



# SHIELDS OF THE CAMPUS GUARD: STORIES IN THE LIFE OF A UNIVERSITY SECURITY OFFICER

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the experiences and challenges of school campus security personnel, focusing on their career pathways, daily responsibilities, and coping strategies in addressing workplace demands. Using a qualitative descriptive design with a narrative inquiry approach, four licensed security officers (two male and two female) with at least five years of experience and assigned to campus entry and exit points were purposively selected. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed four major themes: (1) Pathway to Becoming a Security Officer, which highlights motivations influenced by personal values, public service orientation, and job stability, as well as the gap between initial expectations and actual job realities; (2) Daily Experiences as a Security Officer, which emphasizes routine duties such as monitoring, patrolling, and access control, alongside the need to respond to unpredictable emergencies and dynamic campus situations; (3) Overcoming Challenges in Security Operations, which underscores issues related to workplace conflicts, limited resources, and gaps in institutional policies; and (4) Early Career Challenges and Coping Strategies, which demonstrate the importance of resilience, adaptability, and support systems such as mentorship and training. Overall, the study affirms the critical role of campus security personnel in maintaining safety and order within academic institutions. It further highlights the necessity for strengthened institutional policies, continuous professional development, and enhanced support mechanisms to

improve both performance and well-being, thereby contributing to more effective and sustainable campus security management.

**Keywords:** *Campus security, routine duties, challenges, resilience, institutional support, safety operations.*

## INTRODUCTION

Crimes occur across all societal settings, and college campuses are not exempt. College campuses exhibit specific criminogenic dynamics, including physical vulnerabilities such as inadequate barriers and unsecured facilities; temporal patterns created by similar routines among students, which present predictable opportunities for crime; and lifestyle factors such as the presence of valuable property, frequent socialization, and increased use of alcohol or illegal substances (Sloan & Fisher, 2012, as cited in Godfrey, 2023). These vulnerabilities necessitate comprehensive and proactive security measures that protect the campus community and its resources.

Campus security is a critical concern in line with the CHED Memorandum Order No. 09, Series of 2013, which mandates the safety and well-being of students, staff, and all campus stakeholders. Security personnel are responsible for safeguarding institutional assets, preventing unauthorized access, and ensuring a safe learning environment (Security Tx, 2021; Shpeizer, 2021; Thomas, 2016). While the deployment of armed personnel depends on institutional policy, security guards must be properly trained to manage potential threats, employ physical interventions when necessary, and communicate effectively in high-pressure situations, particularly when interacting with students, parents, or visitors (Anyon, 2017; Omer, 2021; Shamsuddin et al., 2017).

Modern security management distinguishes between proactive and reactive strategies. Reactive security responds to incidents as they occur, while proactive security seeks to eliminate vulnerabilities before they can be exploited (Huth & Nielson, 2019). Perry (2010) identifies three essential steps for effective security: conducting vulnerability assessments, performing cost-benefit analyses, and testing systems for operational effectiveness. Proactive measures serve as the primary defense, with reactive strategies providing supplementary support. Such an approach aligns with NORSU's research thrusts in community service, safety and disaster risk reduction, and institutional development, which emphasize responsive and sustainable systems for societal well-being.

The role of school security personnel has evolved in response to contemporary challenges, including the "new normal" caused by the global pandemic. Lactuan and Catalbas (2024) found that security personnel have demonstrated adaptability and resilience by implementing health and safety protocols while maintaining secure campus environments. Collaboration among school administrators, policymakers, and local security agencies was identified as critical for developing sustainable security strategies. Supporting the health, well-being, and professional development of security personnel

aligns with SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Occupational challenges for security personnel are significant. Rancic (2021) identified emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment as primary components of burnout, which are exacerbated by long working hours and shift work. Jovanović and Šarac (2020) reported associations between high occupational stress and health impairments such as hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Ayeo-eo (2023) highlighted the male-dominated nature of security work, limited professional development opportunities, and job insecurity. Addressing these issues contributes to SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8, and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) by fostering safe, inclusive, and sustainable employment within educational institutions.

