

Original article

School security management – ethical, psychosocial and institutional conditions

Magdalena Szumiec 

Faculty of Social Sciences, Pedagogical University of Cracow, Poland,
e-mail: magdalena.szumiec@up.krakow.pl

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ABSTRACT

School security – of students, teachers, and other staff – is a critical issue in education policy. Due to the multiplicity of threats in the school environment, this issue still occupies a leading place in the discussion on education and forces constant care to improve this state. The headmaster manages school safety. The style of performing this duty is significant. The article discusses school security management, emphasizing the participatory method, which assumes the involvement of all educational entities in decision-making processes. Moreover, the prepared material presents many legal bases and other documents regulating safety rules and obligations to act in an emergency. Various educational programs and projects were also presented, which would be worth getting interested in to improve safety in schools.

KEYWORDS

school, security, management, participation, security management



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Introduction

The scale of threats in the school environment, the increasing number of disturbing phenomena, and the change in their nature make it necessary to monitor the state of security continually and implement appropriate coordinated actions. Since the school, as an educational institution, is obliged to ensure a high standard of safety to all persons staying in its premises, effective management is incredibly important. The scope of these undertakings is extensive and includes human resource management in terms of coordinating occupational health and safety issues (management styles, appropriate working conditions, employee dignity, and their rights), as well as building infrastructure management (school premises, classrooms, workplaces of all employees at the facility). It is undoubtedly a challenging and problematic task that requires much effort and constant commitment. It is associated with the absolute necessity to comply with any legal regulations, developed guidelines and procedures, and requires a flexible approach to the implementation of various projects. Efficiency in security management is undoubtedly the result of establishing cooperation with numerous entities whose professional activity gives even invaluable results. It is also the fruit of individual

people's efforts, who make up the school community and largely depend on understanding and defining the terms "security" and "management".

It should be emphasized that the school, being a remarkably dynamic place, forces a constant need to care for safety issues and obliges to implement various initiatives aimed at improving this area continuously. U. Augustyn confirms that such "activities are never enough, that there will never be such a state of satisfaction, in which we could say that nothing bad will happen at school because wherever there are young people, where there are many of these young people, various events take place" [1].

Security – definition of the concept and its essence

Security is a multidimensional concept, hence any attempt to define it is a complicated operation. This difficulty is due to different contexts, aspects and perceptions of this phenomenon. In the subject literature, safety is described as a state and a process. According to the first approach, it means "a mental or legal state in which an individual has a sense of certainty, being supported by another person or in an efficiently operating legal system" [2, p. 50]. In the second context, it concerns activities aimed at survival, development and realization of one's interests, which should lead to the achievement of the desired state of security – this approach seems to be more practical as it reflects the natural and dynamic nature of this phenomenon.

Security is most often equated with a state of no danger or the ability to "resist, avoid or prevent all threats" [3, p. 123]. This way of perceiving security results from the etymology of the word – it means a state without care (Latin sine – without, cura – care) and includes situations free from threats (in narrow and negative terms), which are a source of confidence and peace (in broad and positive terms). It is worth emphasizing that security, both at the level of individuals and entire international communities, is one of the critical, most valuable, and most protected assets. A. Maslow highlighted its essential role – he placed security in the second position when creating a pyramid of needs [4, p. 67]. This American psychologist emphasized that to satisfy the needs of a higher order (respect and recognition, self-realization) it is necessary to meet all the lower classified ones (physiological, safety, belonging and love). Thanks to this hierarchical approach to human needs, it is easy to notice the essence of security and stress its key existential value. A similar concept was expressed by E. Kołodziński, who claimed that security is strongly related to the necessity to satisfy such needs as "existence, survival, wholeness, identity, independence, peace, and certainty of development" [5, p. 1]. Also, J. Stańczyk in his considerations strongly emphasized the need to ensure security as a necessary condition for taking up activity, awakening motivation to act, ensuring continuity and harmonious development: "it is a guarantee of the intact survival of an individual and the freedom of their development" [6, p. 19]. On the other hand, concerns about unfavorable consequences resulting from the lack of meeting this elementary need were expressed by Ł. Popławski and Z. Popławski in the statement that "security is the primary value on which all others depend" [7, p. 29]. It indicates that the lack of a sense of security has a clear mark on human life quality, disrupting the proper development process, and reducing the individual's professional and life aspirations and opportunities. In the most general approach – according to B. Zdrodowski – security should be considered as "one of the most important spheres (parts, states, needs, feelings, values, goals) of a specific being (things, organization, phenomena), concerning all its categories (elements, structures, functions), related to ensuring the interest of this entity" [8, p. 52]. This interpretation stresses the role of stability, harmony, and order in the process of achieving and maintaining the security.

