

# Innovations

## Senior High School Risk Management: Effective Ways to Mitigate Risks in the New Normal

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### **Abstract**

*Effective risk management in schools is essential in making sound decisions to deliver the best possible outcomes for stakeholders' well-being. In the Philippines, the Senior High School Department just implemented in 2016 wherein the analysis of its risks is necessary to formulate a risk management action plan. This study determines the senior high school's risk management at Baguio Central University and its effective ways of mitigating risks in the new normal. The study employs a total enumeration having seventeen (17) respondents composed of teachers and the principal of the senior high school department. Using a survey questionnaire with an informal interview, the researcher specifically looked into the probability of occurrence of risks, the impact of risks, and the effectiveness of strategies used in mitigating risks in the senior high school department. Results showed that there is a moderate likelihood of the occurrence of risks in the senior high school department during the pandemic. Also, there is a moderate impact of risks in the senior high school department in the new normal. Moreover, it has been found that the department is very highly effective in mitigating risks during the pandemic. Hence, these conclude that risks in the educational sector are inevitable and should be appropriately managed to alleviate their impact on the organization because, if not, it would be detrimental to the operation of the business. Thus, a risk management action plan is required not only for the whole organization but also for the different departments.*

**Keywords:** Risk Management, School Risks, Pandemic, Senior High School, Baguio City

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### **Introduction**

Risks are uncertain events or conditions that, if they occur, have a positive or negative effect on the organization. It is a reality for business owners and managers regardless of the industry sector or company size. Running or operating a business comes with many types of risks. These risks can destroy a business or even cause severe damage that is costly and time-consuming to restore (Alliance Trade, 2021).

Actually, no organizations are safe from these uncertainties that complicate decision-making by managers, and schools were not exempt from this, most especially in this pandemic where risks encountered by organizations become wide.

One component of the total risk is the business risk. It is about internal and external forces that converge to threaten an organization and its management team. It is where an organization may experience events or circumstances that threaten its ability to continue operating, leading to a loss of profits (Peterdy, 2022). Simply put, business risk threatens an organization's financial goals. It can impact an organization's bottom line and its reputation among its clients (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022). According to the Harvard Business Review, company or business risks are divided into three parts which are preventable, strategic, and external risks. Preventable risks are those hazards within the organization, while strategy risks are those that the organization may undertake to generate higher returns. External risks are those occurring outside the organization and, therefore, beyond the control of the management (Alliance Trade, 2021).

A business provides a product or service to its customers or clients. And a school operates to provide education to its students. Therefore, a school is a business enterprise because running a school is the same as managing a business. It provides students with a venue for learning wherein teachers and educators render services to them. Moreover, it involves many aspects, from hiring employees and effectively promoting a product or service to keeping proper financial records and dealing with customers' concerns (Global Business Academy, n.d.). Hence, schools experience business risks, or we call them school risks, because as they undertake many activities due to an increasing number of students, risks are associated with them. Moreover, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has added new challenges for the education sector. Due to this, risk management is essential to keep students, faculty, teachers, and other school stakeholders safe from any harm.

Risk management is the identification, analysis, assessment, and prioritization of risks to achieve an objective in an organization. Specifically, managing risk involves identifying and assessing risks and controls; documenting risks in a risk register; implementing actions and treatments to manage identified risks; monitoring risks; and reporting risks (Victoria, 2022).

## **Literature Review**

All organizations face risks because, without risk, rewards are less likely. Moreover, schools and universities have become more aware of this when the pandemic hit the educational sector. That is why they have recognized the need for a risk management plan to balance taking risks and reducing them (Khartit, 2022). As stated by Curracubby (2023), this school year, the main focus of risk management is

controlling the spread of COVID-19, which is considered an unforeseen event. Moreover, the other possible risks in schools include injury of a student, a lawsuit filed by an angry parent, or damage to the school's reputation. Snook (2020) also added that twelve percent of schools report bullying as a weekly problem for students. They were threatened or injured by a weapon on school property. In addition, student accidents, mental health, reputational damage, mismanagement, and criminal actions, such as cyber-attacks, are some of the risks that could take place in an educational institution (Chubb, 2023).

According to Palcik (2022), a certified professional educator in the United States and Canada, risk management is a significant element to a balanced educational experience for students, teachers, and staffs. He emphasized the role of risk management in science and STEM of K-12 to ensure a safer learning environment for students. Moreover, there should be a more transparent discussion about safety and risks in schools, like actual risks versus perceived risks, and a risk assessment matrix to make it available for principals to evaluate. Successful risk management involves a comprehensive understanding of these and many other aspects designed to keep people safer. In line with safety, the recurring small and moderate hazards, like fires, storms, and landslides, and the infrequent but utterly devastating earthquakes, tsunamis, and pandemics pose threats to the education sector. For instance, in Cambodia, flooding up to at least a meter high makes schools inaccessible, making learners drop out of school, and the same instances were experienced in Lao. Other natural hazards experienced in Asia are landslides, cyclones, wildfire, and food security issues which causes damage to school buildings and loss of furniture, learning materials, and equipment, that resulted in the disruption of the education program.

