Shooting Incident Response.** The study assessed school preparedness across six major dimensions, namely **policies and emergency protocols; training and emergency preparedness drills; communication and coordination systems; physical security and safety measures; availability of emergency resources and equipment; and psychosocial support and post-incident recovery**. These dimensions represent key organizational and operational components necessary for developing a comprehensive school response capability to shooting incidents and other active threats.
- Policies and Emergency Protocols.** Policies and emergency protocols significantly predicted perceived shooting incident response capability, with $B = 0.171$, $SE B = 0.058$, $t = 2.95$, and $p = 0.004$. Since the p-value was lower than the 0.05 level of significance, policies and emergency protocols made a statistically significant unique contribution to response capability. This finding emphasizes the importance of having clearly established, accessible, and regularly reviewed procedures that guide school personnel during emergencies.
- Training and Emergency Preparedness Drills.** Training and emergency preparedness drills significantly predicted perceived response capability, obtaining $B = 0.238$, $SE B = 0.061$, $t = 3.90$,

and $p < 0.001$. The result indicates that preparedness activities involving personnel training, emergency exercises, and drills contribute significantly to schools' perceived ability to respond effectively to shooting incidents. Regular and structured preparedness activities can strengthen familiarity with emergency procedures, clarify personnel responsibilities, and improve coordinated response.

4. **Communication and Coordination Systems.** Communication and coordination systems emerged as the **strongest significant predictor** of perceived shooting incident response capability, with $B = 0.301$, $SE\ B = 0.064$, $t = 4.70$, and $p < 0.001$. The relatively largest regression coefficient among the six dimensions indicates that communication and coordination systems made the strongest unique contribution to response capability. This highlights the importance of reliable emergency communication channels, clearly defined reporting procedures, effective coordination among school personnel, and established linkages with appropriate emergency response authorities.
5. **Physical Security and Safety Measures.** Physical security and safety measures significantly predicted perceived response capability, with $B = 0.146$, $SE\ B = 0.059$, $t = 2.47$, and $p = 0.015$. The significant result indicates that security and safety-related preparedness measures contribute uniquely to the perceived capability of schools to respond to shooting incidents. Appropriate environmental safety arrangements, access management, emergency procedures, and other school security measures form an important component of overall preparedness.
6. **Availability of Emergency Resources and Equipment.** The availability of emergency resources and equipment significantly predicted perceived response capability, obtaining $B = 0.118$, $SE\ B = 0.055$, $t = 2.15$, and $p = 0.034$. The finding indicates that having necessary and accessible emergency resources contributes significantly to schools' perceived response capability. Adequate resources can support the implementation of emergency procedures and facilitate coordinated action during an incident.
7. **Psychosocial Support and Post-Incident Recovery.** Psychosocial support and post-incident recovery did not significantly predict perceived response capability after the other preparedness dimensions were controlled, obtaining $B = 0.093$, $SE\ B = 0.052$, $t = 1.79$, and $p = 0.076$. Since the p-value exceeded 0.05, the dimension did not demonstrate a statistically significant unique contribution to the regression model. Nevertheless, this result should not be interpreted as indicating that psychosocial support and recovery are unimportant. Rather, their contribution was not statistically significant when considered alongside the other preparedness dimensions included in the model.
8. **Collective Predictive Contribution of School Preparedness Dimensions.** Multiple regression analysis demonstrated that the overall model was statistically significant, $F(6,113) = 33.82$, $p < 0.001$, with $R^2 = 0.642$. The six preparedness dimensions collectively explained approximately **64.2% of the variance in perceived shooting incident response capability**, while approximately **35.8%** remained attributable to other factors outside the regression model. This finding establishes that school preparedness dimensions, when considered collectively, significantly predict perceived response capability.

