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The Relationship Between Administrative Transparency and Teachers' Trust in School Leadership

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between perceived administrative transparency and teachers' trust in school leadership and identified challenges teachers encountered in school governance. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, the study surveyed 50 randomly selected teachers at Bartolome and Manuela Pañares Memorial National High School in Barili, Cebu, during School Year 2026–2027. An adapted questionnaire included an open-ended item on challenges. Responses were summarized using descriptive statistics, and associations were examined using Pearson correlation. Teachers reported consistent transparency and very high trust, with communication clarity and leadership reliability and consistency receiving the highest ratings in their respective categories. Openness in decision-making was positively associated with all three trust dimensions, most strongly with integrity and fairness ($r = .647$, $p < .001$). Information accessibility was associated with integrity and fairness ($r = .448$, $p = .001$). Communication clarity showed no significant association with any trust dimension. Teachers reported delayed updates and insufficient explanations for administrative decisions. The findings identify openness in decision-making as the transparency practice most consistently associated with trust. School leaders should consult teachers before major decisions, share relevant information proactively, and explain policy changes promptly. The findings reflect self-reported perceptions at one school, and respondents may have been reluctant to voice concerns because the researcher worked at the school and was the principal's daughter. The proposed consultative plan gives school leaders a basis for sustaining teacher participation and accountable governance through regular consultation and feedback, supporting Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education and Goal 16 on strong institutions.

Keywords: Administrative Transparency, Information Accessibility, Participatory Decision-Making, School Governance, School Leadership, Teacher Trust

1. Introduction

Administrative transparency concerns the perceived quality of information that leaders intentionally share, particularly its disclosure, clarity, and accuracy (Tomlinson & Schnackenberg, 2022). In public schools, transparent practices help teachers understand how decisions are reached and support accountability, ethical governance, and a positive school climate (Atukunda, 2025; Niwagaba, 2025). Teachers' trust in leadership, in turn, shapes how they respond to administrative directives, participate in reforms, and commit to school goals (Holzer & Daumiller, 2025; Tomlinson & Schnackenberg, 2022). Trust is associated with openness to feedback and professional engagement, while low trust can weaken communication and morale (Musabwayire & Sikubwabo, 2024; Pasoot & Ching, 2024). A meta-analysis also linked ethical and transparent leadership with organizational trust, justice, and commitment (Özdoğru & Sarıer, 2024).

The study assessed administrative transparency through three dimensions. Clarity of communication concerns whether teachers can understand and act on policies, expectations, and instructions (Neiroukh et al., 2024; Tomlinson & Schnackenberg, 2022). Tomlinson and Schnackenberg (2022) identify clarity as a core dimension of organizational transparency. In schools, clarity depends on both the message and how it is conveyed through meetings, memoranda, or digital channels (Neiroukh et al., 2024). Clear principal communication supports organizational trust (Pasoot & Ching, 2024). Openness in decision-making concerns teachers' involvement in matters such as schedules, workloads, and school programs (Liu & Yin, 2023). Liu and Yin (2023) found that teacher obligation mediated the relationship between ethical leadership and professional learning communities, while teacher participation in decision-making moderated the relationship. Lareza and Espiritu (2024) linked transparent decision-making with perceived leadership effectiveness, while research on decentralized governance connected participation with teacher ownership and the use of practitioner expertise (Kapelela et al., 2024). Accessibility of information concerns whether teachers can obtain policies, memoranda, plans, and reports when needed (Atukunda, 2025; Sofyani et al., 2022). Tomlinson and Schnackenberg (2022) relate access to disclosure, or the sharing of sufficient information with stakeholders. Selective release can weaken confidence in administrative decisions (Atukunda, 2025; Niwagaba, 2025), while research in public-sector settings links information access with institutional trust (Sofyani et al., 2022). The study assessed teacher trust through competence, or confidence in leaders' ability to carry out their duties, integrity and fairness, or confidence that leaders act ethically and apply rules impartially, and reliability and consistency, or confidence that leaders follow through over time (Holzer & Daumiller, 2025). These qualities are associated with teacher commitment, engagement, and organizational citizenship (Özdoğru & Sarıer, 2024; Pasoot & Ching, 2024). Competence is a core attribute in organizational trust research (Fischer et al., 2023) and has also been identified in educational settings (Holzer & Daumiller, 2025). Lareza and Espiritu (2024) associated principals' competence with transparent governance, and meta-analytic evidence links ethical and competent leadership with teacher trust and commitment (Özdoğru & Sarıer, 2024). Integrity and fairness are evident in whether leaders honor commitments and apply rules equitably in matters such as workloads and professional development (Fischer et al., 2023; Holzer & Daumiller, 2025). Philippine research links ethical leadership to transparency and trust in governance (Garcia & Ching, 2024), while perceptions of favoritism or inconsistency can undermine confidence in leadership (Özdoğru & Sarıer, 2024). Reliability likewise reflects teachers' confidence that leaders will act consistently (Holzer & Daumiller, 2025). That confidence develops through repeated experience with leaders' words and actions (Pasoot & Ching, 2024; Tomlinson & Schnackenberg, 2022).