Additionally, in Indonesia, more than 70% of schools were reported to be prone to earthquakes. In 2012, out of 1.2 million secondary schools in the country, almost 223,000 were reported to be lightly damaged, and almost 345,000 were severely damaged in 2013. These data show that disasters influence the educational continuity of students in the absence of a sound education continuity plan (ASEAN, n.d.).

While, in the Philippines, according to the Department of Education (DepEd), (2020), from the school year 2009-2010 to the school year 2017-2018, 43,810 schools nationwide have reported effects of natural hazards, while 21,949 schools have reported impacts of human-induced hazards. These hazards hinder education delivery and threaten and affect both the lives of students and teachers and other educational resources and investments. Furthermore, because of these threats, DepEd created the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, which is in line with the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction Management Act of 2010, also known as

the Republic Act 10121. This is guided by the DO 37 series of 2015, known as the Comprehensive DRRM in Basic Education Framework. Based on the framework, DRRMS has three major programs: prevention and mitigation, preparedness and response, rehabilitation, and recovery. Moreover, these programs cover three pillars of the global Comprehensive School Safety Framework. First is the safe learning facilities which deal with the infrastructure and related soft components such as resilient designs and standards. It also includes temporary learning spaces (TLS) or classrooms provided to ensure learning continuity in the aftermath of a disaster. Next is disaster risk management, which covers contingency planning, regular drills, provision of safety equipment, and establishing of a DRRM Information and Communication System. And lastly, disaster risk reduction (DRR) in education focuses on integrating DRRM into the K-12 curriculum, including teacher training.

As stated by Moore (2016), risk management creates value and contributes to achieving an organization's objectives. It contributes to the demonstrable achievement of objectives and enhancement of performance. Thus, in Baguio Central University Senior High School Department, its vision is "Empowered, high-caliber and college-ready learners who have equal access to quality education in a learning environment that upholds fairness and excellence" and in order to achieve this kind of learning environment, effective risk management is relevant most especially that the department who is existing for seven years now has not yet formulated its risk management action plan.

Therefore, effective risk management in a school will help school heads or principals make sound decisions to deliver the best possible outcomes for the school and the community and safeguard students and staff's well-being. As a service entity, the primary beneficiary of the school's risk management would be the students and faculty members because they were the organization's lifeblood. According to Template.Net (n.d.), the health and welfare of everyone in a school is the most crucial reason why risk management is needed. Moreover, with proper risk management practices, schools could detect things that might cause unforeseeable problems in the future. Thus, risk management is primarily about thinking in advance. It is analyzing or assessing current questionable events to foresee if they might cause severe results. And then, formulate effective countermeasures to avoid accidents efficiently.

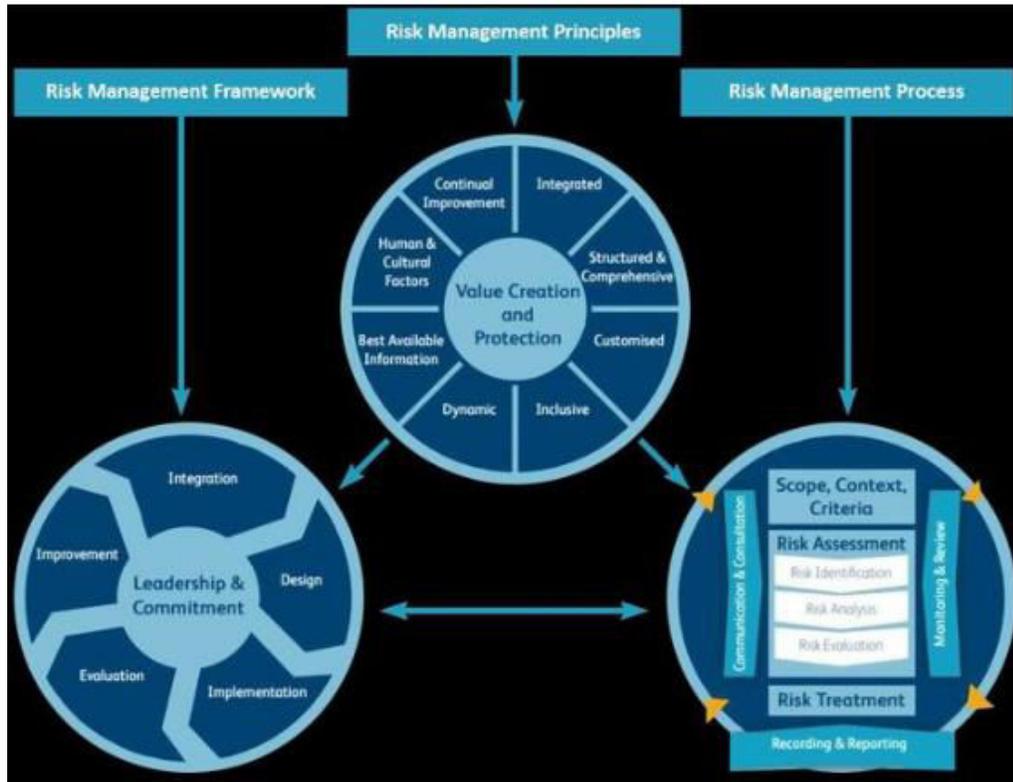
### **Theoretical/ Conceptual Framework**