Despite research on campus security, a notable gap remains: the firsthand experiences of security personnel themselves. Most studies focus on institutional policy, risk management, or quantitative survey data, while the personal narratives of guards regarding daily routines, challenges, and responsibilities are underexplored. This qualitative study addresses this gap by documenting the lived experiences of security personnel at a state university in the Negros Island Region. Through their narratives, particularly regarding night-time patrols and the management of large campus areas, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of campus security from the human perspective. The findings support evidence-based policies that enhance campus safety, promote well-being, and foster inclusive and resilient learning environments, fully aligned with NORSU's research thrusts in community development, sustainable systems, and human capital development, as well as CHED standards and the United Nations SDGs. In conclusion, campus security extends beyond protecting physical assets; it is essential for ensuring the holistic safety and well-being of students, staff, and security personnel. Integrating occupational health, professional development, and proactive security strategies strengthens institutional resilience and fosters inclusive, safe, and sustainable learning environments, in accordance with CHED policies, NORSU research thrusts, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Pathway to Becoming a Security Officer**

The decision to pursue a career in security or law enforcement is influenced by multiple factors, including gender, personal motivation, and socio-economic conditions. Studies indicate that female undergraduates are less likely than their male counterparts to consider careers in policing due to societal perceptions and public attitudes toward law enforcement (Okunola et al., 2019). Negative perceptions of corruption in police agencies have also been cited as deterrents (Okunola et al., 2019). Conversely, some studies report minimal gender differences in career motivations. Todak (2022) observed that women may choose law enforcement roles out of a desire to help others, while Raganella and White (2019) found that male and female recruits in the New York City Police Department exhibited similar motivations, such as serving the public and job security.

Similarly, Chen (2021) and Seklecki & Paynich (2019) noted that both genders are motivated by a desire to assist people and the stability offered by the profession.

Employment status also influences career decisions in law enforcement. Unemployed undergraduates are more likely to join the police compared to their employed peers. However, studies suggest that motivations extend beyond mere employment, as some individuals seek to professionalize and improve policing standards rather than solely secure a job (Fabamise, 2019; Meagher & Yentes, 2020). The expectation of job stability, a respectable position, and steady income are significant motivators, yet these expectations are often tempered by the realities of irregular hours, crisis management, and interactions with difficult individuals (Williams, 2019).

Transitioning into the role of a security officer involves reconciling initial expectations with the realities of the profession. While recruits may anticipate routine tasks, such as patrolling and monitoring premises, the day-to-day responsibilities often involve complex decision-making, conflict resolution, and crisis management. Johnson and Williams (2019) emphasized that the emotional and psychological demands of professional roles can challenge newcomers, requiring resilience and adaptability to manage stress effectively.

### **Daily Experiences as a Security Officer**

Security officers often begin their careers expecting predictable, routine tasks, including monitoring access points and conducting scheduled patrols. While essential, these duties are frequently overshadowed by the unpredictable nature of their work environment. Emergency situations—such as medical incidents, theft, or disturbances—demand rapid, non-routine responses and test the decision-making abilities of security personnel (Harris, 2019). Resilience, defined as the capacity to adapt and recover from stressors, is a key trait for security officers and is enhanced through institutional support, mentorship, and professional training (Carter, 2019). The daily duties of security officers also require managing complex interpersonal dynamics. Students, faculty, and staff may have differing expectations of security personnel, who must balance enforcing policies with maintaining approachability and professionalism (Thompson, 2019). Officers frequently mediate conflicts, de-escalate tense situations, and ensure compliance with institutional regulations, necessitating high levels of emotional intelligence, problem-solving skills, and situational awareness (Jones, 2020).

### **Operational Challenges in Security Work**

Security officers encounter operational challenges arising from insufficient resources, understaffing, or limited access to security technology. Inadequate surveillance systems, unclear communication protocols, and gaps in emergency procedures can hinder their effectiveness, particularly during high-risk events (Jones & Robinson, 2020). Navigating legal and ethical responsibilities, such as respecting individual rights and adhering to institutional regulations, further complicates their work (Brown & Taylor, 2019). Without comprehensive training and well-defined policies,

security personnel may experience uncertainty, inconsistent decision-making, or exposure to legal risks (Sullivan & Dvorak, 2021; Walker, 2019).

