

Traditional Cultural Upbringing and Modern Education and Safety Requirements: Correlation with Student Behavior and School Safety in Selected Public Schools in Cavite, SY 2025-2026

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between traditional cultural upbringing, modern education and safety requirements, student behavior, and school safety in selected public schools in Cavite during School Year 2025-2026. Anchored on Social Learning Theory, Ecological Systems Theory, Sikolohiyang Pilipino, and Positive Youth Development, the study used a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design to determine how Filipino cultural values such as paggalang, disiplina, and pananagutan align with social-emotional learning, mental health support, and school safety measures. The respondents were 360 stakeholders composed primarily of students, teachers, parents, guidance counselors, school heads, and barangay officials from selected National High Schools in Cavite. Data were gathered using a validated survey questionnaire and a semi-structured

interview guide, with the survey instrument obtaining a Content Validity Index of 0.89 and Cronbach's alpha of 0.87. The quantitative data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, paired t-test, and Pearson product-moment correlation, while qualitative responses were used to explain the statistical findings. Results showed that traditional Filipino values were applied to a very high extent at home and to a high extent in school, while modern education and safety measures were implemented to a high extent. A significant gap was found between perceived importance and actual practice for home values, school values, and modern measures. The study also found a strong negative relationship between the alignment of cultural upbringing and modern support systems and behavioral incidents ($r = -0.628$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that stronger alignment was associated with fewer behavioral risks. The study concludes that Filipino cultural roots and modern school reforms are complementary foundations for safer and more supportive learning environments.

Keywords: *Cultural upbringing, values education, school safety, social-emotional learning, student behavior, Filipino values*

INTRODUCTION

Filipino identity has long been anchored in a system of child-rearing that links discipline, respect, and moral character. The adage “*Ang disiplina ay hindi panakit, kundi paghubog ng mabuting pag-uugali*” reflects the belief that correction is meant to shape responsible behavior rather than inflict harm. In traditional households, values such as paggalang, pananagutan, pakikisama, and community belonging were cultivated through family routines, respect for elders, household duties, and shared accountability (Enriquez, 2023; Pe-Pua, 2022).

However, contemporary school realities require this cultural foundation to be examined alongside mental health, social-emotional learning, child protection, and school safety. The source manuscript situates the study in the context of rising concerns about student conflict, behavioral risks, and post-pandemic emotional difficulties. It further notes that security measures alone cannot address the behavioral and emotional roots of unsafe school climates; rather, home, school, and community systems must work together to support learners (Department of Education, 2025; World Health Organization, 2025).

The Philippine policy environment has also moved toward integrating values formation and learner well-being. Republic Act No. 11476 institutionalized Good Manners and Right Conduct and Values Education, while Republic Act No. 12080 strengthened the policy basis for mental health and well-being promotion in basic education. These reforms show that values education, emotional support, and safety protocols must be treated as interconnected rather than separate school programs (Republic Act No. 11476, 2020; Republic Act No. 12080, 2025).

Despite these reforms, implementation gaps remain. The manuscript notes that some families continue to struggle with the shift from punishment-based discipline to guidance-oriented approaches, while some schools lack sufficient resources, personnel, and coordinated systems for mental health and safety. These challenges create a disconnect between perceived values and actual practices in home and school settings (EDCOM II, 2026; Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2026).

This study addressed the need to reconcile cultural heritage with contemporary educational and safety requirements. It determined the extent of alignment between traditional cultural upbringing and modern education and safety needs and examined the relationship of this alignment to student behavior and school safety in selected public schools in Cavite, School Year 2025-2026. Specifically, the study assessed respondent profile, family discipline practices, application of traditional Filipino values, implementation of modern education and safety measures, gaps between perceived values and actual practice, and the relationship between alignment and behavioral incidents.