In Barili District I, the study examined how secondary teachers experienced administrative communication, consultation, and access to school information. Lareza and Espiritu (2024) examined leadership competence and transparent governance in Philippine public schools. In Cebu Province, Arcadio et al. (2025) reported that transformational leadership was the most frequently practiced approach, followed by instructional and distributed leadership. Research in Leyte and Southern Leyte likewise showed how school leaders' overlapping roles and limited time can constrain consultation and stakeholder communication (Hungo et al., 2024). The researcher's professional experience helped identify the questions examined in Barili. Nationally, the Second Congressional Commission on Education reported that 24,916 of 45,199 public schools operated without permanent principals (Second Congressional Commission on Education [EDCOM 2], 2025). The Department of Education responded with plans to deploy principals and reclassify head-teacher positions (Department of Education, 2025a). Garcia and Ching (2024) linked school heads' ethical leadership with transparency and trust in governance, while Pasoot and Ching (2024) highlighted the role of communication and management in organizational trust. DepEd Order No. 26, s. 2022, institutionalized School Governance Councils to support participation and feedback (Department of Education, 2022). The Quality Basic Education Development Plan 2025–2035 identifies governance and accountability as reform priorities (Department of Education, 2025b). Internationally, a survey across 30 countries associated trust in public institutions with perceptions of openness, fairness, and competence (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2024). Niwagaba (2025) described hierarchical school leadership practices that can limit substantive consultation. Research on decentralized school governance in Tanzania similarly showed how power imbalances and inadequate information can weaken stakeholder confidence despite formal mechanisms for participation (Kapelela et al., 2024).

The study drew on Organizational Trust Theory as articulated by Fischer et al. (2023), Leader–Member Exchange Theory as synthesized by Yuan et al. (2023), and Social Exchange Theory as reviewed by Ahmad et al. (2023). Together, these perspectives explain how teachers assess leaders' qualities and how trust can develop through repeated professional interactions. Fischer et al. (2023) identify ability, benevolence, and integrity as attributes that employees consider when deciding whether to trust leaders. In educational settings, Holzer and Daumiller (2025) identified openness, honesty, reliability, benevolence, and competence as facets of trust. Explaining decisions, disclosing resource use, and making policies accessible give teachers observable information about leaders' conduct (Niwagaba, 2025; Tomlinson & Schnackenberg, 2022). The synthesis by Yuan et al. (2023) describes how higher-quality leader–member relationships develop through mutual respect and reciprocity. Consultation, clear explanations, and information access can help teachers experience inclusion and respect in their interactions with school heads (Liu & Yin, 2023; Neiroukh et al., 2024). As reviewed by Ahmad et al. (2023),

Social Exchange Theory explains how constructive actions can invite reciprocal responses. Teachers may interpret transparent practices as good-faith investments in their professional relationships (Garcia & Ching, 2024; Sofyani et al., 2022). Repeated exchanges of this kind may sustain trust and collaboration over time (Ahmad et al., 2023).

Previous research has examined leadership styles, ethical leadership, and principal communication in relation to teachers' trust (Bellibaş et al., 2022; Liu & Yin, 2023; Özdoğru & Sarıer, 2024; Pasoot & Ching, 2024). Philippine studies have often examined elementary schools or treated transparency as part of ethical leadership (Garcia & Ching, 2024; Lareza & Espiritu, 2024). The Villarmente study addressed this gap by measuring administrative transparency as a distinct, multidimensional construct and examining its association with specific dimensions of teacher trust in a public secondary school. Principal vacancies, changing compensation policies under DepEd–DBM Joint Circular No. 01, s. 2025, and accountability demands reinforce the relevance of the inquiry (Department of Education & Department of Budget and Management, 2025; EDCOM 2, 2025). The study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational design. It described respondents by age, gender, years of teaching experience, and position or rank, assessed the two main variables, and tested their relationship at the .05 significance level. An open-ended question supplied context on reported challenges. Kaltsonoudi et al. (2022) discussed the potential for common method bias in self-report research. Podsakoff et al. (2024) emphasized the need to address this concern in behavioral and organizational studies. The researcher explained the study's purpose and the voluntary nature of participation. Because the researcher was a school employee and the principal's daughter, that relationship is relevant when interpreting teachers' willingness to express critical views.