The emotional and psychological demands of the job are significant. Repeated exposure to emergencies, violence, or public negativity can lead to burnout, stress, or compassion fatigue (Thompson & Richards, 2021). Security officers' well-being depends not only on personal resilience but also on institutional support systems, including mentorship, peer support, and professional development opportunities (Harrison, 2019).

### **Early Career Challenges and Coping Strategies**

Beyond technical duties, security officers influence the perception of safety and trust within an institution. Their visible presence deters wrongdoing, fosters a sense of security, and contributes to the psychological comfort of students, staff, and visitors (Scott, 2024). Strategic deployment in high-traffic or high-risk areas demonstrates institutional vigilance and reassures the campus community.

Effective coping strategies are critical for early-career security officers, who may face unexpected situations requiring rapid assessment and response. Mentorship and guidance from experienced colleagues are instrumental in building resilience and developing practical skills (Carter, 2019). Training programs that emphasize legal compliance, conflict resolution, emergency preparedness, and emotional intelligence support officers in navigating the unpredictable aspects of their roles. Security resilience extends beyond individual capability, encompassing institutional structures that enable personnel to anticipate, withstand, and recover from operational challenges (Calli, 2024).

Literature underscores several critical factors in understanding the pathway, daily experiences, and challenges of security officers, all of which are directly relevant to examining their roles and responsibilities within campus settings. Decisions to pursue security work are influenced by gender, personal values, job stability, and the desire to serve the public, rather than solely by unemployment or economic necessity, highlighting the complex motivations behind entering the profession. Once in the role, officers frequently encounter a gap between their expectations and reality, facing unpredictable, high-pressure situations that demand quick decision-making and adaptability. Operational challenges, including limited resources, unclear policies, and high-risk situations, further complicate their duties and can impede effective security management. Alongside these practical demands, the emotional and psychological pressures of the work require resilience, emotional intelligence, and strong support systems to manage stress, conflicts, and the risk of burnout. Institutional support, through structured mentorship, continuous training, clear protocols, and adequate staffing, is therefore essential in enhancing officers' performance, well-being, and professional development. Understanding these interconnected factors is central to the purpose of this study, which seeks to explore the lived experiences of campus security personnel, their coping mechanisms, and the strategies that enable them to maintain a safe, orderly, and supportive educational environment.

## **Research Objective**

This qualitative narrative inquiry would like to retell the stories of campus security personnel as they go about their duties in protecting the lives and properties of a state university in the Negros Island Region.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the shared experiences of campus security personnel at a state university. Specifically, a qualitative narrative inquiry design was utilized to address the study's purpose, as it allowed for an in-depth examination of participants lived experiences and personal perspectives. The objective of qualitative descriptive research was to provide a comprehensive and accurate summary of a particular event or phenomenon as experienced by individuals or groups (Lambert & Lambert, 2012, as cited in Colson, 2024). Narrative inquiry emphasized understanding the meanings and interpretations that individuals attached to their actions and experiences through storytelling (Li, 2022). By examining participants' narratives, this approach revealed how individuals organized and made sense of their life experiences (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Li, 2022; Polkinghorne, 1996, as cited in Wade, 2023). Narrative inquiry was therefore selected because it provided participants with the flexibility to articulate their experiences in their own words, allowing their voices to be authentically represented and highlighting the complex realities of their roles as campus security personnel.

### **Respondents of the Study**

In this study, purposive sampling was employed to identify participants who could provide relevant and meaningful insights. Purposive sampling is a method of selecting participants who are most likely to generate appropriate and useful information (Campbell et al., 2020). For qualitative descriptive studies, the sample should be purposively selected, focusing on participants with direct experience related to the phenomenon under investigation (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009, as cited in Colson, 2024). According to Patton (2015, as cited in Li, 2023), utilizing purposive sampling enables researchers to obtain in-depth responses, as the selected participants best fit the characteristics required for the study. A clear rationale for participant selection was therefore established to ensure transparency and reduce potential bias (Barglowski, 2018, as cited in Li, 2023). The criteria for participant inclusion consisted of an equal number of male and female campus security officers who had been assigned to entrance and exit gates, had served as security personnel for at least five years, and were licensed security guards.