Literature Review

Cultural Values, Discipline, and Filipino Formation

Cultural values shape how discipline is understood and practiced. In the Filipino context, discipline is closely connected with *kapwa*, *loób*, *pakikisama*, *paggalang*, and *pagpapalaki*, which emphasize shared identity, moral conscience, relational harmony, respect, and holistic upbringing (Enriquez, 2023; Pe-Pua, 2022). These concepts suggest that correction should restore right relationships and guide moral development rather than merely impose authority.

The literature reviewed in the manuscript shows that culturally responsive discipline is more effective when it combines respect for local values with child-centered and rights-based practices. Jayawardena (2025) found that cultural values influence how discipline is defined and implemented across countries, while Cislighi et al. (2021) reported that harsh punishment is associated with aggression, anxiety, and dropout risks. These studies support the need to preserve the moral intent of Filipino discipline while avoiding practices that harm learners.

Restorative and positive discipline approaches provide a bridge between tradition and reform. Tiroog (2025) and Akpan and Ja'afar (2025) showed that restorative justice and culturally grounded conflict resolution improve student-teacher trust and reduce disciplinary incidents. In the present study, these perspectives support the view that *paggalang*, *disiplina*, and *pananagutan* can remain central in schools when translated into guidance, accountability, and relationship-building rather than fear-based compliance.

Modern Education, Social-Emotional Learning, and Mental Health Support

Modern education increasingly recognizes that student development includes emotional regulation, social competence, responsible decision-making, and belonging. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2024) defines social-emotional learning as a process that develops skills for managing

emotions, building relationships, and making responsible choices. Cipriano et al. (2023) further showed that SEL programs improve academic outcomes and reduce behavioral concerns.

The literature also emphasizes that SEL must be culturally responsive. Schonert-Reichl et al. (2025) warned that generic SEL programs may marginalize students from non-Western backgrounds, while Dela Cruz and Santos (2025) found that Filipino values such as *pakikisama* and *pagmamalasakit* can strengthen cooperation and reduce conflict. This supports the study's position that SEL should not replace Filipino values but should provide a modern structure for applying them in schools.

Mental health has become a core component of school safety. Lancaster and Brasfield (2023) reported post-pandemic increases in youth anxiety, depression, and behavioral challenges, while Stilwell et al. (2024) emphasized that psychological safety strongly predicts school belonging. In the Philippine setting, school safety therefore requires both physical protocols and psychological support systems that help learners feel secure, heard, and guided.

School Safety, Policy Alignment, and Home-School-Community Partnership

School safety is a relational and systemic concern. It depends not only on rules and security procedures but also on consistency among family discipline, classroom expectations, guidance services, and community support. The ecological perspective of Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2020) explains that learners develop within interconnected systems; when home and school expectations are aligned, behavioral risks are reduced and protective factors become stronger.

Policy frameworks provide the formal basis for this alignment. Republic Act No. 11476 supports values education and GMRC, while Republic Act No. 12080 strengthens mental health and well-being services in basic education. DepEd policy initiatives, such as values education implementation and parent-engagement programs, further support the need to connect families, schools, and local communities (Department of Education, 2024, 2026).

The reviewed studies collectively show that implementation matters as much as policy existence. OECD (2025) and UNESCO (2026) noted persistent gaps in funding, training, and school capacity, especially when policies are not supported by resources. Thus, the present study's focus on the gap between perceived importance and actual practice is important because it identifies whether values and safety measures are truly lived in schools and homes.

Theoretical and Conceptual Basis

This study was anchored on Social Learning Theory, Ecological Systems Theory, Sikolohiyang Pilipino, and Positive Youth Development. Social Learning Theory explains that learners acquire behavior through observation, modeling, and reinforcement (Bandura, 2021). Ecological Systems Theory explains how family, school, community, culture, policy, and historical conditions interact in learner development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2020).

Sikolohiyang Pilipino grounds the study in Filipino cultural realities by emphasizing *kapwa*, *loób*, *pakikisama*, and *pagpapalaki* as relational foundations of behavior formation (Enriquez, 2023; Pe-Pua, 2022). Positive Youth Development shifts the focus from deficits to strengths by emphasizing competence, confidence, character, connection, and contribution (Lerner et al., 2021). Together, these theories support an integrated understanding of learner behavior, cultural formation, and school safety.