As stated by Khartit (2022), adopting a risk management framework that is set in best practices in the firm's risk culture can be the cornerstone of an organization's financial future. Therefore, this study finds support from the different risk management frameworks (RMF). The first component that must be considered in

creating a risk management plan is identifying risk, which is simply making a list of all possible risks the organization could encounter. Followed by the risk measurement and assessment, which provides information on the risk exposure and the probability of a loss occurring due to those exposures. Then, the organization can decide which risks to eliminate or minimize through risk mitigation. Afterward, risk reporting and monitoring regularly on specific and aggregate risk measures is important to ensure that risk levels remain optimal. And the last component is risk governance which ensures that all employees of the organization perform their duties following the risk management framework.

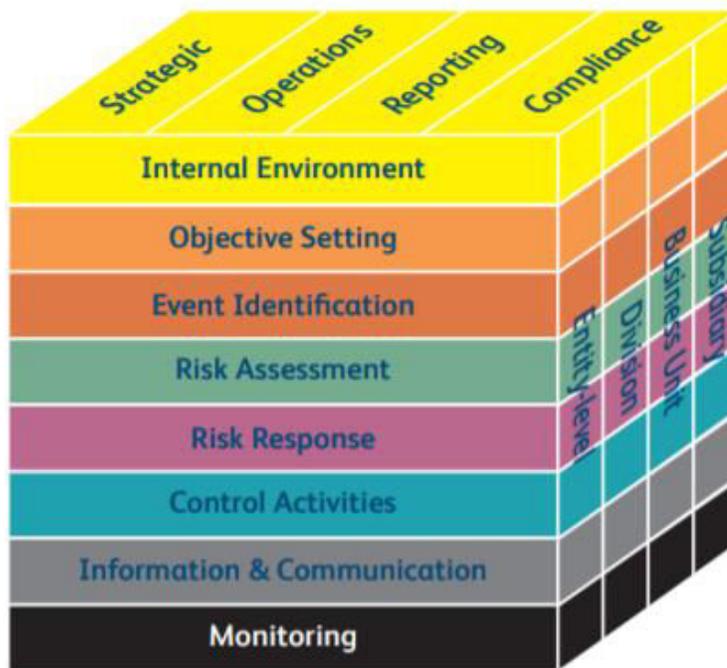
Successful risk governance relies on how effectively the management can work together in managing risks. An Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework is needed to articulate and codify how an organization approaches and manages risk (Quan & Chiang, n.d.). Jankensgard (2019) also stated that ERM, as a solution, is a set of mechanisms to address two general risk management problems faced by an organization, the agency and information problems of risk management. In an organization with decentralized decision-making authority, internal agency problems and information asymmetries could be addressed by Enterprise Risk Management. According to Kanu (2021), ERM is believed to contribute significantly, especially in a volatile and dynamic environment, to the successful performance of modern-day organizations. It is a methodical process of identifying and creating solutions to potential events that represent risks to achieving an organization's strategic objectives or opportunities to gain a competitive advantage (Alliance Trade, 2021).

Moreover, according to Williams (2019), the two widely accepted risk management standards organizations use to manage risks are the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 31000:2018 and COSO ERM, which could be used as models for the formulation of this study. ISO 31000 is a widely accepted standard for enterprise risk management worldwide. It places greater emphasis on creating and protecting value as a key driver of risk management which consists of 3 main components, namely principles, framework, and process as seen in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. ISO 31000:2018-Principles, Framework, and Process**

While the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations (COSO) ERM, updated in 2017, places greater emphasis on the importance of risk considerations when designing and implementing strategies to accomplish the organization's performance goals and objectives. COSO ERM Cube was formulated in 2004 and illustrates the link between the four categories and the eight components of the risk management process, as seen in Figure 2. This is the original standard of the COSO framework which was then updated to place greater emphasis on the strategy, which is shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 2. COSO ERM Cube (2004)**

The new standard in Figure 3 uses a ribbon-type diagram that intertwines five categories throughout an organization’s lifecycle. This new standard shows that strategy or objective-setting, performance, and review or revision (three ribbons) in the diagram are there to represent common processes that flow throughout the entity. On the other hand, governance or culture, information and communication, and reporting (two ribbons) represent the supporting mechanisms of ERM. Hence, the new framework places greater emphasis on culture and dives deeper into concepts like risk appetite and integrating risk management throughout the organization.



