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Research Article

The Influence Of Transformational Leadership Of Schoolheads, Strategic Planning Practices, Internal Communication Satisfaction, And Organizational Justice On Organizational Trust: A Prediction Model

Jhallibee M. Baer¹ | Eugenio S. Guhao, Jr.,²

¹⁻² University of Mindanao, Professional Schools, Davao City, Philippines

¹baerjhallibee@gmail.com

²eugene.guhao@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative study examined how transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction, and organizational justice influence organizational trust in public elementary schools in Region XI. Using a descriptive-correlational design with exploratory factor analysis, data were gathered from 400 teachers selected through stratified random sampling across 10 divisions. A validated Likert-scale instrument ensured reliability via Cronbach's alpha. Findings indicated very high levels across all variables. Significant correlations were found between the independent variables and organizational trust. Organizational justice was identified as the strongest predictor, followed by transformational leadership and internal communication satisfaction, while strategic planning practices showed no significant effect. Factor analysis revealed that organizational trust is best explained by three key dimensions—leadership, communication, and justice. The results suggest that trust in schools is primarily built through relational, ethical, and communicative factors rather than procedural planning. This highlights the importance for school leaders and policymakers to strengthen fairness, effective communication, and transformational leadership to foster trust and enhance educational quality aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 4.

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Organizational trust deteriorates when school structures are disabled, imbalanced, or ineffective, as teachers' confidence in the institution declines amid poor balance and functionality (Koster, 2020; Kalkan, 2018). Such structural dysfunction fosters commotion, weak cooperation, and an indifferent work climate that further depress trust (Jiang & Chen, 2019). Because trust functions as a strategic driver of excellence, low trust levels suppress productivity, degrade performance outcomes, and jeopardize organizational sustainability (Nuñez & Guhao Jr., 2020). Compounding these effects, ineffective leadership particularly leadership that neglects deliberate trust- and commitment-building diminishes institutional competitiveness and undermines overall success (Schwepker & Good, 2020).

Organizational trust serves as a foundation for fostering effective professional learning communities, as it enhances collaboration, mutual respect, and shared commitment among educators. It creates an environment where teachers feel empowered to contribute, leading to improved self-efficacy and a positive school culture. This is affirmed by Sioting Jr. and Guhao Jr. (2023), who found that trust is a key driver in strengthening professional relationships and sustaining collaborative practices in public elementary schools in Region XI. Research has shown that organizational trust is essential for improving organizational behaviors, enhancing organizational identification, and fostering employee loyalty

(Dai, Tang, Chen, & Hou, 2022). This understanding has practical implications, as it can guide strategies to cultivate a more cohesive and motivated workforce. Previous studies have highlighted several key contributions of organizational trust. Vineburgh (2019) found that higher levels of organizational trust are linked to greater empowerment, increased support for innovation, improved performance, and reduced interpersonal conflict. These findings suggest that trust within an organization can create a more dynamic and harmonious work environment, which is conducive to achieving higher organizational goals.

Transformational leadership significantly contributes to the development of organizational trust by fostering transparency, integrity, and a shared commitment to institutional goals. Through open communication, individualized support, and the encouragement of professional growth, transformational leaders cultivate an environment where teachers feel respected, valued, and confident in their leaders' decisions. This trust strengthens collaboration, enhances morale, and promotes a unified effort toward school improvement. Millado, Guhao Jr., and Rodriguez (2021) support this relationship, revealing that transformational leadership significantly influences organizational trust.

A study by Al-Husseini and Elbeltagi (2021) found a strong positive link between transformational leadership and

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

organizational trust. The researchers explained that when leaders inspire others, set a good example, and show genuine care for their staff, employees are more likely to trust them and the organization. The study highlights that transformational leadership is important in creating a supportive and transparent work environment where trust, teamwork, and long-term organizational success.

Strategic planning plays a crucial role in fostering organizational trust by promoting transparency, clear direction, and ensure that members are actively involved in setting and achieving institutional goals. When teachers are engaged in the planning process, they develop a sense of responsibility and confidence in leadership decisions, fostering stronger trust within the organization. This relationship is evident in the study of Baldoz and Guhao Jr. (2020), which revealed that participatory and well-structured planning processes enhance employee engagement, thereby reinforcing trust and commitment in achieving organizational objectives.