The conceptual framework used in the study is the Roots-Reform Alignment Model (RRAM). It proposes that cultural upbringing practices and educational and safety supports influence student behavior and school safety through emotional regulation, social competence, and sense of belonging. In this model, cultural roots such as *paggalang*, *disiplina*, and *pananagutan* converge with reform strategies such as SEL, guidance, policy, and security to produce safe schools, resilient youth, and strong communities.

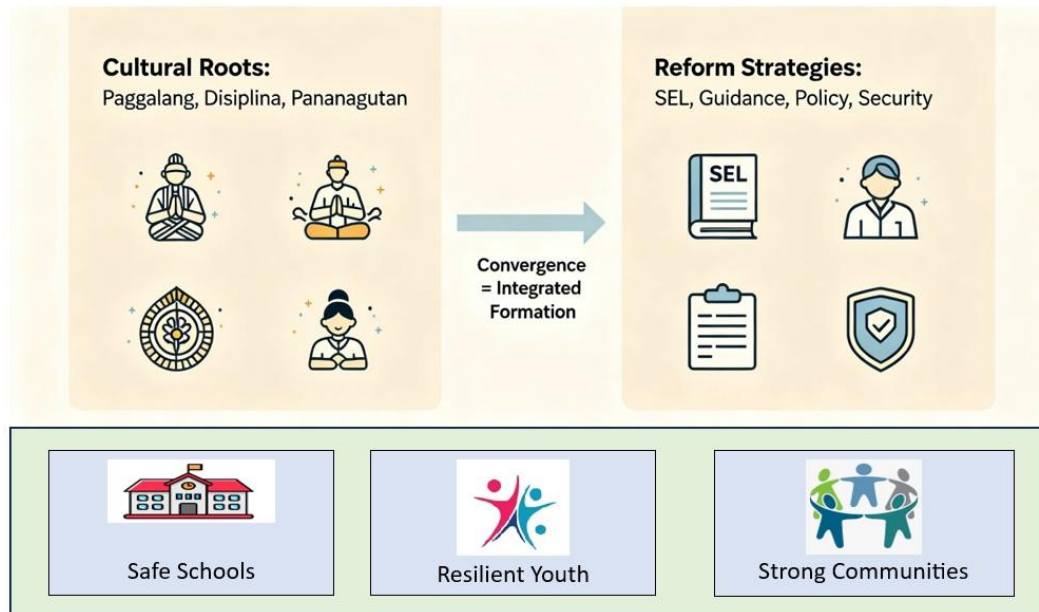


Figure 1. *Roots-Reform Alignment Model of the study*

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design. The quantitative phase described the profile of respondents, measured the extent of traditional values and modern education and safety practices, tested the gap between perceived importance and actual practice, and examined the relationship between alignment and behavioral incidents. The qualitative phase used interviews and focus group discussions to explain the statistical results and provide deeper context for the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Ivankova & Stick, 2022).

Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected National High Schools in the Province of Cavite, specifically in the CALABARZON region. The schools were selected from urban and semi-urban areas, including General Trias, Dasmariñas, Imus, Bacoor, and Trece Martires, to capture diverse school and community contexts. Cavite was considered an appropriate locale because of its large and diverse student population, varied socioeconomic conditions, and relevance to school-community partnership and safety concerns (Department of Education Region IV-A, 2024; Mendoza & Santos, 2023).

Participants and Sampling Technique

The target population consisted of students, teachers, parents, guidance counselors, school heads, and barangay officials connected with selected National High Schools in Cavite. From a population of 12,450, the sample size was computed using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error. The final sample consisted of 360 respondents. Stratified random sampling was used to ensure representation from each stakeholder group, while random selection was applied within the strata to minimize selection bias (Adam, 2020; Thompson, 2022).