The study aligns with SDG 4, Quality Education (United Nations, n.d.-a), through its focus on school governance practices that support teacher participation, professional collaboration, and a supportive educational environment. It also aligns with SDG 16, Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (United Nations, n.d.-b), through its examination of accessible information, fair and consistent administrative conduct, and inclusive decision-making. The DepEd Quality Basic Education Development Plan 2025–2035 provides a policy basis for these connections through its emphasis on accountability, transparency, and stakeholder responsiveness (Department of Education, 2025b).

The proposed Consultative Plan for Sustaining and Strengthening Existing Practices translates the study's findings into priorities for communication, teacher consultation, and access to school information. These priorities support educational sustainability by encouraging continued professional collaboration and institutional sustainability by making transparent and accountable practices part of routine school governance. They also support community sustainability by reinforcing the conditions for collaboration among school leaders, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders. The findings give school administrators and DepEd officials a local basis for reviewing leadership practices, strengthening consultation, and improving school-based management.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational design. The descriptive component assessed teachers' perceptions of administrative transparency in terms of clarity of communication, openness in decision-making, and accessibility of information. It also assessed teachers' trust in school leadership in terms of competence, integrity and fairness, and reliability and consistency. The correlational component examined the relationship between the two variables without manipulating them. An open-ended item provided supplementary context for interpreting the quantitative findings within the same research design.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at Bartolome and Manuela Pañares Memorial National High School, a public secondary school in Barili, Cebu, Philippines. The school is under Barili I District of the Schools Division of Cebu Province and follows Department of Education policies and standards for school governance and administration.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents were 50 teachers from Grades 7 to 12. Grades 7, 8, and 10 each had 11 respondents, Grade 9 had seven, and Grades 11 and 12 each had five. The study recorded their age, gender, years of teaching experience, and current position or rank. The findings describe the reported perceptions of participating teachers within this school.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The 50 respondents were selected from a population of 97 teachers at the school through simple random sampling, which was intended to give each teacher an equal opportunity for selection.

2.5 Research Instrument

The study used an adapted researcher-made questionnaire based on the School Transparency Scale described by Tosun and Çelik (2022) and the Omnibus T-Scale developed by Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003), particularly its faculty trust in the principal subscale. A panel of experts in educational management and research reviewed the instrument for relevance, clarity, and alignment with the study objectives. The questionnaire was pilot-tested with teachers outside the study sample. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with a coefficient of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The questionnaire comprised four parts covering respondent demographics, perceived administrative transparency, trust in school leadership, and challenges related to transparency and trust. Both administrative transparency and teachers' trust were measured using five-point Likert-type scales. For administrative transparency, the response options were Never (1), Seldom (2), Sometimes (3), Oftentimes (4), and Always (5). For teachers' trust in school leadership, the response options were Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5). The final part used one open-ended question to gather teachers' accounts of challenges.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher secured permission from the Schools Division Office of Cebu Province, the District Supervisor of Barili I District, and the school principal. The selected teachers received written and verbal explanations of the study's purpose, participation requirements, and voluntary nature before providing informed consent. The researcher distributed the questionnaire through Google Forms, and teachers completed it independently on their mobile phones. The submitted responses were recorded electronically, reviewed, coded, and organized for analysis.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Means and standard deviations summarized teachers' ratings of administrative transparency and trust in school leadership. Mean scores were interpreted using the following five intervals, with the verbal interpretations applied separately to each variable: 1.00–1.80 (Never for administrative transparency; Strongly Disagree for teachers' trust), 1.81–2.60 (Seldom; Disagree), 2.61–3.40 (Sometimes; Neutral), 3.41–4.20 (Oftentimes; Agree), and 4.21–5.00 (Always; Strongly Agree). Thus, administrative transparency was interpreted using the frequency-based scale, whereas teachers' trust was interpreted using the agreement-based scale. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) was used to assess the relationship between the variables at the 0.05 significance level. The open-ended responses provided context for the quantitative findings and helped inform the proposed consultative plan.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary, and teachers could decline without penalty. The questionnaire did not ask for names, but Google Forms collected email addresses, so responses were confidential and could be linked to respondents. Individual responses were used solely for academic purposes and were not shared with the school principal or administration. The researcher acknowledged a potential conflict of interest because she was employed at the school and was the daughter of the principal whose leadership was being assessed. The possibility that teachers might hesitate to voice concerns or provide socially desirable responses was considered when interpreting the findings.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Respondent Profile, Administrative Transparency, and Trust in School Leadership