Building on this, several studies emphasize that strategic planning not only guides organizational direction but also serves as a mechanism for building trust and cooperation among members. When leaders communicate plans clearly and encourage participation, employees perceive fairness and openness, which enhances their confidence in leadership. A study by Wahab, Ismail, and Idris (2021) found that inclusive strategic planning processes significantly improve employees' trust and organizational commitment, as they feel valued and

involved in decision-making. In school settings, this means that collaborative planning led by school heads can foster a positive culture of trust, mutual respect, and shared responsibility in achieving institutional goals.

Internal communication satisfaction is vital for building organizational trust. When information is shared openly, accurately, and in a timely manner, employees feel more informed and valued. This transparency reduces uncertainty and helps prevent rumors, making employees more confident in their leaders and the organization. Accurate and timely communication also shows that the organization values its employees and strengthening their emotional connection. Teachers are more likely to trust both their leaders and the institution which supports better teamwork and overall performance (Men & Yue, 2021).

Research supports that effective internal communication plays a crucial role in strengthening organizational trust and employee engagement. When leaders communicate clearly, consistently, and openly, employees feel included, respected, and emotionally connected to the organization. Vercic, Coric and Vocic (2021) emphasize that effective internal communication not only enhances transparency but also cultivates trust by ensuring employees are engaged, heard, and well-informed. In the context of schools, teachers with high levels of experience in communication satisfaction are more likely to trust their leaders and the institution, which in turn fosters collaboration,

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

commitment, and overall organizational performance.

Organizational justice is a critical antecedent of organizational trust, as perceptions of fairness in decision-making, treatment, and communication strongly influence how employees evaluate the trustworthiness of their leaders and the institution. Transparent and consistent decision-making processes reassure staff that policies are applied without bias or favoritism, fostering a sense of predictability and stability. When school staff perceive distributive, procedural, and interactional justice as being upheld, meaning fair allocation of resources, transparent processes, and respectful interpersonal treatment, they are more likely to trust the organization and its leadership (Colquitt, Lepine, Wesson & Gellatly, 2021).

Supporting this view, a study by Bakhshi, Kumar, and Rani (2021) revealed that perceptions of fairness in organizational policies and leader behavior have a significant positive impact on employees' trust in management. The researchers found that when employees experience distributive, procedural, and interactional justice—such as fair rewards, transparent decision-making, and respectful communication—they are more likely to trust their leaders and feel committed to the organization. In educational institutions, this means that when school heads uphold fairness and equality in handling staff concerns, performance evaluation, and communication, they create an environment of trust that promotes teamwork and organizational effectiveness.

This study is anchored on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that trust emerges from reciprocal interactions between employees and the organization. Transformational Leadership promotes supportive and inspiring exchanges that encourage employees to respond with trust. Strategic Planning Practices provide clarity and direction, signaling organizational competence that strengthens employees' confidence. Internal Communication Satisfaction fosters transparency and respect, reducing uncertainty and promoting a trusting environment. Organizational Justice ensures fairness in decisions and interactions, reinforcing employees' willingness to trust the organization.

Supporting this anchor theory, Transformational Leadership Theory introduced by Burns (1978) and expanded by Bass (1985), explains how leaders inspire, communicate effectively, and act with integrity to influence key organizational processes that build trust. Transformational leaders enhance strategic planning practices by providing a clear vision and involving employees in goal setting, thereby strengthening organizational direction. They also promote internal communication satisfaction through meaningful, transparent, and motivational communication that makes employees feel valued and informed. In addition, transformational leaders foster organizational justice by demonstrating fairness, ethical behavior, and respect in decision-making and interpersonal interactions. Through these combined effects, transformational leadership

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

enhances employees' confidence and ultimately leads to higher organizational trust.

Furthermore, the Trust in Leadership Framework, developed by Dirks and Ferrin in 2002, posits that trust in leadership is built through leaders' integrity, competence, and benevolence. This reciprocity is reinforced through transformational leadership, where leaders inspire, empower, and recognize employees' contribution. Similarly, strategic planning practices that involve teachers in decision-making, transparent internal communication, and adherence to organizational justice principles strengthen these positive exchanges. Collectively, these leadership actions create an environment where teachers' trust in management emerges as a natural outcome of ongoing reciprocal social exchanges.