Research Instrument

The study used a validated survey questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide. The questionnaire measured respondent profile, family discipline practices, application of traditional Filipino values at home and in school, implementation of modern education and safety measures, perceived alignment, and behavioral outcomes. It used a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree or Very Low Extent to Very

High Extent. The instrument obtained a Content Validity Index of 0.89 and a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.87, indicating that it was valid and internally consistent (DeVellis, 2021; Taber, 2021).

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher first secured ethical clearance and permission from the appropriate school and community authorities. After approval, questionnaires were administered to the selected respondents during scheduled data collection periods. Informed consent was obtained from adult participants, while parental consent and student assent were secured for minors. After the quantitative phase, selected respondents participated in interviews or discussions to clarify and explain the statistical findings. Completed instruments were checked, encoded, and organized for analysis.

Data Analysis

Frequency and percentage were used to summarize the respondent profile. Weighted mean and composite mean were used to interpret the extent of family discipline practices, school services, traditional values, and modern measures. Paired t-test was used to determine significant gaps between perceived importance and actual practice. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine the relationship between alignment and behavioral incidents. The level of significance was set at 0.05. Qualitative responses were organized thematically to support interpretation of the quantitative findings (Field, 2022; Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero, 2021).

Ethical Consideration

The study observed informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, right to withdraw, and protection of minors. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study and were assured that their responses would be used only for research purposes. No personal identifiers were reported, and data were presented in aggregated form. The study also maintained integrity in analysis and reporting by presenting results objectively and acknowledging its limitations (American Psychological Association, 2020; World Medical Association, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Respondents and Existing Practices

The respondent profile showed representation across key school and community stakeholders. Students comprised the largest group at 70.00%, while non-student stakeholders composed 30.00%. In terms of socioeconomic status, most respondents belonged to middle-income families at 57.50%. The largest group in terms of length of stay in the community was the 3-10 years category at 45.00%.

Table 1. *Profile of the Respondents*

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Status	Student	252	70.00%
Status	Non-student	108	30.00%
Family monthly income	Low income	81	22.50%
Family monthly income	Middle income	207	57.50%
Family monthly income	High income	72	20.00%
Length of stay in community	Less than 3 years	99	27.50%
Length of stay in community	3-10 years	162	45.00%
Length of stay in community	More than 10 years	99	27.50%
Total		360	100.00%

These results indicate that the study captured the perspectives of students and adult stakeholders from varied social and community backgrounds. Such diversity is important because school safety and behavior formation are not shaped by school rules alone but by the combined influence of families, teachers, school administrators, guidance personnel, and community officials. This finding supports ecological explanations of learner behavior, which emphasize the interaction of home, school, and community systems (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2020; Tan, 2025).

Application of Traditional Filipino Values

The application of traditional Filipino values showed that values were practiced more consistently at home than in school. At home, the composite mean was 4.30, interpreted as Very High Extent. In school, the composite mean was 4.16, interpreted as High Extent. The results imply that paggalang, disiplinina, and pananagutan remain embedded in family life and are also present in school settings, although the school application appears less consistent.

Table 2. *Application of Traditional Filipino Values at Home and in School*

Setting	Composite Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Home	4.30	Very High Extent
School	4.16	High Extent

The results affirm that traditional Filipino values continue to serve as a cultural framework for behavior formation. The stronger rating at home suggests that families remain a primary site of values transmission. However, the lower school rating indicates the need for stronger home-school alignment so that values taught at home are reinforced through classroom routines, guidance services, and school-wide expectations. This supports the view that values education becomes more effective when family and school systems provide consistent modeling and reinforcement (Bandura, 2021; Department of Education, 2024).

Family Discipline Practices and School Support Services

Family discipline practices were rated at a High Extent, with a composite mean of 4.16. The highest indicator was paggalang or respect for elders and authority (4.42), interpreted as Very High Extent, followed by values reinforcement at home (4.23), also Very High Extent. School services were likewise rated at a High Extent, with a composite mean of 3.78. Safety and security measures received the highest weighted mean of 4.08, while mental health support received 3.59.