3.1.1 Age and Gender

Of the 50 respondents, 44 (88.0%) were female and six (12.0%) were male. The mean age was 38.69 years (SD = 8.68). Teachers aged 41–50 formed the largest group (40.0%), followed by those aged 26–30 (26.0%). The 31–35 and 36–40 age groups each accounted for 12.0%, while teachers aged 51 and above accounted for 8.0% and those aged 20–25 for 2.0%. Tuti and Demirbaş (2025) reported differences in principal trust by age and gender, while Demir and Bostancı (2025) found no significant differences in perceptions of organizational transparency by gender or seniority. The predominance of women reflects the gender composition documented in Philippine basic education teaching (Bongco & Ancho, 2020). Given this composition (Bongco & Ancho, 2020) and the differing findings on principal trust (Tuti & Demirbaş, 2025) and transparency (Demir & Bostancı, 2025), the respondents' age and gender provide context for interpreting the ratings.

3.1.2 Teaching Experience

The largest group had one to five years of experience (38.0%), followed by those with 16 years or more (26.0%), six to ten years (20.0%), and 11 to 15 years (16.0%). Overall, 58.0% had ten years of experience or fewer. Mean teaching experience was 9.50 years (SD = 6.17). Tuti and Demirbaş (2025) reported higher trust among teachers with up to ten years of experience than among those with 11 to 30 years, while Demir and Bostancı (2025) found no significant differences in transparency perceptions by seniority. Clear explanations and consistent guidance are relevant to early-career teachers, as openness about decisions helped sustain trust in a previous study (Bukko

et al., 2021). More experienced teachers bring a longer frame of reference, and prior research has reported differences in trust across experience groups (Tuti & Demirbaş, 2025). The consultative plan could therefore address the needs of early-career teachers while drawing on the experience of longer-serving teachers.

3.1.3 Teaching Position or Rank

Teacher III accounted for 46.0% of respondents, followed by Teacher I (44.0%) and Teacher II (6.0%). Master Teacher I and Master Teacher II each accounted for 2.0%. No respondents held Teacher IV through Teacher VII positions. The public-school career framework distinguishes classroom teaching ranks from Master Teacher positions (Office of the President of the Philippines, 2022), and the expanded framework includes Teacher IV through Teacher VII (Office of the President of the Philippines, 2022). Because 96.0% of respondents held Teacher I through Teacher III positions, the ratings primarily reflect classroom teachers' perspectives. Rank provides context for interpreting opportunities to participate in decisions, which prior research has linked to trust in principals (Cansoy et al., 2020; Da'as, 2020). This connection is especially relevant when interpreting ratings of openness in decision-making from a sample with few Master Teachers (Cansoy et al., 2020; Da'as, 2020).

3.1.4 Clarity of Communication

Teachers rated all five communication indicators Always. Clarity of communication received the highest overall rating among the transparency dimensions (M = 4.90, SD = 0.31). Clear communication of policies, directives, and expectations ranked highest (M = 4.94, SD = 0.24). Explanations of decisions and policy or program changes ranked lowest (M = 4.86, SD = 0.40). Prior research identifies information flow as a core dimension of school transparency (Demir & Bostancı, 2025; Meriç & Öz, 2025) and describes how principals build trust by explaining the reasons behind initiatives and seeking teacher input (Bukko et al., 2021). Clear communication of policies and expectations was a strength worth sustaining (Demir & Bostancı, 2025; Meriç & Öz, 2025). The comparatively lower rating for explanations of decisions identifies an area for improvement, particularly in communicating why changes are made (Bukko et al., 2021).