**Figure 3. New COSO ERM Standard**

### **Significance of the Study**

Hence, a risk management action plan is necessary to identify and address the risks and, in doing so, increase the likelihood of successfully achieving the organization's objectives. The Senior High School department of the university is still young because it was just implemented in 2016 compared to other departments, and they still need their risk management action plan, which means that this study would greatly benefit them. Specifically, it would benefit the management, principal, and teachers as a basis for improving the department. A risk management action plan could help protect people from harm, limit the possibility of a lawsuit, safeguard the school's public reputation, reduce potential losses in revenue, and make the students, teachers, and parents feel safe (Curacubby, 2023).

### **Objectives of the Study**

Therefore, this study aims to determine the senior high school's risk management and effective ways of mitigating risks in the new normal. Specifically, its objectives are to (1) determine the probability of occurrence of risks in the senior high department in the new normal; (2) assess the impact of risks in the senior high school department in the new normal; and (3) identify the effectiveness of strategies used in mitigating risks in the senior high department during the pandemic.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

The researcher used the descriptive research design using the quantitative method. This design uses questionnaires and interviews to gather data about a group of people. It is generally more objective as data collected undergo statistical analysis (Uy et al., 2016). The researcher chose the survey questionnaire and informal interview to collect the data needed to answer the specific problems of this study. An informal interview was done with some of the study's respondents as a follow-up to their answers to the questionnaire.

#### **Population and Locale**

The respondents of the study were the Senior High School faculty and principal of Baguio Central University for the school year 2022 to 2023, with a total of seventeen (17). Moreover, the teachers with the principal of the said department were the respondents of the study because they were the ones who were more aware of the different school risks encountered in the department because of their direct involvement in the operations and decisions made therein. Total enumeration was used in the study due to the small target population.

### **Data Gathering Tools**

The researcher used a survey questionnaire with an informal interview to gather the data needed for this study. It is a self-made questionnaire formulated by the researcher parallel to its objectives and constructed based on various readings of literatures, journals, and online resources. There were three parts of the questionnaire in this study in which, Part I is about the likelihood of the occurrence of risks in the senior high school department in the new normal. While Part II is about the impact of risks on the senior high school department in the new normal. And Part III deals with the effectiveness of strategies used in mitigating risks in the senior high school department during the pandemic.

The researcher understands the importance of ensuring the validity and reliability of the research instrument. To establish its validity, the questionnaire was presented to two tool validators to attest to its content validity. The research tool has a validity of 4.9 which means that it has very high validity. This implies that the research tool can significantly measure what it intends to measure. For its reliability, the researcher used Cronbach's Alpha to ensure that the various items measuring the different constructs deliver consistent scores, which was conducted in the Junior High School department of the university, having a total of thirteen (13) teachers. The Cronbach Alpha resulted in 0.96, which means that there is an excellent intercorrelation among the items measuring the concept.

### **Data Gathering Procedures**

The researcher sought permission from the university's Senior High School principal to conduct the research. Once approved, the researcher prepared a letter to the respondents attached to the questionnaire ensuring the confidentiality of the respondent's responses. The researcher administered the questionnaires personally and upon the retrieval of the questionnaires, it was tallied, assessed, and interpreted. And throughout the process, the researcher observed confidentiality and honesty.

### **Treatment of Data**

Descriptive statistics such as frequency count and mean were used to analyze the data. For Part I of the questionnaire, which is the level of likelihood of occurrence of risks in the senior high school department in the new normal, the statistical tools used were frequency count and mean. A scale was developed with the corresponding verbal interpretation:

| Numerical Value | Statistical Limits | Descriptive Equivalent | Symbol |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------|
| 1               | 1.00-1.80          | Very Low Likelihood    | VLL    |
| 2               | 1.81-2.60          | Low Likelihood         | LL     |
| 3               | 2.61-3.40          | Moderate Likelihood    | ML     |
| 4               | 3.41-4.20          | High Likelihood        | HL     |
| 5               | 4.21-5.00          | Very High Likelihood   | VHL    |

For Part II of the questionnaire, which is the level of impact of risks in the senior high school department's objectives in the new normal, the statistical tools used were frequency count and mean. A scale was developed with the corresponding verbal interpretation:

| Numerical Value | Statistical Limits | Descriptive Equivalent | Symbol |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------|
| 1               | 1.00-1.80          | Very Low Impact        | VLI    |
| 2               | 1.81-2.60          | Low Impact             | LI     |
| 3               | 2.61-3.40          | Moderate Impact        | MI     |
| 4               | 3.41-4.20          | High Impact            | HI     |
| 5               | 4.21-5.00          | Very High Impact       | VHI    |