When considering the essence of security, it is worth analyzing it in the context of not only the state without threats, but also in relation to the feeling and belief that there are no threats. It was clearly emphasized by D. Frei, who, in accordance with the adopted classification of the security assessment, recognized that there are four separate ways of perceiving a situation:

- *a state of insecurity*, which means the correct perception of a real and significant threat,
- *a state of obsession*, which includes over-perception of a small threat as significant,
- *a state of false security*, which refers to the situation when a real threat is played down,
- *a state of security*, which is associated with an adequate perception of the situation without a significant threat [5, p. 1].

It follows that the sense of security is individual and subjective, which suggests that it should be interpreted in the context of a given subject. For it is obvious that different people may perceive the same phenomena differently and react to them contradictorily. This proves the relativity of the sense of security and indicates that in its assessment one should always consider circumstances where some of the threats may be unconscious, or – on the contrary – significantly exaggerated or even imaginary.

Although the scientific achievements related to the interpretation and explanation of the essence of security are already huge and significant, this phenomenon is still the subject of extensive analyzes and the search for new concepts and definitions. Educational institutions are a special place for the discourse on security [9]. This is due to the dynamics of constantly evolving threats and the fact that school children and youth are an exceptionally sensitive security entity. It turns out that the procedural and instinctive inability to counteract threats, typical for this age category, stemming from ignorance, unawareness and little experience, results in the inability to guarantee one's safety [10]. In view of such circumstances, it is necessary to implement many procedures and undertake numerous projects aimed at improving security in the school environment. Prevention should play a key role, thanks to which it is possible to prevent the occurrence of pathological phenomena by supporting individuals in coping with the demands of life, eliminating risk factors, and strengthening protective factors. It should be remembered that school security is multi-sided and includes both external and internal factors. It is influenced by legal acts (e.g., laws and regulations), in-school documents (statutes, regulations, procedures, preventive and educational programs), as well as all entities making up a given school structure (management and teaching staff, students) and entities from the external environment (local government, private and public institutions). The multiplicity of elements determining the level of security in an educational institution requires a comprehensive approach to the management of this area.

Legal acts and other documents regulating school security issues

Ensuring safety in the school environment is a difficult, complex process that requires compliance with applicable legal regulations and recommendations included in school documents [11, p. 3]. School safety issues are regulated by various generally applicable legal acts (laws and regulations), including in particular:

- The Act of November 17, 1964, Code of Civil Procedure [12],
- The Act of October 26, 1982, on proceedings in juvenile cases [13],

- The Act of 22 July 2016, amending the Act on health protection against the consequences of the use of tobacco and tobacco products [14],
- The Act of October 26, 1982, on upbringing in sobriety and counteracting alcoholism [15],
- The Act of 29 July 2005, on counteracting drug addiction [16],
- The Act of May 10, 2018, on the protection of personal data [17],
- The Act of April 26, 2007, on crisis management [18],
- The Act of June 6, 1997, Penal Code [19],
- The Act of 6 June 1997, Code of Criminal Procedure [20],
- The Act of 29 July 2005 on counteracting domestic violence [21].

Although these documents refer to school security, they do not fully take into account the specificity of educational institutions. Therefore, the detailed tasks of the school in the field of ensuring security are included in the following acts of the education law:

- The Act of 14 December 2016, Educational Law [22],
- The Act of 7 September 1991, on the education system [23],
- The Act of 26 January 1982, Teacher’s Charter [24],
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of May 21, 2001, on the framework statutes of public kindergartens and public schools [25],
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of December 31, 2002, on safety and hygiene in public and private schools and institutions [26],
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of October 31, 2018, amending the regulation on safety and hygiene in public and private schools and institutions [27],
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of January 31, 2003, on specific forms of educational and preventive activities among children and adolescents at risk of addiction [28],
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of August 18, 2015, on the scope and forms of educational, informative and active activities in schools and educational institutions to counteract drug addiction [29].