In Figure 1 is shown the conceptual framework of the study having four exogenous variables which are: Transformational Leadership of School Heads, Strategic Planning Practices, Internal Communication Satisfaction, and Organizational Justice, and one endogenous variable which is the organizational trust. The first exogenous variable is transformational leadership based on

Metcafe and Metcafe (2000) with three (3) indicators: vision building, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. The second exogenous variable is strategic planning practices based on Aziz and Rahman (2019) which has five (5) indicators: preparing for strategic planning, defining future trends, quadratic strategic analysis, implementation of the strategic planning, and evaluation and strategic oversight. The third exogenous variable is internal communication satisfaction based on Vercic, Coric, and Vocic (2021) with eight (8) indicators: satisfaction with feedback, satisfaction with communication with immediate superior, satisfaction with horizontal communication, satisfaction with informal communication, satisfaction with information about the organization, satisfaction with communication climate, satisfaction with the quality of communication media, and satisfaction with communication in meetings. The fourth exogenous variable is organizational justice based on Al-Zu'bi (2010) with three (3) indicators: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice. Furthermore, the endogenous variable is organizational trust is based on Celek and Yilmaztruk (2012), which has three (3) indicators: trust to work team, trust to work setting, and trust to management.

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

Exogenous Variables

Endogenous Variable

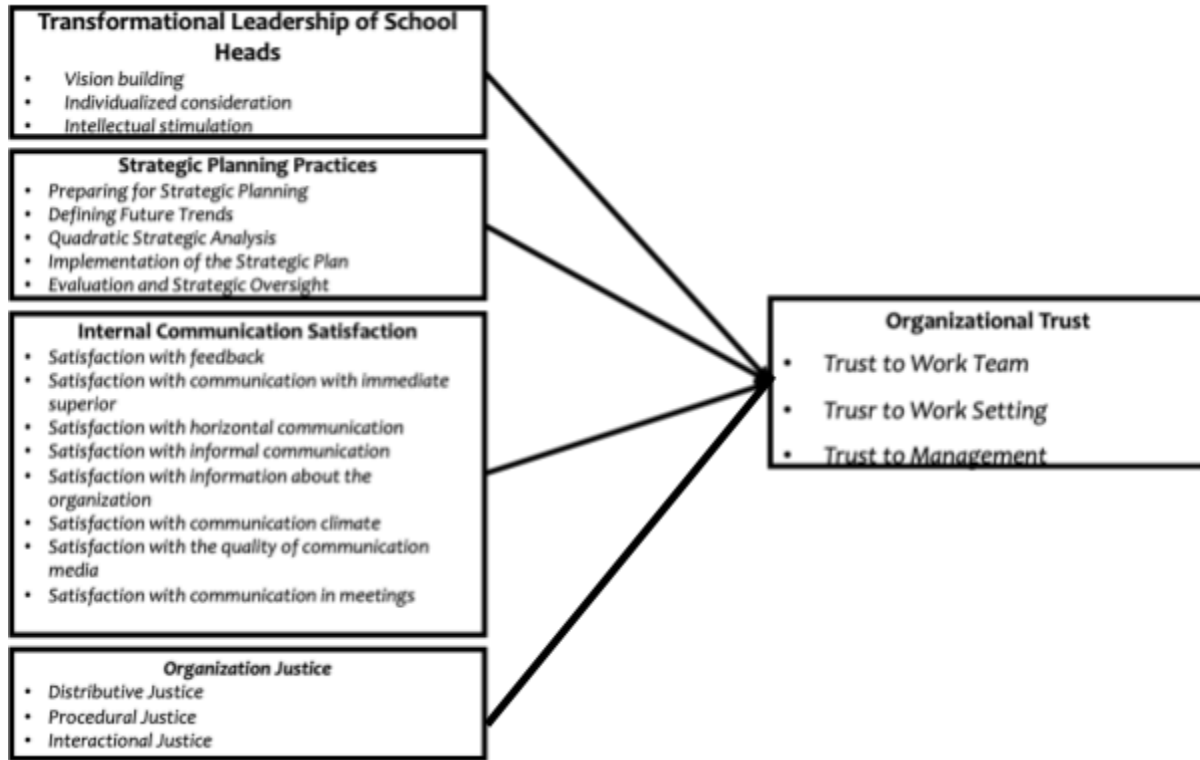


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the study showing the direct relationship of the exogenous variables towards the endogenous variable.

The research gap in the study of transformational leadership, strategic planning, internal communication satisfaction, organizational justice, and organizational trust within educational institutions lies in the limited exploration of how these variables interact specifically in the context of school heads in the Philippines. While there is extensive literature on transformational leadership and its impact on various organizational outcomes, there is a lack of studies that comprehensively examine the combined effects of these variables in the unique

cultural and organizational setting of Filipino schools. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a detailed analysis of how transformational leadership practices of school heads, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction and organizational justice influence organizational trust within the educational sector in the Philippines.