And, for Part III of the questionnaire, which is the level of effectiveness of strategies used in mitigating risks in the senior high school department during the pandemic, the statistical tools used were frequency count and mean. A scale was developed with the corresponding verbal interpretation:

| Numerical Value | Statistical Limits | Descriptive Equivalent | Symbol |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------|
| 1               | 1.00-1.80          | Not Effective          | NE     |
| 2               | 1.81-2.60          | Slightly Effective     | SE     |
| 3               | 2.61-3.40          | Moderate Effective     | ME     |
| 4               | 3.41-4.20          | Highly Effective       | HE     |
| 5               | 4.21-5.00          | Very Highly Effective  | VHE    |

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### **Ethical Considerations**

The data collected during this study was kept confidential at all times, and the researcher obtained permission from the respondents. There was no information released about the respondents to the public. Rest assured that the researcher handled all data gathered in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and no compensation was made to the respondents who participated in this study. All data and electronic documents were saved in a password-protected folder which will be made accessible only to the researcher. The data collected will be retained for study recordkeeping purposes only. Furthermore, after the completion of the study, the results will be shared with the Senior High School department of the university, which can be used as a basis for formulating their risk management action plan.

### **Results and Discussions**

#### **Level of Likelihood of Occurrence of Risks in the Senior High School Department in the New Normal**

Table 1 presents the level of likelihood of occurrence of risks in the senior high school department in the new normal. The respondents stated that there is a moderate likelihood ( $M=2.85$ ) of the occurrence of risks in the senior high school department during the pandemic. This implies that risks in the department sometimes occur or happen on some occasions rather than all the time. Even with the adverse effects or hazards brought about by COVID-19, the Baguio Central University Senior High School department did not encounter risks frequently. As stated by one of the participants of the study, teachers' and students' communication was open, which could help lessen the occurrence of risks in the department. However, then another participant stated that this could be due to a lack of awareness of teachers on risk management since the senior high school department still needs to prepare a risk management plan. Curacubby (2023) stated that as the COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges, schools have already realized the importance of developing a risk management plan. Thus, as the Alliance Trade (2021) mentioned, enterprise risk management would help organizations like schools give greater awareness of the risks they are facing and their ability to respond effectively.

Moreover, the respondents stated that the depression of students has a high likelihood ( $M=3.65$ ) in the department, which implies that it is frequently occurring. Most of the participants of the study affirmed this result based on their experiences during blended and face-to-face learning. This has the highest number of incident cases handled by the guidance counselor. It includes cyberbullying, especially

during the COVID-19 pandemic, wherein kids and teens spend most of their time on digital platforms. And, even if the department is already on full face-to-face learning, modules were still given due to students encountering depression. This confirms the study of Tee et al. (2020), which states that the COVID-19 pandemic threatens societies' mental health. Locion et al. (2022) also found out that the struggles experienced by the students during the pandemic have really impacted how they act and behave, leading to stress, anxiety, and depression. In addition, this study also infers that the pandemic introduces emerging practices in learning that brought about challenges to teachers. Based on the study of Schleicher (2020), most educational systems were not ready for the world of digital learning. It was also emphasized in the new COSO ERM Framework that information and communication are the supporting mechanisms in an organization.

On the other hand, as stated by the participants of the study, in their class, students feel that their unique cultural background is respected and they are free to be themselves without being judged, which is why having a culturally unsafe environment seldom occurs.

**Table 1.** Level of Likelihood of Occurrence of Risks in the Senior High School Department in the New Normal

| Level of Likelihood of Occurrence of Risks in the Senior High School Department in the New Normal |  |  |  |  |  |  | Descriptive Equivalent |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------------------|
| COVID-19 infection  |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Likelihood        |
| Harassment of a student   |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Likelihood        |
| Lawsuit/ complaints from parents  |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Likelihood        |
| Culturally unsafe environment   |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Likelihood        |
| School Violence   |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Likelihood        |
| Accidents   |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Likelihood        |
| Natural Disasters   |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Likelihood        |
| Emerging Technologies   |  |  |  |  |  |  | Likelihood             |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                              |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------------------------|
| Insufficient equipment or connectivity |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Likelihood                   |
| Depression of students                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Likelihood                   |
| <b>Grand Mean</b>                      |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | <b>Grand Mean Likelihood</b> |

### **Level of Impact of Risks in the Senior High School Department in the New Normal**

Table 2 presents the level of impact of risks in the senior high school department in the new normal. It has been found that there is a moderate impact ( $M=3.13$ ) of risks in the senior high school department in the new normal. This implies that the identified risks in the department cause reasonable changes. It agrees with the result in Table 1 that regular assessment of risk is necessary to minimize the adverse effects of risk in an organization. In today's global business and economic climate, from cyber risk to natural disaster preparedness to supply chain disruption, whatever type and size of business, it faces numerous risks (Thomson, 2017).