Table 3. *Family Discipline Practices and School Services*

Area/Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Paggalang / Respect for elders and authority	4.42	Very High Extent
Disiplina / Compliance with rules	4.18	High Extent
Pananagutan / Accountability for actions	4.05	High Extent
Open communication with parents	3.91	High Extent
Values reinforcement at home	4.23	Very High Extent
Family discipline practices composite	4.16	High Extent
Safety and security measures	4.08	High Extent
Academic support programs	3.82	High Extent
Guidance and counseling services	3.76	High Extent
Mental health support	3.59	High Extent
Values education instruction	3.64	High Extent
School services composite	3.78	High Extent

These results suggest that both family and school structures already contain protective elements. However, the lower scores for mental health support and values education instruction indicate areas that require strengthening. The finding is consistent with literature showing that modern school safety should include psychological safety, guidance support, and trauma-informed responses, not only physical security measures (Lancaster & Brasfield, 2023; Stilwell et al., 2024).

Implementation of Modern Education and Safety Measures

The overall implementation of modern education and safety measures was rated at a High Extent, with a composite mean of 3.77. Health and safety protocols (4.15) and school security systems (4.10) were the highest-rated indicators. Social-emotional learning activities (3.68), modern conflict resolution approaches (3.72), mental health awareness programs (3.51), and student support groups (3.44) were also rated High Extent, but with comparatively lower means.

Table 4. *Implementation of Modern Education and Safety Measures*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Health and safety protocols	4.15	High Extent
School security system	4.10	High Extent
Social-emotional learning activities	3.68	High Extent
Mental health awareness programs	3.51	High Extent
Student support groups	3.44	High Extent
Modern conflict resolution approaches	3.72	High Extent
Composite Mean	3.77	High Extent

The findings reveal that schools have made progress in implementing modern safety measures, but psychological and developmental supports remain less robust than visible safety protocols. This suggests an imbalance between physical security and emotional support. Since effective school safety includes belonging, emotional regulation, and supportive relationships, schools need to integrate SEL, guidance, and mental health systems more deliberately into their safety programs (CASEL, 2024; World Health Organization, 2025).

Gap Between Perceived Importance and Actual Practice

A significant difference was found between perceived importance and actual practice in all three areas: home values, school values, and modern measures. The largest gap was observed in modern measures, with a mean difference of 0.71, followed by school values at 0.38 and home values at 0.32. All p-values were 0.000, indicating statistically significant gaps at the 0.05 level.

Table 5. *Difference Between Perceived Importance and Actual Practice*

Variable	Perception	Practice	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value	Decision
Home values	4.62	4.30	0.32	4.213	0.000	Significant
School values	4.54	4.16	0.38	5.127	0.000	Significant
Modern measures	4.48	3.77	0.71	8.432	0.000	Significant

This result shows that stakeholders consider cultural values and modern supports important, but actual implementation does not fully match their expectations. The wider gap in modern measures indicates that schools may have policies or programs in place but still lack the resources, staff training, or consistency needed for full implementation. This finding supports policy literature showing that reforms succeed only when supported by capacity, resources, monitoring, and local adaptation (OECD, 2025; UNESCO, 2026).

Relationship Between Alignment and Behavioral Incidents

The study found a strong negative relationship between value alignment and behavioral incidents. The Pearson correlation coefficient was $r = -0.628$, with a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value was below 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that stronger alignment between traditional cultural upbringing and modern education and safety supports was significantly associated with fewer behavioral incidents.

Table 6. *Relationship Between Value Alignment and Behavioral Incidents*

Variables	r-value	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Value alignment and behavioral incidents	-0.628	0.000	Strong negative relationship	Reject H0

This is the central finding of the study. It confirms that cultural roots and reform strategies are not opposing forces. Instead, when they converge, they create a consistent formation system that helps students regulate emotions, respect others, and reduce conflict. The result supports the Roots-Reform Alignment Model, which argues that safer schools emerge when Filipino values are reinforced through SEL, guidance, policy, mental health support, and community partnership (Santos et al., 2026; Reyes & Cruz, 2025).