## **Research Instrument**

This qualitative descriptive study utilized two sources of data collection: semi-structured interviews and a focus group. The researcher developed the semi-structured interview and focus group questions and subsequently validated these instruments with an expert panel. An expert panel is composed of individuals with specialized knowledge and experience relevant to the research topic, providing guidance on the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the questions (Brady et al., 2017). The semi-structured interviews consisted of 12 to 15 open-ended questions, designed to elicit detailed accounts of participants' experiences. Open-ended questions were employed because they allow participants to freely express their perspectives and expand on their experiences without being constrained or influenced by the researcher, whereas closed-ended questions may limit the depth and richness of responses, making them less suitable for qualitative inquiry (Connor, et al., 2019).

## **Data Gathering Procedure**

Prior to data collection, the researchers personally submitted a formal request letter to the university president to seek permission to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researcher coordinated with the head of security to identify potential participants who met the inclusion criteria.

An orientation session was then conducted to explain the purpose of the study, its scope, and the expected timeframe. Participants were provided with an informed consent form, and only those who voluntarily agreed were included in the study. To facilitate openness and trust, rapport was established prior to the conduct of interviews.

Throughout the data collection process, bracketing was observed to minimize researcher bias and ensure that participants' narratives were captured as authentically as possible. Follow-up interviews were conducted when necessary to clarify responses and deepen understanding. Ethical considerations were strictly observed, and participants were referred to a mental health professional in cases where emotional distress or triggering experiences arose during the interview process.

Data collection continued until data saturation was achieved, indicating that no new significant information was emerging. Upon completion of the interviews, participants were given tokens and verbal recognition as a gesture of appreciation for their time and contribution to the study.

## **Data Analysis**

This study employed thematic analysis following the framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2021). The process began with data familiarization, wherein the researcher repeatedly listened to audio recordings and carefully reviewed the transcribed interviews and focus group discussions. During this phase, detailed notes were taken to identify initial patterns and insights.

Each transcript was reviewed line-by-line to enhance familiarity with the data and to ensure transcription accuracy. To further validate the data, the transcribed materials were returned to the participants for confirmation through member checking.

The second phase involved generating initial codes, where the researchers conducted a systematic coding of the data. Relevant segments of the transcripts were assigned codes, and similar codes were grouped accordingly. This process continued until all data had been thoroughly coded and organized.

In the third phase, the researchers searched for themes by examining relationships among codes and clustering them into meaningful categories. These initial themes represented patterns relevant to the research questions.

The fourth phase involved reviewing the themes, wherein each theme was evaluated in relation to the coded data and the entire dataset. Themes that lacked sufficient supporting data were revised, merged, or discarded. A constant comparative method was applied throughout this stage to identify similarities and differences across data sets and ensure consistency (Kolb, 2012).

The fifth phase focused on defining and naming the themes. The researchers refined each theme to clearly capture its essence and uniqueness. Relevant data extracts were selected to illustrate each theme, ensuring that they provided clear and compelling evidence for the analysis. Themes were carefully reviewed to avoid duplication and were organized into a coherent narrative that reflected the participants' experiences.

The final phase involved producing the report, where the findings were presented in a clear, logical, and compelling manner. The writing process was iterative and occurred alongside the analysis to ensure that the final report accurately represented the data and addressed the research objectives.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Participants of the Study**

This qualitative study involved four purposively selected campus security personnel from a state university, each possessing diverse professional backgrounds and extensive experience in campus security operations. The participants varied in age, educational attainment, and years of service, thereby providing a comprehensive perspective on the phenomenon under investigation.

Participant 1, a 57-year-old female and Chief Security Officer, holds a Master of Public Management degree and has completed extensive training in public safety and law enforcement. Her professional background reflects strong leadership and technical expertise in security management.

Participant 2, a 64-year-old male, demonstrated extensive field experience in campus security, emphasizing proactive monitoring and the use of digital surveillance systems.

Participant 3, a 44-year-old male Chief Security Officer, transitioned from local government service and highlighted the importance of legal knowledge and decision-making in managing multi-campus security operations.

Participant 4, a 62-year-old male with a Master in Technology Education, emphasized procedural compliance, policy enforcement, and operational monitoring as essential components of effective security practice.