Furthermore, one of the department's objectives is to produce quality and skilled students in the workforce. This could be possible if emerging technologies and insufficient equipment or connectivity risks were minimized because ICT skills are essential in all institutions. As stated by Yoon (2022), technology could change the world, which is why innovation is critical to the future well-being of society. And the participants of the study agree that these events impact their strategies and approaches to delivering their lessons in the classroom. And Thomson (2017) also agrees that technologies are integral to businesses because they drive financial, human resources, and intellectual property functions. However, the more we demand technology, the greater its risk.

Conversely, with regard to injuries of students, as stated by the participants of the study, it only occurs rarely and if it occurs it is only a minor injury. Therefore, there would really be a minor impact on the organization.

**Table 2.** Level of Impact of Risks in the Senior High School Department in the New Normal

| Level of Impact of Risks in the Senior High School Department in the New Normal |  |  |  |  |  |  | Descriptive Equivalent |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------------------|
| COVID-19 infection  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Severe Impact          |
| Death of a student  |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Impact            |
| Lawsuit/ complaints from parents  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Severe Impact          |
| Naturally unsafe environment  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Severe Impact          |
| School Violence   |  |  |  |  |  |  | Severe Impact          |
| Smoking   |  |  |  |  |  |  | Severe Impact          |
| Natural Disasters   |  |  |  |  |  |  | Severe Impact          |
| Emerging Technologies   |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Impact            |
| Insufficient equipment or connectivity  |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Impact            |
| Depression of students  |  |  |  |  |  |  | High Impact            |
| <b>Grand Mean</b>   |  |  |  |  |  |  | <b>Severe Impact</b>   |

### Risk Assessment Matrix

Table 3 shows the risk assessment matrix of the likelihood of occurrence of risks and the impact of risks in the senior high school department in the new normal. This tool helps visualize the probability versus the severity of potential risk. Businesses use risk matrices to help them arrange different risks and develop an appropriate mitigation strategy (Auditboard, 2021). As shown in Table 3, emerging technologies, insufficient equipment or connectivity, and depression of students were considered high risk in the department which means that detailed research and management planning is required at senior levels. While COVID-19 infection,

bullying, and natural disasters were identified as significant risks for senior management attention. On the other hand, lawsuits or complaints from parents, culturally unsafe environments, and school violence were recognized as moderate risks where management responsibility must be specified. And lastly, the injury of a student was assessed as a low risk wherein it could be managed through routine procedures.

**Table 3. Risk Assessment Matrix**

|                         | ICT        |  |                             |  |             |
|-------------------------|------------|--|-----------------------------|--|-------------|
| LIKELIHOOD              | Low Impact | Moderate Impact (2)  | Moderate Impact             | High Impact (4)  | High Impact |
| High Likelihood (5)     |            |  |                             |  |             |
| Likelihood              |            |  |                             | Emerging technologies; inefficient management or inactivity; cessation of projects |             |
| Moderate Likelihood (3) |            |  | COVID-19; Natural Disasters |  |             |
| Likelihood              |            | Lawsuits/complaints from parents; Culturally unsafe environment; School Violence |                             |  |             |
| Low Likelihood (1)      |            |  |                             |  |             |

**Legend:**

- Risk (detailed research and management planning required at senior levels)
- Significant Risk (senior management attention needed)
- Moderate Risk (management responsibility must be specified)
-

Low Risk (manage by routine procedures)

### **Level of Effectiveness of Strategies Used in Mitigating Risks in the Senior High School Department During the Pandemic**

Table 4 presents the level of effectiveness of strategies used in mitigating risks in the senior high school department during the pandemic. It has been found that the department is very highly effective ( $M=4.23$ ). It implies that even with the adverse effect of COVID-19 in the educational sector, the teachers and school staffs were able to alleviate risks effectively. As stated by one of the participants of the study, the teachers in the senior high school department were ready and able to connect with their students online and offline.

Moreover, Table 4 also shows that building positive relationships in the school is very highly effective ( $M=4.47$ ) in mitigating risks during the pandemic. One of the significant impacts of the pandemic on students is depression. According to Scher (2020), students struggle to cope with the "new normal," and emotional health was a rising priority for educators even before the coronavirus pandemic. Hence, providing support and addressing the students' mental health concerns is very critical. That is why Baguio Central University reopened its school gradually, from pure online to blended, then full face-to-face learning. And during the first two weeks of full face-to-face learning, the department did not start automatically on the academics. However, the teachers first set positive rapport in the classroom through group activities. This approach was implemented based on the collaborative institutional research conducted by their teachers regarding the readiness of the senior high school students, which resulted in satisfactory preparedness because students need assistance and guidance from their teachers in order for them to manage the challenges brought by the pandemic. Actually, one of the participants of this study said that one of the diagnosed depressed students of the department was able to cope and his anxiety was lessened when there is full face-to-face learning because they do not have already the luxury of time to overthink things and they could already connect with their friends and classmates. Hence, having positive relationships in schools is central to the well-being of both students and teachers which reinforces an effective learning environment (Roffey, 2012).