Proposed Roots-Reform Alignment Action Framework

Based on the findings, the study proposes an action framework that connects cultural values with modern education and safety measures. The framework focuses on strengthening Filipino values, improving SEL implementation, expanding mental health and guidance services, supporting positive discipline, and creating consistent home-school-community partnerships.

Table 7. *Proposed Roots-Reform Alignment Action Framework*

Area of Concern	Recommended Strategy	Intended Outcome
Cultural values formation	Integrate paggalang, disiplina, and pananagutan into GMRC, classroom rules, and school-wide routines.	Consistent values formation across home and school.
Social-emotional learning	Contextualize SEL activities using Filipino values such as kapwa, pakikisama, and pagmamalasakit.	Improved emotional regulation and social competence.
Mental health and guidance support	Strengthen guidance services, referral systems, and teacher training on signs of distress.	Earlier identification and support for learners at risk.
Positive discipline	Train parents and teachers on restorative and guidance-oriented discipline.	Reduced reliance on punitive approaches and improved learner accountability.
School safety and security	Combine physical safety protocols with psychological safety, counseling, and student support groups.	Safer, more supportive school climate.
Home-school-community partnership	Engage parents, barangay officials, and school leaders in coordinated safety and values programs.	Stronger community support and reduced behavioral incidents.

This proposed framework emphasizes that school safety is both cultural and institutional. Filipino values provide the moral language for formation, while modern education and safety supports provide the systems needed to address contemporary learner needs. Together, they create a balanced approach to discipline, behavior formation, and violence prevention.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that traditional Filipino values remain strong in selected public schools and communities in Cavite, particularly in the home setting. Paggalang, disiplina, and pananagutan continue to guide student behavior and family discipline practices. However, these values are applied less consistently in school settings, showing the need for stronger reinforcement through classroom routines, guidance programs, and school policies. Modern education and safety measures were implemented to a high extent, but their implementation was uneven. Physical safety and security protocols were stronger than psychological and emotional support systems. This suggests that schools need to move beyond visible security measures and strengthen social-emotional learning, mental health awareness, conflict resolution, and student support mechanisms. The significant gaps between perceived importance and actual practice show that stakeholders support both cultural values and modern education standards, yet actual implementation remains incomplete. The strongest gap appeared in modern measures, indicating resource and capacity limitations in translating policy into daily school practice.

The study's most important conclusion is that the alignment of cultural upbringing with modern education and safety supports significantly relates to fewer behavioral incidents. The strong negative correlation confirms that tradition and reform can work together. When Filipino cultural roots are connected with SEL, guidance, mental health support, and safety protocols, schools become safer and students are better supported behaviorally and emotionally.

Recommendation

School administrators should integrate traditional Filipino values into SEL activities, GMRC instruction, classroom rules, and guidance programs. Values such as paggalang, disiplina, and pananagutan should be made visible in daily routines, not only in formal lessons.

Schools should strengthen mental health and guidance services by allocating resources for guidance personnel, teacher training, referral mechanisms, and student support groups. Physical safety protocols should be matched with psychological safety interventions so that learners feel secure, supported, and heard.

Teachers and guidance counselors should adopt holistic teaching and discipline strategies that combine academic instruction, character formation, and emotional support. They should model respectful communication, accountability, and self-regulation because values are learned most effectively through consistent adult behavior.

Parents and families should collaborate with schools by aligning home discipline with school values and rules. Punitive methods should be replaced with explanatory, restorative, and guidance-oriented approaches while preserving the cultural importance of respect and responsibility.

DepEd officials and policymakers should provide localized guidelines and training modules that explicitly connect Filipino cultural values with modern education frameworks, mental health services, SEL, and school safety protocols. Policies must be supported by adequate funding, staffing, and monitoring mechanisms.

Future researchers may expand the scope to other provinces or regions, conduct longitudinal studies to measure the long-term effects of alignment strategies, and examine the role of technology, socioeconomic status, and community involvement in the relationship between culture, education, and school safety.

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