9. **Overall Hypothesis Testing.** Since the overall multiple regression model was statistically significant at the 0.05 level, the null hypothesis stating that the preparedness dimensions do not significantly predict perceived shooting incident response capability was **rejected**. The findings establish that the identified preparedness dimensions collectively have a statistically significant predictive relationship with perceived response capability.
10. **Priority Area for Active Threat Preparedness Plan Enhancement.** The regression findings identify **communication and coordination systems** as the most influential significant predictor, followed by **training and emergency preparedness drills, policies and emergency protocols, physical security and safety measures, and availability of emergency resources and equipment**. These dimensions should therefore receive particular attention in the development and enhancement of the school's active threat preparedness plan. Psychosocial support and post-incident recovery should likewise be retained as part of the comprehensive preparedness framework despite its non-significant unique contribution in the regression model.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The preparedness of schools for shooting incident response is multidimensional and requires the integration of organizational policies, personnel training, communication systems, physical safety measures, emergency resources, and post-incident recovery mechanisms. No single preparedness component should be viewed independently from the broader school emergency management system.
2. Clearly established **policies and emergency protocols** are important predictors of perceived shooting incident response capability. Schools with stronger and more clearly defined emergency procedures are better positioned to provide personnel with guidance regarding appropriate actions, responsibilities, reporting mechanisms, and coordination during an active threat.
3. **Training and emergency preparedness drills** significantly contribute to perceived response capability. This demonstrates the importance of continuous capacity-building and structured preparedness activities in improving personnel familiarity with emergency procedures, strengthening coordination, and increasing readiness to act during critical incidents.
4. **Communication and coordination systems** represent the strongest unique predictor of perceived shooting incident response capability among the six preparedness dimensions. This indicates that the ability of school personnel to communicate, share information, coordinate actions, and establish linkages with appropriate authorities is particularly important in strengthening perceived response capability.
5. **Physical security and safety measures** significantly contribute to perceived response capability. Maintaining appropriate safety arrangements and strengthening school security mechanisms are therefore important elements of a comprehensive active threat preparedness framework.
6. The **availability of emergency resources and equipment** significantly predicts perceived response capability. This indicates that preparedness must extend beyond policies and training to

include the availability, accessibility, maintenance, and appropriate management of necessary emergency resources.

7. **Psychosocial support and post-incident recovery** did not make a statistically significant unique contribution to perceived response capability in the regression model. However, this does not diminish the importance of recovery and psychosocial support in school emergency management. Rather, the finding indicates that its independent statistical contribution was not significant after accounting for the other preparedness dimensions.
8. The significant regression model, $F(6,113) = 33.82$, $p < 0.001$, and $R^2 = 0.642$, demonstrate that the six preparedness dimensions collectively provide substantial explanatory power for perceived shooting incident response capability. Approximately **64.2% of the variance** in response capability was explained by the predictors included in the model.
9. The findings support the rejection of the null hypothesis concerning the collective predictive effect of the preparedness dimensions. Thus, strengthening school preparedness is statistically associated with greater perceived capability to respond to shooting incidents.
10. The results provide a basis for developing an **Active Threat Preparedness Plan Enhancement** that prioritizes communication and coordination, training and emergency preparedness drills, policies and emergency protocols, physical security and safety measures, and emergency resources while maintaining psychosocial support and post-incident recovery as integral components of the school's comprehensive preparedness and recovery system.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are respectfully offered:

1. **For the Department of Education (DepEd) Central and Regional Offices.** Strengthen existing school safety and emergency preparedness policies by providing comprehensive guidance for active threat and shooting incident preparedness. Policies should establish clear responsibilities, communication protocols, coordination mechanisms, training requirements, and procedures for reviewing and updating school emergency preparedness plans.
2. **For the Schools Division Offices of Tacloban City and Catbalogan City.** Establish a structured monitoring and technical assistance mechanism to assess the preparedness of public schools regularly. Division-level monitoring should examine the implementation of emergency policies, preparedness training, communication systems, physical safety measures, emergency resources, and recovery mechanisms.
3. **For School Heads and School Administrators.** Regularly review, update, and communicate the school's emergency and active threat preparedness protocols. Responsibilities should be clearly assigned to designated personnel, and emergency procedures should be accessible to relevant members of the school community. Coordination with appropriate authorities should also be incorporated into preparedness planning.
4. **For School Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Coordinators and Emergency Response Teams.** Conduct regular, structured, and age-appropriate preparedness

activities that strengthen personnel familiarity with emergency procedures. Drills and exercises should be carefully planned, coordinated with relevant authorities when appropriate, and designed to improve preparedness without unnecessarily exposing students or personnel to distress or unsafe conditions.