On the other hand, Table 4 shows that having a parent complaints policy is highly effective and has the lowest mean in mitigating risks in the senior high school department during the pandemic. This could imply that because complaints from parents were minimal in the department, the teachers could deal with them effectively before they escalated. However, then, to further maximize the parent complaints policy, teachers suggested that there should be a regular review of this

policy. Moreover, in doing so, seeking feedback from parents on the policy helps review its content (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2023).

**Table 4.** Level of Effectiveness of Strategies Used in Mitigating Risks in the Senior High School Department During the Pandemic

| <b>Level of Effectiveness of Strategies in Mitigating Risks in the Senior High School Department During the Pandemic</b> |  |  |  |  |  |  | <b>Descriptive Equivalent</b> |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Clean and Disinfect Regularly  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |
| Enforce Entry Guidelines   |  |  |  |  |  |  | Very Effective                |
| Conduct regular safety checks  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |
| Have a parent complaints policy  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Very Effective                |
| Have a reporting tool  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Very Effective                |
| Have physical security measures  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |
| Have a strong anti-bullying policy   |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |
| Peer mediation/ Counseling   |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |
| Conduct natural disaster drills  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |
| Have a weather safety plan   |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |
| Regular trainings/ seminars/ workshops   |  |  |  |  |  |  | Very Effective                |
| Have a stable network structure  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |
| Have a mental health-friendly environment  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |
| Build positive relationships   |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |
| School-community partnerships  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly Effective              |

|               |  |                        |
|---------------|--|------------------------|
| <b>d Mean</b> |  | <b>Highly<br/>tive</b> |
|---------------|--|------------------------|

To put it concisely, the COVID-19 pandemic risk affected the schools wherein the Senior High School Department of Baguio Central University is not exempted. This study found that there is a moderate likelihood of the occurrence of risks in the senior high school department in the new normal. And, there is also a moderate impact of identified risks in the said department. Moreover, the level of effectiveness of strategies used by the teachers and management of the school in mitigating risks during the pandemic is very highly effective.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

In the new normal, even with the adverse effect of COVID-19 on the educational sector, the Baguio Central University Senior High School department experience school risks occasionally. The identified risks encountered by the department only happen occasionally. And these risks cause practical changes in the department. Its impact on the department is mild and not extreme or excessive. Meanwhile, the teachers and staffs were able to address the identified risks during the pandemic, from pure online learning to blended, then full face-to-face learning.

Ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed at school and develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed to contribute to society is the main goal of every school. It is building a culture of safety, reducing risks, and ensuring learning continuity during the pandemic. However, then, in achieving these goals, the department needed to address natural and human-induced hazards or threats by creating a risk management action plan following the risk management process. In the Baguio Central University Senior High School department, even if the teachers effectively mitigate risks, they still need to identify some risks in the department. Hence, proper and regular seminars, training, and workshops for teachers and staff of the school are necessary since they are the provider of services to the different university stakeholders. Moreover, in carrying out these activities, there should be support and commitment from the management, most especially in addressing emerging technologies in the educational sector which would entail cost. The role of management lies primarily in the design and execution of risk management in accordance with the risk policies. Thus, the department's principal must then put risk management strategies and systems in place and ensure that everyone complies with them.

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**RISK MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN**

This risk management action plan was formulated based on the results and findings of the study. The risk number, color, number for the likelihood and impact of risks were based on Table 3 which is the risk assessment matrix followed by the description of risks. To arrive with the risk magnitude, we simply multiply the likelihood of risk with the impact of risk, whereas if the result is 15 or above then this risk is considered to be unacceptable to the organization and should be given an immediate action (eclipse, 2022). The mitigation strategies were based on the result of Table 4 which is the level of effectiveness of strategies used in mitigating risks in the senior high school department during the pandemic. Then, the researcher aligned the appropriate mitigation strategies on the different identified risks. The effectiveness of mitigation strategies was based on the result of Table 4. Through this, the researcher was able to come up with the actions to be taken to address these risks with the people involved with it.