By analyzing the contents of the above documents, one can articulate the most important assumptions relating to the obligation facing each educational institution, i.e., the obligation to ensure safe conditions for education, upbringing, and care. These include:

- compliance with the applicable regulations in the field of occupational safety and health (securing the facilities and taking care of the condition of technical devices and other equipment, ensuring appropriate temperature, ventilation, lighting and even surface of roads and passages, proper organization of lessons and free time and recreation, ensuring proper conditions in sanitary and other rooms, development of instructions, regulations, evacuation plans and procedures in the event of an accident, etc.),
- diagnosis of existing threats and analyses and evaluation of the effectiveness of actions taken to ensure safety,
- developing educational and preventive programs aimed at effective counteracting threats,
- supporting the harmonious psychophysical development of students through the implementation of activities, including support, elimination of risk factors, and strengthening of protective factors,

- developing students' competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) in terms of perceiving and counteracting threats through the implementation of educational activities covering the subject of safety,
- undertaking cooperation with institutions working to improve broadly understood security (including the Police, Municipal Police (Commune), Fire Service, Psychological and Pedagogical Clinic, Family Court, Addiction Prevention and Treatment Clinic, Sanitary and Epidemiological Station, Health Clinic Psychical, Children's Rights Protection Committee, Social Welfare Center, Society of Families and Friends of Addicted Children, parish, sports club, community center or youth organization) [30],
- implementation of government programs aimed at improving security,
- considering the principles of security and health protection in the statute of an educational institution,
- carrying out the obligation to train all school employees in first aid.

Educational institutions are required to comply with the applicable legal regulations is the absolute minimum. To ensure safety in the school environment, it is also necessary to take into account the recommendations set out in internal school documents (statutes, regulations, procedures, and educational and preventive programs). They should precisely reflect the specifics of a given facility and refer to the problems occurring in it. The key element preceding the development of documentation in this area should be reliably conducted security analyses [10] – it is an essential stage, indispensable to create an effective remedial tool that gives the expected results. In educational activities aimed at increasing the level of safety in the school environment, prevention should play a special role, since – according to Z.B. Gaś – it is a comprehensive intervention that compensates for educational deficiencies and eliminates maturity deficits through the implementation of three streams of activities:

- supporting individuals in coping with difficulties that threaten their proper development and healthy life,
- weakening and eliminating risk factors that disturb the development and disorganize a healthy lifestyle,
- initiating and strengthening protective factors conducive to proper development and leading a healthy lifestyle [31].

School practice clearly shows that a defensive approach to prevention, based on intervention and control, and focusing only on the identification of risk factors and their elimination, gives much less effect compared to the approach derived from positive psychology, focusing mainly on protective factors. Hence, it is desirable to include both groups of factors in educational and preventive programs. In addition, when developing such programs, the following assumptions should be taken into account:

- cultivating socially acceptable norms and values,
- creating a friendly atmosphere,
- building proper relations between teachers, students and parents,
- equalizing educational opportunities for students with special educational needs, culturally different and multilingual,
- shaping proper life skills,
- increasing the educational competencies of adults (parents/guardians and teachers),
- supporting activities that develop students' interests and passions [32].

Table 1. Risk factors and protective factors

Selected examples	
Risk factors	Protective factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – violence among peers, – rejection by peers, – destructive peer group, – weak emotional bond with the facility, – school failures, – lack of control over one’s own behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – feeling of belonging to a group/facility, – positive atmosphere of the facility, – pro-social attitudes of the peer group, – making students responsible, – promoting the need to provide mutual assistance, – creating opportunities to experience success and recognize your own talents, – strong disapproval of violent behavior

Source: Own study based on [32].

Only through a comprehensive approach to school security, there is a real chance to make real changes.

Initiatives supporting educational institutions in creating a security environment

A significant role in improving security in the school environment is played by ministerial programs, social actions and campaigns, preventive programs as well as competitions and decorations.

Particularly noteworthy are government programs, such as: *Program for Preventing Social Maladjustment and Crime Among Children and Youth* (2004-2014), *Program for Counteracting Drug Addiction* (2006-2010), *Program for Counteracting Domestic Violence* (2006-2016), *Video Monitoring in schools and institutions* (2007-2009), *Program of Combating AIDS and HIV Prevention* (2007-2011), *Zero tolerance for school violence* (2007-2013), *Program for Reducing the Health Consequences of Smoking Tobacco in Poland* (2008-2011), *Safe and friendly school* (2008-2013 and 2014-2016), *Safer Together* (2007-2015), *Safe+* (2015-2018). One of the most interesting proposals of preventive programs focusing on activating young people to work for their development and helping others in this area is the program implemented by government entities: the Ministry of the Interior (under the *Safer Together* program) and the Ministry of National Education (through the *Safe and a friendly school*) in cooperation with the Police Headquarters – Prevention and You/Education (PaT/E).