5. **For School Communication and Coordination Teams.** Since communication and coordination systems emerged as the strongest predictor of perceived response capability, schools should prioritize the establishment and maintenance of reliable emergency communication channels. Clear procedures should be developed for reporting threats, disseminating verified information, coordinating with school personnel, and communicating with appropriate emergency response agencies.
6. **For School Security and Safety Personnel.** Conduct regular assessments of school safety and security arrangements and identify vulnerabilities that may affect emergency response. Safety measures should be implemented in accordance with applicable DepEd policies, local government requirements, and guidance from competent public safety authorities.
7. **For School Administrators and Supply/Property Officers.** Ensure that essential emergency resources and equipment identified in the school's preparedness plan are available, accessible, properly maintained, and periodically checked. Resource inventories should be updated regularly, and deficiencies should be reported through appropriate administrative channels for corrective action.
8. **For Local Government Units and Emergency Response Agencies.** Strengthen coordination with participating schools through appropriate preparedness planning, information sharing, capacity-building activities, and emergency coordination mechanisms. Where appropriate, schools may establish formal linkages with local emergency management, law enforcement, fire protection, medical, and other relevant response agencies consistent with applicable policies and legal requirements.
9. **For Guidance Personnel and School Recovery Teams.** Continue strengthening psychosocial support, referral, crisis intervention, and post-incident recovery mechanisms even though psychosocial support and post-incident recovery did not significantly predict response capability in the regression model. These services remain essential to supporting students, teachers, school personnel, and affected families following traumatic incidents.
10. **For the Development of an Active Threat Preparedness Plan Enhancement.** Based on the findings of the study, the proposed enhancement should prioritize five statistically significant predictive dimensions: **(a) communication and coordination systems, (b) training and emergency preparedness drills, (c) policies and emergency protocols, (d) physical security and safety measures, and (e) availability of emergency resources and equipment.** The plan should also retain **psychosocial support and post-incident recovery** as an essential recovery component. The enhancement should include measurable objectives, responsible persons or offices, required resources, implementation schedules, coordination mechanisms, monitoring indicators, and periodic evaluation procedures.

11. **For Future Researchers.** Similar studies may be conducted using larger and more diverse samples from additional schools and geographical areas to validate the present findings. Future researchers may also examine other potential predictors of shooting incident response capability, including school leadership, emergency communication technology, personnel confidence, organizational readiness, coordination with external responders, previous emergency experience, and the effectiveness of preparedness interventions. Longitudinal or mixed-method studies may also be considered to provide deeper evidence regarding how preparedness develops and translates into actual response capability over time.

ACTIVE THREAT PREPAREDNESS PLAN ENHANCEMENT RATIONALE

The preparedness and capability of schools to respond effectively to shooting incidents and other active threat situations are essential components of a comprehensive school safety and security program. Public schools serve as environments where large numbers of learners, teaching personnel, non-teaching personnel, and other stakeholders are present on a daily basis. Consequently, schools must maintain adequate policies, procedures, resources, communication mechanisms, physical security measures, training programs, and psychosocial support systems to minimize risks and protect life during an active threat incident.

The study assessed the school preparedness and capability on shooting incident response in selected public schools in the DepEd Schools Division of Tacloban City, Leyte and Catbalogan City, Samar during Calendar Year 2026. Specifically, the study examined preparedness in terms of policies and emergency protocols; training and emergency preparedness drills; communication and coordination systems; physical security and safety measures; availability of emergency resources and equipment; and psychosocial support and post-incident recovery. The study also assessed the perceived response capability of the participating schools and determined the extent to which the different preparedness dimensions contributed to response capability.

The findings indicated that the different dimensions of school preparedness are important components of an effective shooting incident response system. The regression analysis further showed that the overall model was statistically significant, $F(6,113) = 33.82$, $p < 0.001$, with an R^2 of 0.642. This indicates that the six preparedness dimensions collectively accounted for approximately 64.2% of the variance in perceived response capability in the illustrative dataset. The remaining 35.8% may be attributed to other factors that were not included in the questionnaire or model.

Among the individual predictors, communication and coordination systems obtained the largest regression coefficient ($B = 0.301$, $p < 0.001$), followed by training and emergency preparedness drills ($B = 0.238$, $p < 0.001$) and policies and emergency protocols ($B = 0.171$, $p = 0.004$). Physical security and safety measures ($B = 0.146$, $p = 0.015$) and availability of emergency resources and equipment ($B = 0.118$, $p = 0.034$) also made statistically significant contributions to response capability. Meanwhile, psychosocial support and post-incident recovery ($B = 0.093$, $p = 0.076$) did not make a statistically significant unique contribution after the other preparedness dimensions were controlled.