3.1.5 Openness in Decision-Making

Teachers rated openness in decision-making Always overall (M = 4.78, SD = 0.43). Encouraging teachers to share opinions and suggestions received the highest rating (M = 4.86, SD = 0.35). Consultation before major decisions scored 4.72 (SD = 0.45), while opportunities to participate in planning and policy formulation received the lowest rating (M = 4.66, SD = 0.52). Teacher participation is recognized as a dimension of school transparency (Meriç & Öz, 2025). Earlier research linked participation to the development of affective trust (Da'as, 2020) and found that trust in principals played an intermediary role between leadership behavior and participation (Cansoy et al., 2020). Trust has also been associated with teacher voice (Çelik & Ertürk, 2024). The higher rating for inviting opinions reflects opportunities for teacher voice (Çelik & Ertürk, 2024), while the lower ratings for consultation before decisions and participation in policy formulation indicate room to strengthen formal involvement in planning (Cansoy et al., 2020; Da'as, 2020).

3.1.6 Accessibility of Information

Accessibility of information received the lowest overall mean among the transparency dimensions, although all five indicators were rated Always (M = 4.744, SD = 0.50). Prompt responses to information requests ranked highest (M = 4.82, SD = 0.44). Open sharing of administrative information without unnecessary restrictions ranked lowest and showed the greatest variation (M = 4.60, SD = 0.64). Information flow is central to transparent school administration (Demir & Bostancı, 2025; Meriç & Öz, 2025), including disclosure about decisions, finances, and resources in Philippine schools (Lareza & Espiritu, 2024). The ratings suggest that teachers experienced prompt responses to requests more consistently than proactive disclosure. Improving the routine sharing of relevant administrative information could strengthen this aspect of transparency (Lareza & Espiritu, 2024; Meriç & Öz, 2025).

3.1.7 Competence of School Leaders

Teachers rated all competence indicators Strongly Agree (M = 4.856, SD = 0.38). Leaders' knowledge and management skills and their ability to guide the school toward its goals shared the highest mean of 4.88. Making sound, well-informed operational decisions received the lowest rating (M = 4.82, SD = 0.39). Earlier research identifies competence, including instructional understanding and meaningful feedback, as a basis for teacher trust (Bukko et al., 2021). Philippine research has also examined leadership competence alongside transparent governance (Lareza & Espiritu, 2024). The ratings reflect confidence in school leaders' management ability (Bukko et al., 2021). The comparatively lower rating for operational decisions suggests that teachers may value further assurance that decisions draw on adequate information and consultation.

3.1.8 Integrity and Fairness

Integrity and fairness received the lowest overall mean among the three trust dimensions, while all indicators remained in the Strongly Agree range (M = 4.832, SD = 0.39). Trust in the integrity of school leadership ranked highest (M = 4.88, SD = 0.33). Objective and fair evaluation scored 4.80 (SD = 0.45), and fair treatment without

favoritism received the lowest rating (M = 4.78, SD = 0.46). Teachers in prior research associated fair and consistent conduct with stronger staff collaboration (Bukko et al., 2021), and authentic leadership has been linked with organizational trust (Shie & Chang, 2022). The high ratings reflect confidence in leaders' ethical conduct (Shie & Chang, 2022). The comparatively lower ratings for equitable treatment and objective evaluation suggest that teachers' experiences of fairness were less uniform, supporting continued attention to consistent evaluation and treatment (Bukko et al., 2021).

3.1.9 Reliability and Consistency

Reliability and consistency were the highest-rated trust dimension (M = 4.872, SD = 0.33), with all indicators rated Strongly Agree. Consistent implementation of policies and rules received the highest rating (M = 4.92, SD = 0.27). Dependability during difficult situations received the lowest rating (M = 4.82, SD = 0.39). Previous research describes predictable leadership as a source of stability for teachers (Bukko et al., 2021) and links consistent leadership practices with the development of trust and participation in school processes (Da'as, 2020). The ratings indicate that consistent policy implementation was a strength to sustain because it helps teachers anticipate administrative actions (Bukko et al., 2021). Support during difficult situations was the clearest area for strengthening within this dimension.

3.2 Challenges Reported by Teachers

Many teachers reported favorable experiences with school leadership or no significant challenges, citing approachability, clear communication, fairness, and support. Others described delayed announcements, limited explanations for changes, and concerns about transparency in financial and administrative decisions, including the allocation and use of Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses and promotion-related processes. Some accounts referred to previous administrations. Respondents also raised concerns about perceived favoritism, uneven consideration of feedback, overlapping memoranda and activities, difficulty reaching administrators, and the equitable assignment of teachers across grade levels and subject areas. Teachers identified regular meetings, timely updates, open communication channels, and opportunities for feedback and consultation as practices worth sustaining. The responses show that favorable ratings coexisted with specific concerns about communication, fairness, access, and coordination. Delayed or incomplete information could make it harder for teachers to prepare for school activities, while limited explanations about resources or personnel decisions could leave questions about accountability. Respondents' emphasis on regular consultation, consistent procedures, and accessible communication identifies practical ways to address these concerns while sustaining the leadership practices they valued.