The diversity of participants ensured rich, experience-based narratives that contributed to a deeper understanding of campus security operations, consistent with the principles of qualitative inquiry (Patton, 2015).

## **Thematic Findings**

Using thematic analysis following the framework of Braun and Clarke (2021), four major themes emerged: (1) Pathway to Becoming a Security Officer, (2) Daily Experiences in Security Operations, (3) Overcoming Challenges in Security Operations, and (4) Early Career Adaptation and Resilience.

### **Theme 1: Pathway To Becoming A Security Officer**

#### **Motivations and Influences Behind Career Choice**

The findings revealed that participants' decisions to pursue a career in campus security were shaped by intrinsic motivations such as public service, safety advocacy, and professional responsibility, rather than purely economic necessity. For instance, Participant 2 emphasized a strong desire to help others and contribute to community safety, while Participant 1 highlighted her commitment to leadership during institutional challenges. These findings are consistent with prior studies indicating that motivations for entering security-related professions are often driven by altruistic values, job stability, and a desire for meaningful work (Meagher & Yentes, 2020; Todak, 2022). Similarly, research suggests that both male and female personnel share comparable motivations centered on service and security (Chen, 2021; Raganella & White, 2019), contradicting earlier assumptions that gender significantly influences career choice in law enforcement (Okunola et al., 2019).

#### **Initial Perceptions Versus Reality**

Participants reported a disparity between their initial expectations of the role and the actual demands encountered in practice. While many anticipated routine and structured tasks, they were confronted with complex challenges such as legal ambiguities, emergency situations, and high-pressure decision-making.

This finding aligns with Williams (2019), who noted that professionals often experience a “reality shock” when transitioning into demanding roles. Similarly, Johnson and Williams (2019) emphasized that initial perceptions of predictability are frequently replaced by the complexities of real-world practice, requiring adaptability and resilience.

## **Theme 2: Daily Experiences In Security Operations**

### **Routine Duties and Unexpected Situations**

Participants described their daily responsibilities as a combination of structured routines and unpredictable events. Routine tasks included monitoring entry points, conducting patrols, and maintaining incident reports, while unexpected situations involved emergencies, unauthorized access, and crisis management.

These findings support Harris (2019), who emphasized that security work involves a dynamic interplay between routine surveillance and sudden disruptions requiring immediate response. The need for adaptability in such situations further reinforces the importance of resilience, as highlighted by Carter (2019), who identified resilience as a critical factor in managing high-pressure environments.

### **Interactions with Students, Faculty, and Staff**

The study also revealed that security personnel play a vital role in fostering a safe and supportive campus environment through effective communication and interpersonal engagement. Participants emphasized the importance of approachability, professionalism, and mutual respect in their interactions with the academic community.

This finding is consistent with Thompson (2019), who argued that security officers must balance authority with approachability to maintain order while fostering trust. Furthermore, Jones (2020) highlighted that effective conflict resolution and emotional intelligence are essential skills in managing campus interactions and maintaining a positive institutional climate.

## **Theme 3: Overcoming Challenges In Security Operations**

### **Navigating Workplace Conflicts and Operational Hurdles**

Participants identified several operational challenges, including long working hours, resource limitations, high-stress situations, and dealing with difficult individuals. These challenges required the use of communication skills, emotional intelligence, and strategic decision-making.

The findings are supported by Smith (2021), who emphasized the importance of de-escalation techniques in managing workplace conflicts. Additionally, operational constraints such as understaffing and inadequate resources have been identified as significant barriers to effective security operations (Jones & Robinson, 2020).

Moreover, the emotional toll associated with these challenges aligns with Thompson and Richards (2021), who reported that prolonged exposure to high-stress situations can lead to burnout and psychological strain among security personnel.

### **Tackling Institutional Support and Policy Deficiencies**

Institutional challenges, including unclear policies, insufficient support, and leadership conflicts, emerged as significant concerns among participants. These issues often resulted in confusion, inconsistent decision-making, and operational inefficiencies.

This finding is consistent with Garcia and Chen (2020), who highlighted that gaps in institutional policies can hinder effective security responses, particularly in emergency situations. Similarly, Sullivan and Dvorak (2021) emphasized that unclear protocols can lead to legal and operational risks.