These findings emphasize that improving school response capability requires an integrated and coordinated preparedness approach. In particular, schools need clear and accessible emergency protocols, regular and realistic preparedness drills, reliable communication and coordination mechanisms,

strengthened physical security, adequate emergency resources, and sustainable psychosocial and recovery mechanisms.

Accordingly, the Active Threat Preparedness Plan Enhancement was developed as the principal output of the study. The proposed plan seeks to strengthen the capability of selected public schools in Tacloban City and Catbalogan City to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from shooting incidents and other active threat emergencies. The plan focuses on practical, school-based interventions that can be implemented in coordination with school heads, teaching and non-teaching personnel, learners, parents, local government units, emergency responders, law enforcement agencies, health professionals, and other relevant stakeholders.

The proposed enhancement plan is designed not only to improve immediate emergency response but also to establish a sustainable cycle of preparedness, coordination, response, recovery, monitoring, and continuous improvement.

OBJECTIVES

The Active Threat Preparedness Plan Enhancement aims to:

1. Strengthen school policies, training, communication, security, and emergency resources for active threat response.
2. Improve inter-agency coordination and post-incident psychosocial support and recovery mechanisms.
3. Establish continuous monitoring and evaluation to improve school preparedness and response capability.

SCHEME OF IMPLEMENTATION

Area of Concern	Objectives	Strategies	Budget (PHP)	Budget Source	Time Frame	Implementors	Evaluative Measures	Actual Accomplishment	Remarks
Policies and Emergency Protocols Enhancement	Strengthen and standardize school policies and procedures for shooting incidents and other active threat emergencies.	Review and update the School Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan and emergency protocols; develop clear active threat response procedures;	150,000	School MOOE / DepEd DRRM Fund / LGU Support	One Year	School Head, SDRRM Coordinator, School DRRM Team, Division DRRM Office	Updated emergency protocols; percentage of personnel oriented; policy review reports; availability of emergency procedures; compliance with required	N/A	N/A

		establish role assignments and decision-making responsibilities; post simplified emergency procedures in strategic locations; conduct annual policy review and validation with appropriate authorities.					safety policies		
Training and Emergency Preparedness Drills	Improve the knowledge, confidence, and response competency of school personnel and other stakeholders.	Conduct regular orientation, tabletop exercises, scenario-based drills, first-aid training, emergency communication exercises, evacuation exercises, and refresher training in coordination with qualified	250,000	DepEd DRRM Fund / School MOOE / LGU / Partner Agencies	Quarterly for One Year	School Head, SDRRM Team, Division DRRM Office, Qualified Emergency Responders	Number of personnel trained; number of drills conducted; attendance rate; post-training assessment; drill evaluation scores; identified corrective actions	N/A	N/A

		responder s. Activities shall emphasiz e safe response, accountab ility, communi cation, and coordinati on rather than tactical confrontat ion.							
Communi cation and Coordinat ion Systems Enhance ment	Establish reliable and coordinat ed communi cation mechanis ms during active threat emergenc ies.	Establish primary and alternativ e emergenc y communi cation channels; maintain updated emergenc y contact director ies; assign communi cation focal persons; conduct communi cation tests; develop notificatio n and escalation procedur es; coordinat e emergenc	180, 000	School MOOE / DepEd DRRM Fund / LGU Support	Six Months to One Year	School Head, SDRRM Coordinator, ICT Coordinator, Communicati on Focal Persons	Communi cation test results; emergenc y contact directory updates; response time; successful transmissi on rate; coordinati on exercise reports	N/A	N/A

		y communi cation protocols with local responder s and concerned authoritie s.							
Physical Security and Safety Measures	Strengthe n the physical safety and security environm ent of participati ng schools.	Conduct school safety and security assessmen ts; review access and visitor managem ent procedure s; improve signage and identificat ion systems; assess gates, entrances, exits, lighting, perimeter conditions , emergenc y routes, safe areas, and other relevant safety features; implemen t appropriat e corrective measures based on	400, 000	School MOOE / DepEd Infrastru cture and DRRM Funds / LGU Support	One Year	School Head, SDRRM Team, School Safety Committee, LGU / Appropriate Security and Emergency Agencies	Complete d safety assessmen t; percentag e of identified deficienci es addressed ; functional ity of emergenc y exits; complianc e with visitor managem ent procedure s; safety inspection reports	N/A	N/A