Various preventive programs are also helpful in creating a school security environment. An example of valuable initiatives are the proposals of the Education Development Center (ore.edu.pl, Faculty of Education and Prevention), such as *School Preventive Intervention* (a program addressed to teachers of all educational stages, preparing them to undertake interventions towards students taking psychoactive substances), *Golden Five* (an international program aimed at teachers and students, including, among others, developing communication competencies and helping to develop skills, preventing the occurrence of risky behaviors and marginalization), *How to deal with provocative student behavior? The method of constructive confrontation* (a program addressed to teachers, the main goal of which is to equip them with the ability to properly react to aggressive and provocative behavior of students), *School for*

Parents and Educators (a program addressed to parents and teachers aimed at creating positive relationships with people in adolescence), *Conflict resolution at school* (a program aimed at teachers, educators, educators devoted to constructive methods of conflict resolution). It is worth adding that the addition to these generally available prevention programs addressed to a wide audience are also proposals targeted at selected groups from the so-called high risk, especially in the field of alcohol prophylaxis (e.g., *Noah, Correction, Feel, trust, speak*) and those devoted to the topic of aggressive behavior (e.g., *Aggression Replacement Training*). The strength of the above programs is that they were developed in accordance with the assumptions of the so-called positive prophylaxis, consisting in strengthening protective factors. Their effectiveness in reducing the level of tendency to deviant behavior is the result of a specific approach to a problem situation by depicting the mechanisms of risk behavior and showing constructive ways of behaving in various difficult situations. In addition to the above preventive programs, there is also a wide range of materials (in the form of articles, practical guides, and lesson plans) offered by the Education Development Center. Their thematic scope covers broadly understood safety: health promotion, prevention of risky behaviors, or forms of help for addicts (e.g. *How to protect a child against passive and active smoking, Addiction guide at school, How to love and require and Suicide prevention of children and adolescents*). The mass media also respond to the need to reduce the scale of pathological phenomena in the school environment and present valuable information and educational content. Examples include the following websites: www.stacjadzrowia.gov.pl (the website of the Chief Sanitary Inspectorate), www.kbn.gov.pl (the website of the National Bureau for Drug Prevention), www.zyjbezpiecznie.policja.pl (the website of the Police), www.ore.edu.pl (the website of the Center for Education Development), www.scholaris.pl (the portal with educational resources for teachers), www.narkomania.gov.pl, or www.dopalaczeinfo.pl. It is worth adding that there are also various websites devoted to a vital subject these days – security on the Internet. Interesting materials are offered, for example, by the Empowering Children Foundation through the *Child on the Web* program, under which the *Sieciaki.pl* and *Helpline.org.pl* projects are implemented. Valuable information in the field of Internet safety prevention can also be obtained from the official website of the European Commission project, implemented in Poland by the consortium: Empowering Children Foundation and Scientific Academic Computer Network (www.saferinternet.pl), as well as by visiting the website: www.edukacja.fdds.pl, www.necio.pl and www.dbi.pl, fundacja.orange.pl/kurs/ [33]. The website www.programyrekomendowane.pl [34] is an interesting proposal bringing together important information on mental health promotion and the prevention of risky behaviors among school children and youth. In accordance with the guidelines set out in the Recommendation System, each program included in the Base must be based on scientific theoretical foundations, use effective preventive strategies, be characterized by a time-based plan for the implementation of the assumed projects, be realized by properly trained staff, and be subject to evaluation. This database has been divided thematically into four sections devoted to mental health promotion (programs aimed at improving mental well-being and strengthening life skills, e.g. *Zippy's Friends, Epsilon Program*), universal prevention (programs aimed at counteracting the emergence of problem behaviors, e.g. *Treasure Archipelago, Program of home detectives "Hansel and Gretel on the trail"*), selective prevention (programs addressed to high-risk groups, the aim of which is to prevent, reduce, or eliminate negative behaviors, e.g., *Psychosocial development support program for disliked children, Psychosocial development support program for shy children*) and indicative prophylaxis (programs aimed at specific individuals from high-risk groups aimed at preventing, limiting, or eliminating problem behaviors, e.g., *Fred goes net, School preventive intervention*). The creation of the

Bank of Preventive Programs devoted to health promotion and universal, selective, and indicating prevention makes it easier for entities interested in the above-mentioned topics to obtain interesting educational materials.