The importance of continuous training and professional development was also evident, as inadequate training can compromise the effectiveness of security personnel (Walker, 2019).

## **Theme 4: Early Career Adaptation And Resilience**

### **Adapting to the Role and Responsibilities**

Participants described the initial phase of their careers as challenging, particularly in terms of decision-making, understanding policies, and managing responsibilities. Adaptation was facilitated through experience, continuous learning, and guidance from senior personnel.

This finding aligns with Scott (2024), who noted that security personnel significantly influence the perception of safety and must develop both technical and interpersonal competencies to perform effectively.

### **Building Resilience Through Support Systems**

Resilience emerged as a central theme in coping with the demands of the profession. Participants emphasized the importance of mentorship, peer support, and institutional backing in managing stress and maintaining performance.

This is supported by Carter (2019), who highlighted the role of support systems in enhancing resilience among professionals in high-risk occupations. Furthermore, Calli (2024) emphasized that security resilience involves not only reactive responses but also proactive strategies that integrate adaptability, preparedness, and organizational support.

## **Integrated Discussion**

The findings of this study highlight that campus security personnel operate within a complex and dynamic environment characterized by both routine responsibilities and unpredictable challenges. Their motivations are largely intrinsic, grounded in a commitment to service and community safety, which aligns with existing literature on career motivations in security professions (Meagher & Yentes, 2020; Todak, 2022).

However, the transition from expectations to reality reveals significant gaps, emphasizing the need for improved recruitment orientation and training programs. Daily operations require a balance between enforcement and interpersonal engagement, reinforcing the dual role of security personnel as both protectors and community facilitators (Thompson, 2019; Jones, 2020).

Operational and institutional challenges further underscore the necessity of adequate resources, clear policies, and strong administrative support. Without these, security personnel may face difficulties in performing their roles effectively, potentially compromising campus safety (Garcia & Chen, 2020; Walker, 2019).

Finally, resilience and support systems emerge as critical factors in sustaining performance and well-being. Institutions must therefore prioritize mentorship, continuous training, and psychological support to enhance the effectiveness and job satisfaction of security personnel (Carter, 2019; Callı, 2024).

## **Implications for Practice, CHED, and SDG Alignment**

The findings of this study contribute to the research thrusts of higher education institutions by emphasizing the importance of human resource development, institutional governance, and campus safety management. In alignment with CHED priorities, the study supports the development of policies that enhance employee welfare, professional training, and organizational effectiveness.

Furthermore, the study aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly:

- SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) – by addressing the psychological well-being of security personnel
- SDG 4 (Quality Education) – by promoting safe learning environments
- SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) – by highlighting the need for professional development and fair working conditions
- SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) – by strengthening campus security systems and institutional governance

## Conclusions

This study concluded that the role of campus security personnel is inherently multifaceted, complex, and demanding, requiring the integration of routine operational duties with the capacity to effectively respond to unpredictable and high-risk situations. The findings revealed that entry into the security profession is shaped by a combination of intrinsic motivations—such as a commitment to public safety and service—and external influences, including institutional needs and career opportunities. However, a notable disparity emerged between initial expectations and the lived realities of the role, confirming that security-related professions require significant adaptability and continuous role adjustment.

The daily experiences of campus security personnel demonstrated the critical importance of their functions in maintaining institutional safety and order. Core responsibilities such as access control, patrol operations, and community engagement were found to be essential in fostering a secure academic environment. Nevertheless, these structured duties were frequently interrupted by emergencies, interpersonal conflicts, and operational disruptions, necessitating rapid decision-making, situational awareness, and effective communication skills. These findings highlight the dynamic nature of security work and the need for constant readiness.

Furthermore, the study identified several persistent challenges, including workplace conflicts, limited resources, unclear institutional policies, and insufficient organizational support. These constraints not only hinder operational efficiency but also contribute to occupational stress and potential burnout. Despite these challenges, participants demonstrated resilience through adaptive coping mechanisms, reliance on peer and supervisory support, and continuous learning, underscoring the critical role of support systems in sustaining performance and well-being.