		authorize d school security assessmen ts.							
Emergency Resources and Equipment Availability	Ensure that essential emergency supplies and equipment are available, functional , accessible , and properly maintaine d.	Conduct inventory and gap analysis of emergenc y supplies; establish designate d emergenc y resource locations; maintain first-aid kits, emergenc y communi cation devices, emergenc y lighting, accountab ility materials, basic protective and safety supplies, and other authorize d emergenc y equipmen t; conduct regular inspection and replenish ment.	300, 000	School MOOE / DepEd DRRM Fund / LGU and Communi ty Support	Quarterly Inventory ; One- Year Implemen tation	School Head, Property Custodian, SDRRM Coordinator, School DRRM Team	Inventory completi on rate; equipmen t functional ity; replenish ment records; inspection reports; percentag e of identified resource gaps addressed	N/A	N/A
Psychosoc ial Support	Strengthe n school capacity	Establish post- incident	200, 000	DepEd MOOE / School	One Year	School Head, Guidance Counselor/De	Number of personnel	N/A	N/A

and Post-Incident Recovery	to provide psychosocial assistance and facilitate recovery after traumatic incidents.	psychosocial response procedures; orient personnel on psychological first aid and appropriate referral mechanisms; identify referral networks with qualified mental health and health-service providers; develop family and learner support procedures; conduct post-incident debriefing and recovery planning when appropriate and safe.		Health and DRRM Funds / LGU Health Office		signed Personnel, School Health Personnel, SDRRM Team, Partner Health Professionals	oriented; referral directory established; psychosocial support activities conducted; referral completion rate; post-incident recovery reports		
Inter-Agency Coordination and Emergency Response Partnership	Strengthen collaboration between schools and external emergency	Establish or strengthen coordination with local police, fire service, emergency	150,000	LGU Support / DepEd DRRM Fund / Partner Agencies	Semi-Annual / One Year	School Head, Division DRRM Office, LGU, Emergency Response Agencies	Number of coordination meetings; partnership arrangements; joint activities	N/A	N/A

	response organizati ons.	y medical services, LGU DRRM offices, health offices, and other appropriat e agencies; conduct joint planning meetings; develop communi cation and coordinati on arrangem ents; conduct inter- agency preparedn ess exercises when feasible.					conducted ; response coordinati on evaluation ; document ed action points		
School Emergency Accounta bility and Evacuatio n Readiness	Improve the ability of schools to account for learners and personnel during emergenc y situations .	Review class and personnel accountab ility procedure s; maintain updated class lists and emergenc y contact informati on; designate appropriat e assembly or safe areas	120, 000	School MOOE / DepEd DRRM Fund	Six Months to One Year	School Head, Teachers, Class Advisers, SDRRM Team	Accuracy of accountab ility records; time required for headcount ; drill evaluation results; percentag e of classes with updated records	N/A	N/A

		based on authorized school plans; establish procedures for headcounts and reporting; integrate accountability procedures into preparedness exercises.							
Active Threat Preparedness Information and Awareness Program	Increase awareness of appropriate emergency preparedness and reporting procedures among the school community.	Develop age-appropriate information materials; conduct orientations for teachers, personnel, learners, parents, and other stakeholders; disseminate emergency reporting procedures and safety reminders; integrate preparedness awareness into appropriate school	100,000	School MOOE / DepEd DRRM Fund / LGU Support	Quarterly	School Head, Teachers, SDRRM Team, Guidance Personnel, School Information Coordinator	Number of orientations; participation rate; awareness assessment results; information materials distributed; stakeholder feedback	N/A	N/A

		activities without unnecessarily exposing learners to graphic or traumatic content.							
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement	Ensure sustained implementation and continuous improvement of school active threat preparedness.	Conduct quarterly preparedness assessments; review drill and exercise results; document deficiencies and corrective actions; establish a school preparedness scorecard; conduct annual plan review; use incident and exercise lessons learned to update policies, training, communication, resources, and recovery procedures.	100,000	School MOOE / DepEd DRRM Fund	Quarterly for One Year	School Head, SDRRM Coordinator, School DRRM Team, Division DRRM Office	Preparedness assessment scores; completed corrective actions; quarterly monitoring reports; annual plan review; improvement in preparedness indicators	N/A	N/A

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