Various competitions and awards also play an important role in the context of shaping school safety. An example may be the national competition *Safe School – Safe Student*, crowned with inclusion in the *National Safe School Club*. In addition to membership of this *Club*, schools can also apply for a *Safety Promoting School* or a *Health Promoting School* certificate.

The guide prepared by the Ministry of National Education, entitled “Safe school. Threats and recommended preventive actions in the field of physical and digital safety of students” may prove helpful in ensuring safety. The document contains recommendations and guidelines on how to proceed in the event of an emergency at school. The provision of the so-called good practices for the whole school community – students, teachers and management – in terms of external (fires, terrorist attacks, biological and chemical contamination) and internal threats (violence, drugs, theft, pedophilia, cyberbullying, and crime on the Internet) increases significantly chances for the success of the implemented measures [35].

Such a wide range of various initiatives aimed at improving security in the school environment is a response to the presence of many threats significantly affecting the decline in the sense of security and proves the great need to improve this area. This requires the permanent implementation of coordinated actions aimed at combating undesirable phenomena. Although the headmaster and the teaching staff are responsible for the state of safety in an educational institution, its final dimension is influenced by the entire student community, hence the most frequent target of preventive programs. As part of the undertaken projects, the issues related to shaping the ability to react to dangerous situations as well as modeling appropriate attitudes are crucial, as they constitute the key pillar of security [7]. Certainly, the effort incurred by educational institutions in connection with the implementation of initiatives aimed at improving school safety will be profitable and will result in the creation of a friendly environment that will positively affect the development of the entire school community and building appropriate relationships in it.

Security management and basic tasks in this area

The factors that determine the state of school security can be grouped into three basic categories:

- *ethical conditions* – values appreciated by the school community, based on which the facility operates, attitudes of the teaching staff, management, parents and students, rules and norms regulating social relations at school,
- *psychosocial conditions* – professional and psychosocial competencies of the teaching staff, atmosphere at the facility and interpersonal relations, social, psychological and emotional competences and skills of students,
- *institutional conditions* – educational law, the method of pedagogical supervision, work organization, system of improving the teaching staff, administrative affiliation, location and living conditions of the institution, class size [36].

The above categories are strongly related to each other, they complement and determine each other. It turns out that institutional conditions should take account of psychosocial conditions, which, in turn, should be consistent with the applicable norms and ethical values. It is important to constantly reflect on the operating conditions of the facility, trends,

needs, and expectations accepted in a given society, and to search for effective solutions in line with the chosen philosophy. It follows that the state of school safety is related to many areas of the functioning of the institution and depends on the activity of individual entities. Undoubtedly, ensuring security in the school environment requires effective management. So, what is management?

Management is “nothing more than organizing a given institution in a systemic way, enabling its functioning and performing specific tasks” [37, p. 151]. According to B. Gliński, it means a series of activities aimed at “causing the functioning of things, organizations or subordinate persons in accordance with the goals of the manager” [38, p. 929], including planning and making decisions, organizing, leading and controlling. These measures should be directed at various areas of the organization (human, financial, material and information resources) and implemented with the aim of achieving the assumed goals [39].

Three elements can be distinguished in the management process: the managing entity, the subject of management, and the information and decision feedback [40]. The effectiveness of this process depends on the proper use of numerous measures, including:

- the so-called technical means – automatic, constructional,
- legal measures – based on regulations,
- organizational measures – concerning procedures,
- educational measures – including the improvement of competences in the field of counteracting threats,
- scientific measures – concerning the improvement of research methods, design, and control [41].

Their success is determined by the human factor and it is them, in the context of security management, that should be given a lot of attention. Effective management of human potential must be preceded by thorough factual and methodological preparation. This system can be developed using:

- the *expert method* – characterized by a top-down action scheme and the use of ready-made solutions,
- the *participatory method* – involving the teaching staff in the work on a given project [42].