| Number | Description of     | Likelihood of | Impact of | Magnitude | Mitigation Strategies                | Effectiveness  | People Involved     | Action to be Taken  |
|--------|--------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|---|
|        | Using technologies |               |           |           | Regular trainings/seminars/workshops | Very Effective | Principal, Teachers | Regularly training/seminars/workshops for teachers about using technologies in the educational setting, like make them aware of the emerging devices in learning, and develop the teacher's ability to utilize ICT skills. Invest in Information and Communication Technology |

|  |                              |  |  |  |                         |                   |                                  |  |
|--|------------------------------|--|--|--|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|--|
|  |                              |  |  |  |                         |                   |                                  | infrastructure for basic<br>ation levels   |
|  | icient<br>oment/<br>ectivity |  |  |  | e network<br>tructure   | ive<br><br>Highly | gement,<br>ts,<br>ers,<br>nunity | MIS department should<br>s have a regular check<br>ne stability of internet<br>ection in the different<br>of the school campus<br>ne faculty office, library,<br>tudent lounge<br>rade of internet<br>ectivity if needed<br>ntify potential partners in<br>community that could<br>in providing for the<br>s of the students through<br>help of the Parents-<br>ners Association |
|  |                              |  |  |  | ol-community<br>erships | ive<br>Highly     |                                  |  |

|  |                  |  |  |  |                         |               |  |   |
|--|------------------|--|--|--|-------------------------|---------------|--|---|
|  | ession of<br>nts |  |  |  | mediation/<br>selling   | Highly<br>ive | pal,<br>ers/<br>ers,<br>ance<br>selor,<br>ts, Students | velop peer support<br>orks by implementing a<br>y system with the help of<br>nk Club<br>isers and teachers<br>d always encourage<br>nts in their classroom to<br>e short-term goals and<br>ules and taught<br>fulness techniques to<br>resilience<br>verage digital technology<br>ental health support, like<br>ng self-help apps and<br>l counseling<br>e collaborative<br>erships with the<br>nunity mental health<br>lizations to co-create<br>al health promotion<br>rams |
|  |                  |  |  |  | positive<br>onships     | Highly<br>ive |  |   |
|  | D-19<br>ion      |  |  |  | a and Disinfect<br>arly | Highly<br>ive | ity Guards,<br>rs,<br>gement                           | ntify and connect with<br>c health experts to help<br>ort school-based<br>ion prevention and<br>ol programs where   |
|  |                  |  |  |  | ce entry                | y Effective   |  |   |

|  |              |  |  |  |                      |             |        |   |
|--|--------------|--|--|--|----------------------|-------------|--------|---|
|  |              |  |  |  | elines               |             |        | l nurses can serve as<br>ns to local health<br>rtments  |
|  | ng           |  |  |  | g anti-bullying<br>y | ive         | Highly | ular dissemination of<br>nation on acceptable<br>unacceptable behaviors<br>e school campus  |
|  |              |  |  |  | rtting tool          | y Effective |        | more effective means of<br>unication with students<br>parents on how and<br>e to report bullying like<br>ng anti-bullying posters<br>hallways                               |
|  | al Disasters |  |  |  | al disaster          | ive         | Highly | e first aid supplies<br>ry year teach students<br>weather-related risks<br>d out information about<br>r plan for parents and<br>rage them to discuss<br>with their children |
|  |              |  |  |  | her safety plan      | ive         | Highly | chase tools used in<br>g reliable emergency<br>nse procedures like<br>kler systems  |

|  |                                |  |  |  |                                   |             |   |  |
|--|--------------------------------|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|-------------|---|--|
|  |                                |  |  |  |                                   |             |   |  |
|  | mit/<br>complaints from<br>nts |  |  |  | complaint                         | y Effective | pal,<br>gement,<br>ance<br>selor,<br>ers,<br>ts | ate the parent complaint<br>y<br>principal should ensure<br>parents are aware of their<br>to advocacy when<br>nunicating the issues<br>ved in their company<br>in negotiating an<br>me.  |
|  | rally Unsafe<br>onment         |  |  |  | al health-<br>lly class<br>onment | ive Highly  | pal,<br>ers/<br>ers,<br>ance<br>selor           | public and purposeful<br>being inclusive, like<br>g a clear sign/ statement<br>he entrance to the<br>ing, a wall mural<br>ring the diversity of the<br>nts<br>blish safe and<br>dential reporting<br>anisms and clear<br>edures for investigation<br>esponse |
|  | l Violence                     |  |  |  | cal security<br>ures              | ive Highly  | pal,<br>ers/<br>ers,                            | incident tracking<br>are to track trends and   |

|  |                |  |  |  |          |               |                                      |   |
|--|----------------|--|--|--|----------|---------------|--------------------------------------|---|
|  |                |  |  |  |          |               | ance<br>selor                        | vide counseling and<br>ort to potentially violent<br>duals  |
|  | r of a Student |  |  |  | ar<br>ks | Safety<br>ive | Highly<br>er<br>ers,<br>enance<br>er | ays remind students of<br>fety rules<br>ays provide adult<br>vision most especially<br>there are<br>curricular activities |