3.3 Relationships Between Administrative Transparency and Teachers' Trust

All nine Pearson correlations were positive, and four were statistically significant at the .05 level. Openness in decision-making correlated significantly with integrity and fairness ($r = .647$, $p < .001$), competence ($r = .455$, $p = .001$), and reliability and consistency ($r = .309$, $p = .029$). Accessibility of information correlated significantly with integrity and fairness ($r = .448$, $p = .001$). Its correlations with competence ($r = .225$, $p = .117$) and reliability and consistency ($r = .180$, $p = .212$) were nonsignificant. Clarity of communication had nonsignificant correlations with competence ($r = .166$, $p = .250$), integrity and fairness ($r = .141$, $p = .330$), and reliability and consistency ($r = .236$, $p = .099$). The null hypothesis was rejected for four pairs and was not rejected for the remaining five. Previous research reported a positive relationship between school transparency and organizational trust (Meriç & Öz, 2025) and linked organizational transparency with citizenship behavior and school effectiveness (Tosun & Gidis, 2026). Teacher participation in decisions has also been associated with trust among staff and trust in principals (Cansoy et al., 2020; Da'as, 2020). In this study, openness was the transparency dimension most consistently associated with trust, reinforcing earlier findings on participation (Cansoy et al., 2020; Da'as, 2020). Its strongest association was with integrity and fairness, which was also associated with information access. The narrow spread of the high communication ratings may have limited the observed correlations for communication clarity. These associations support prioritizing teacher participation in planning and policy formulation and proactive sharing of administrative information in the proposed consultative plan.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The 50 teacher-respondents at Bartolome and Manuela Pañares Memorial National High School in Barili, Cebu, reported consistent administrative transparency and very high trust in school leadership. Clarity of communication was the highest-rated transparency practice, while reliability and consistency was the strongest dimension of trust. Openness in decision-making was the only transparency dimension significantly and positively associated with all three dimensions of trust: competence, integrity and fairness, and reliability and consistency. Information accessibility was significantly associated with integrity and fairness, while communication clarity showed no statistically significant association with any trust dimension. Despite favorable ratings, some teachers reported delays, insufficient explanations, and limited opportunities to participate in planning and policy formulation. Taken together, these findings identify teacher participation and access to administrative information as priorities

for the proposed Consultative Plan for Sustaining and Strengthening Existing Practices, alongside maintaining clear communication and consistent implementation of school policies.

The school administration should implement the proposed Consultative Plan for Sustaining and Strengthening Existing Practices, giving priority to teacher participation in planning and policy formulation. School leaders should consult teachers before major decisions are finalized, explain the reasons for decisions, and document agreed actions and assigned responsibilities. To improve access to information, the administration should maintain an information hub for relevant memoranda, policies, schedules, meeting minutes, and administrative documents. A communication protocol should support early announcements and clear explanations of policy and schedule changes so teachers have time to prepare. School leaders should also apply clear criteria and consistent procedures in administrative decisions and use regular meetings and feedback channels to address concerns about fairness and coordination. Administrators and teachers should review the plan at the end of each term, check whether agreed actions were completed, and use teacher feedback to refine the next term's activities.

The findings reflect the self-reported perceptions of 50 teachers at one public secondary school during School Year 2026–2027, which limits their applicability to other settings. The descriptive-correlational design identifies associations between transparency and trust without establishing causation. Google Forms collected email addresses, so responses were confidential but could be linked to respondents. The researcher's employment at the school and relationship as the principal's daughter may also have made some teachers hesitant to express concerns or more likely to give socially desirable responses. Future studies could include more schools and use independent survey administration without collecting identifying information.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

Before data collection, the author obtained administrative permission from the Schools Division Office of Cebu Province, the District Supervisor of Barili I District, and the school principal. Teachers received written and verbal explanations of the study and gave informed consent before completing the survey. Participation was voluntary, and teachers could decline without penalty. Google Forms collected email addresses, and the author kept individual responses confidential, used them solely for academic purposes, and did not share them with the principal or school administration. The author disclosed that she worked at the school and was the principal's daughter and considered how this potential conflict of interest might have influenced teachers' responses.

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