Overall, the findings underscore the indispensable role of campus security personnel in promoting a safe, orderly, and conducive learning environment. The study emphasizes the urgent need for strengthened institutional frameworks, including the development of clear and consistent policies, provision of adequate resources, and implementation of continuous professional development programs. Such measures are essential not only to enhance the effectiveness and accountability of security personnel but also to safeguard their psychological well-being and long-term career sustainability. In alignment with national and global priorities, the study supports mandates aimed at advancing institutional quality, governance, and human resource development. Moreover, it contributes to broader development goals by highlighting the importance of safe educational environments, decent working conditions, and resilient institutional systems.

Ultimately, empowering campus security personnel through policy enhancement, capacity-building initiatives, and institutional support is vital in ensuring both their professional effectiveness and their contribution to sustainable and secure academic communities.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness, well-being, and professional development of campus security personnel, as well as to strengthen institutional security systems.

First, higher education institutions should develop and implement comprehensive and standardized security policies that clearly define roles, responsibilities, and protocols. Clear guidelines will minimize ambiguity in decision-making, particularly during emergencies and complex situations, thereby improving operational efficiency and accountability.

Second, institutions are encouraged to invest in continuous professional development and training programs for security personnel. These programs should include areas such as conflict resolution, crisis management, legal and ethical standards, and the use of modern security technologies. Regular training will ensure that security officers remain competent, adaptable, and prepared to handle both routine and high-risk situations.

Third, universities should strengthen institutional support systems by ensuring adequate staffing, providing sufficient resources, and improving access to modern security infrastructure such as surveillance systems and communication tools. Enhancing logistical and administrative support will enable security personnel to perform their duties more effectively and reduce operational strain.

Fourth, it is recommended that institutions establish mental health and wellness programs tailored to the needs of security personnel. Given the high-stress nature of their work, providing access to counseling services, stress management workshops, and peer support systems can help mitigate burnout and promote psychological well-being.

Fifth, the implementation of structured mentorship and onboarding programs is highly recommended, particularly for newly hired security personnel. Pairing less experienced officers with seasoned professionals can facilitate knowledge transfer, improve decision-making skills, and ease the transition into the profession.

Sixth, institutions should promote a collaborative and inclusive campus security culture by fostering positive relationships between security personnel, students, faculty, and staff. Communication and engagement initiatives can enhance trust, cooperation, and mutual respect, contributing to a safer and more supportive academic environment.

Seventh, policymakers and institutional leaders should align campus security initiatives with national and global frameworks, particularly those advocated by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Emphasis should be placed on human resource development, institutional governance, and safety management, ensuring that security personnel are recognized as vital contributors to educational quality and institutional resilience.

Finally, institutions are encouraged to support evidence-based policy development and research initiatives related to campus security. Continuous evaluation and research will enable universities to adapt to emerging security challenges, improve practices, and sustain a culture of safety and excellence.

Overall, these recommendations aim to strengthen campus security systems while promoting the professional growth, well-being, and long-term sustainability of security personnel. These efforts contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

### **Compliance with Ethical Standards**

This study adhered strictly to established ethical standards to protect the rights, privacy, and well-being of participants. Anonymity was ensured by removing all personally identifiable information, such as names, addresses, and emails, and pseudonyms were used in reporting data to prevent identification (Crow & Wiles, 2008, as cited in Colon, 2024). Privacy and confidentiality were maintained by restricting access to raw data and securely disposing of it after the completion of the study, unless otherwise authorized by the participant. Participation was entirely voluntary, with participants fully informed of the study's purpose and given the freedom to withdraw at any stage; any data collected from participants who opted out were discarded (Mumford et al., 2021). The principles of non-maleficence and beneficence guided the research process, ensuring that participants were not exposed to harm, undue stress, or discomfort (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Wilson et al., 2008, as cited in Colon, 2024). The researchers took care to avoid overburdening participants and to create a safe and respectful environment throughout data collection, following ethical precedents in sensitive research contexts (Alderson, 2000, as cited in Colon, 2024). Collectively, these measures ensured that the study complied with the highest ethical standards, fostering trust and promoting the integrity and reliability of the findings. AI tools were thoughtfully used to enhance grammar and maintain professionalism in the presentation of the text.

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