Looking at the assumptions of individual methods, it can be presumed that a much more effective approach in the aspect of human resource management is the use of the participatory method, the main advantage of which is taking account of the opinions of individual people forming a given community and working out solutions together. A special place in it should be taken by leadership consisting in exerting, without the use of coercion, influence on formulating goals of a given group or organization, helping to establish its culture, and motivating to actions aimed at achieving the established assumptions [39]. The most crucial element seems to be revealing the potential, inspiring to work related to joint decision-making and implementation of a given vision, and entrusting joint responses for the achieved results. Only then can full commitment and positive results be expected. Such a participatory approach to management results from the belief that the school is a place where all members of the school community should strive to achieve common goals and that is why it is so important to refer to their positions and opinions. It should be borne in mind that “an authoritarian management strategy based on monitoring and continuous control will not make the school a safe environment. The only right way is participatory management [43, p. 293].

Security management at school requires a strategic approach in the afore-mentioned individual phases in such a way as to optimally use the potential of a given environment and at the same time ensure the achievement of the institution's development goals. These tasks consist of:

- planning – which concerns the analysis of technical possibilities and human potential, as well as covers work with the mission and vision of the facility and other in-school documents,
- organizing – involving the use of the school's staff capacity in the context of the implementation of planned projects,
- leading (motivating) – based on the principles of participation of all participants in school life, mobilizing and involving them in the process of implementing projects so that the results achieved are treated as personal successes,
- controlling – including all members of the school community and concerning the analysis of the state of safety and evaluation of activities undertaken to improve this area.

Therefore, effective school management requires “flattening the hierarchy of service dependencies and involving all educational entities in decision-making processes” [44, p. 384]. In organizations with high leadership potential, prestige and respect are gained not through the mere fact of holding a position, but relationships with others, and an atmosphere of trust and support. The decentralization of power and the creation of space for negotiation and dialogue gives an opportunity to intensify the involvement of individual units in implementing activities improving the state of school security. The following conditions must be met:

- teachers can make decisions,
- giving teachers the opportunity to organize themselves,
- acting in solidarity to defend one's own interests,
- acting in solidarity to defend one's own interests,
- providing teachers with conditions for autonomous action [45].

It should be noted that the above assumptions should also be respected in relation to other groups that make up the school community, i.e., students and their parents and other school employees.

The way of managing a school obviously has a “direct impact on the personal relations functioning in it” [44, p. 378], the quality of work performed and the prevailing atmosphere, therefore, to ensure a safe and friendly environment, it is necessary to take special care of the appropriate climate, conducive to achieving personal and didactic successes, fostering self-esteem, and creating a bond and identification with the institution. The influence of the headmaster's personality on the school atmosphere seems indisputable, and its most important feature is the stability of the mood. Therefore, it is desirable that managers be cheerful, self-controlled, and predictable. Being able to show respect and acceptance is also significant. Friendly attitude, fair treatment, appreciating and praising others are of great importance, and the key is own example, appropriate attitude, commitment, good intentions, and passion. An essential element is also trust, support, keeping one's word, advising, and helping in overcoming personal limitations as well as the ability to admit one's mistakes and showing a creative approach to various matters. Honesty, which can be considered the highest value, is an inseparable element of the sense of security in joint action.

As previously mentioned, safety is managed by the headmaster on the school premises. Although, he/she is responsible for the results achieved, it should be clearly emphasized

that the final dimension is influenced by the entire school community – students, teachers, administrative staff, parents, and the local community. Each of these groups should take part in creating a security environment tailored to their own abilities. Cooperation with various institutions working for security is also important. Undoubtedly, striving to ensure a high level of security is hard, regular work that must be approached with full commitment and methodical use, using top-down recommendations and best practices [46]. Extensive knowledge of the legal system, administrative, civil, criminal, labor, public finance and other regulations is indispensable. Headmasters are supported in safety management by ready-made and verified tools supporting the security assessment in educational institutions. These are, among others, studies on ensuring safety in schools during evacuation, fire, etc. [47], in the swimming pool [48], on a school trip [49], on the way to school [50], as well as on in chemical laboratories [51], or discussing the issues of ergonomics of students' workplaces [52] and covering the risks associated with new information technology [53]. Thanks to these tools, it is possible to effectively identify accident hazards occurring in school and plan effective corrective and preventive actions. It should also be remembered that, according to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education [27], school principals are obliged, at least once a year, to scrupulously inspect the facilities belonging to the institution they manage. They should inform students and teachers about the existing dangers, paying attention to particularly dangerous places. To reduce the risk of an accident, it is worth promoting the right attitudes and emphasizing the importance of certain technical solutions. The priority tasks include, in particular, taking actions aimed at eliminating the "weak points" identified in the course of inspections. For this purpose, it is necessary, together with the team appointed by them, to plan specific preventive methods, estimate the costs and time needed to perform individual tasks, and appoint people responsible for their implementation. It should be remembered that the greatest effectiveness in prevention can be achieved in a situation of simultaneous use of several possible technical and organizational solutions, and at the same time not omitting the necessary element of any preventive measures, which is raising awareness and shaping the attitude of responsibility for own and others' safety. Thus, when developing safety procedures in an educational institution, the following rules should be taken into account:

- proper behavior and actions (during school activities and in case of various situations),
- supervision (planning inspections, maintenance and repairs, supervision over compliance with established procedures and rules),
- training (planning and systematic implementation of training courses devoted to threats and methods of appropriate response, shaping appropriate skills and attitudes).

As already mentioned, many provisions concerning school safety procedures result from the applicable regulations, especially the *Regulation on safety and health in public and private schools and institutions* [27]. However, they do not fully exhaust the issues of the need to ensure proper supervision and safe conditions for all students, so it is important to create detailed regulations, procedures and instructions tailored to the needs of a given institution. It is extremely important that everyone interested, i.e., students, teachers, and other school staff participated in the activities of creating these records, and if this is impossible, it is necessary to at least familiarize them with the content. Consulting with all parties before approving various regulations and instructions seems to be an obligatory element that may significantly affect the degree of respecting and compliance with their provisions. It is important that the procedures for dealing with a given situation are developed in a concise,

understandable, and unambiguous manner. The knowledge of these principles and the ability to react appropriately constitutes the basis for creating a safe school environment. For this purpose, it is worthwhile to carry out regular training courses on the issues of threats and ways of deal with them. Their most important goal should be to create a safety culture by shaping the desired attitudes and behaviors. It may be helpful to properly motivate and skillfully reward those who follow the regulations in force in the institution. On the other hand, negative manifestations of behavior should be met with clear disapproval and even punishment.

When gathering the current considerations on the guidelines for security management in an educational institution, attention should be paid to the need to take account of such issues as:

- safety culture in relation to school,
- regulations on health and safety at work and education,
- basic management tasks,
- the environment of the school’s functioning in the context of the duties of the headmaster, teaching staff and other bodies (managing the human potential and infrastructure of the institution),
- instructions, regulations and procedures regarding safety, health at work and education (workplace instructions, occupational health and safety instructions, regulations of teaching and administrative rooms, order regulations, procedures covering the training of employees and students in the field of occupational health and safety, fire protection, occupational diseases, first aid, counteracting mobbing, conduct in the event of an accident or in the event of a risky behavior),
- obligations in the field of improving safety, health at work and education, including control and analysis of the health and safety condition as well as occupational risk assessment.

To sum up, wise management is essential to ensure security in the school environment. The key factor is the knowledge and compliance with the applicable norms and regulations of the administrative law system, covering the state’s activity in the field of education, training, and upbringing. An important role in the aspect of improving security is also played by in-school documents that regulate detailed solutions, not regulated by the rank of an act or regulation in legal acts. These are the school statute, the concept of the school’s work, the educational and preventive curriculum, the school set of curricula, as well as the regulations and resolutions of collective bodies, or the headmaster’s orders. They should set the priority tasks for the development of an educational institution, resulting from the perceived threats, challenges, and opportunities. Various safety initiatives, especially governmental programs, educational packages, preventive programs, websites, competitions, and decorations devoted to school security, can also prove helpful. It is vital that the activities undertaken are implemented in a systematic, comprehensive, and consistent manner, not only within school walls, but also in the local environment, which requires establishing “close cooperation with organizations and institutions that can support the school’s efforts to create safe and friendly environment” [9, p. 267]. It is obvious that the foundation of effective management is good knowledge of the school community, clearly defined goals and development plans, a sense of common mission, commitment and dedication, authentic team and system thinking, appreciation of individual units, constant analysis of work and noticing its effects, perfecting the solutions adopted, respecting democratic values, ensuring a friendly atmosphere, caring for correct interpersonal relations and high self-esteem. As E. Włodarczyk claims, effective

security management requires “participation, and knowledge of the essence of security and threats, understanding the causes of threats in school, distinguishing between challenges and threats, and preparing students and teachers to deal effectively with difficult, unknown situations that threaten their safety, as well as perceiving the area of changes needed to make the activities aimed at shaping safety at school more effective” [43, p. 289].

Summary and conclusions

The school security is one of the priority issues involving principals of educational institutions and representatives of leading authorities to undertake coordinated actions aimed at improving this state. The subject of security is also significant from the perspective of the teaching staff, administrative staff, students, and parents. Any neglect in this area may have catastrophic consequences for their health and life. Therefore, the functioning of the school in its key areas should be based on the applicable legal regulations, regulating the basic principles of organizing its work. An important supplement to these provisions is the documents forming the intra-school law, referring “to a specific institution, its specific conditions, needs, and development plans” [54, p. 210]. In this way, the school’s micro-policy is effectively implemented, covering “the organization, management and administration of internal and external affairs of the school, including defining its vision and mission, planning development, adopting specific strategies of conduct, and enforcing decisions made” [54, p. 210].

Security management in the school premises requires systemic solutions, including the mobilization of human, financial, technical, and information resources, to reduce threats and improve the security environment [41]. These activities should be to a large extent focused on prevention, namely consolidating appropriate behaviors and, especially, raising awareness of various causes of threats and illegal phenomena. Without this element, it is difficult to imagine a real change. That is why it is so important to show the legitimacy of observing the principles and rules of conduct established in the school and motivate to respect them by promoting the right attitudes. Since the goal of management should be a real sense of security for all participants of school life, it is necessary to include them in decision-making processes. This can only be achieved based on a participation strategy, which determines the success of the implemented projects and results in a real improvement in safety in the school environment. Therefore, it should be ensured that the entities included in the school community strive for “goals based on the same shared values, for which dialogue, participation, and service to others are essential” [55, p. 112]. Efficient management of an institution requires noticing and implementing common ideas and plans, and using the potential of other units, institutions, and entire communities. After all, the modern approach to management is about implementing, not so much the principal’s goals, but taking into account the expectations of both entities from the internal (students, parents, teachers, and other school employees) and external environment (including local government, and private and public institutions). At the same time, one should remember about the instability of this environment (resulting from changes in the economic, political, technological, legal, and social areas) and be prepared for the implementation of the vision that enables the continuation and development of the school in a dynamically changing reality.

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The author declared no conflict of interests.

Author contributions

The author contributed to the interpretation of results and writing of the paper. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Ethical statement

The research complies with all national and international ethical requirements.

ORCID

Magdalena Szumiec  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7727-7898>

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Biographical note

Magdalena Szumiec – Ph.D. in social sciences in the field of pedagogy, Assistant Professor at the Institute of Safety Sciences at the Pedagogical University in Cracow. Research interests: education and prevention of safety and health security; author of one monograph, over forty scientific articles, co-editor of the monograph and co-author of the curriculum for education for security with methodological reconstruction; member of the Teams: “Safe and friendly school” (2014-2016); “Safe+” (2015-2018); Education for Safety at the Pedagogical Sciences Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences (2018-2019).

Zarządzanie bezpieczeństwem w szkole – uwarunkowania etyczne, psychospołeczne i instytucjonalne

STRESZCZENIE

Bezpieczeństwo w szkole – uczniów, nauczycieli i innych pracowników – stanowi kluczowe zagadnienie polityki oświatowej. Z uwagi na wielość zagrożeń w środowisku szkolnym, problematyka ta wciąż zajmuje czołowe miejsce wśród dyskusji nad oświatą i wymusza nieustanną troskę o poprawę tego stanu. Bezpieczeństwem w szkole zarządza dyrektor. Niezwykle ważny jest styl sprawowania przez niego tego obowiązku.

W artykule omówiono kwestię zarządzania bezpieczeństwem w szkole, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem metody partycypacyjnej, która zakłada uczestnictwo wszystkich podmiotów edukacji w procesach decyzyjnych. Ponadto w opracowanym materiale przedstawiono wiele podstaw prawnych i innych dokumentów regulujących zasady bezpieczeństwa i obowiązki postępowania w sytuacji zagrożenia. Zaprezentowano też różne programy i projekty edukacyjne, którymi warto byłoby się zainteresować mając na uwadze poprawę stanu bezpieczeństwa w szkołach.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE szkoła, bezpieczeństwo, zarządzanie, partycypacja, zarządzanie bezpieczeństwem

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