The urgency of conducting this study in the locale is driven by the pressing need to improve educational outcomes and organizational effectiveness in Region XI.

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
 *Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

With the ongoing reforms in the Philippine education system, there is a critical need for evidence-based strategies that can enhance leadership practices, foster a positive organizational climate, and ultimately improve student performance. By addressing the research gap and providing actionable insights, this study can contribute to the development of more efficient leadership and management practices in Region XI, supporting the broader goals of educational reform and improvement.

The main purpose of the study is to determine the influence of transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction and organizational justice on organizational trust. It has the following specific objectives to determine the level of transformational leadership in terms of vision building, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. To describe the level of strategic planning practices in terms of preparing for strategic planning, defining future trends, quadratic strategic analysis, implementation of the strategic plan, evaluation and strategic oversight. To ascertain the level of internal communication satisfaction in terms of satisfaction with feedback, satisfaction with communication with immediate superior, satisfaction with horizontal communication, satisfaction with informal communication, satisfaction with information about the organization, satisfaction with communication climate, satisfaction with the quality of communication media and satisfaction with communication in meetings. To measure the level of organization justice in terms of distributive justice, procedural

justice and interactional justice. To determine the level of organizational trust in terms of trust to work team, trust to work setting and trust to management. It also seeks to determine whether there are significant correlations between transformational leadership and organizational trust, between strategic planning practices and organizational trust, between internal communication satisfaction and organizational trust and between organizational justice and organizational trust. Finally, it also aims to determine whether there is combined significant influence of transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction and organizational justice on organizational trust. Lastly, to develop a mathematical prediction model on organizational trust.

Additionally, the following null hypotheses were examined at a 0.05 level of significance. These were the null hypotheses of the study. First, there is no significant relationship between transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction, and organizational justice on organizational trust. Second, transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction, and organizational justice do not significantly predict organizational trust. Third, which domain of transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction, and organizational justice significantly influence organizational trust.

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

For DepEd officials, the results of the study can inform academe by providing evidence-based insights into how transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction, and organizational justice collectively strengthen organizational trust in schools. These insights can help DepEd design more targeted training programs for school heads, refine existing supervisory frameworks, and craft policies that promote transparent, collaborative and justice-oriented school management.

Future researchers will benefit from this study as it provides a robust framework for examining the interrelationships between transformational leadership and various organizational variables. The methodology and results of the study can serve as a foundation for further research, enabling researchers to explore these dynamics in different contexts and with different populations. By addressing a significant research gap and offering practical insights, this study paves the way for future investigations that can continue to enhance our understanding of effective educational

leadership (Schwepker & Good, 2020; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002).

Furthermore, this study is in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by identifying how leadership, communication, and fairness within schools create supportive and effective learning environments, which scholars affirm as vital foundations for educational quality (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2020; Colquitt et al., 2021). By examining how transformational leadership, internal communication satisfaction, and organizational justice foster organizational trust, the study highlights conditions that strengthen teacher motivation, collaboration, and professional performance—key drivers of school effectiveness (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Vercic, Coric, & Vocic, 2021). These insights contribute to improving school governance and promoting high-quality, inclusive, and learner-centered education consistent with the aims of SDG 4 (Millado, Guhao Jr., & Rodriguez, 2021).

METHODS

This section presents the study's research methods, including the research respondents, research subjects, research

instrument, research procedure in gathering the data, and the statistical treatments of data used in the conduct of the study.

Research Respondents

The research participants were the 400 public elementary school teachers from the

ten divisions of Region XI, comprising 37 males and 363 females, among the 25,978

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

elementary school teachers based on the data from DepEd Region XI for the school year 2024-2025. These elementary teachers were selected because they are at the core of the school's organizational structure and directly experience how leadership, communication, and fairness influence their trust in the institution. In many schools, issues of organizational trust arise when teachers perceive inconsistencies in leadership practices, limited involvement in decision-making, and unclear communication, which can weaken collaboration and morale.

The sample size was determined with consideration for the development of a prediction model, ensuring statistical validity and reliability. It is also calculated using the Raosoft sample size online calculator that is set at 5% margin of error. In line with the recommendations of De Vera, Gabud, and Manalo (2020), emphasized that large sample sizes strengthen the predictive accuracy and generalizability of regression-based models in educational research, the sample of 400 exceeds the minimum requirement for multiple regression analyses. Their study highlighted that a sample size of at least 300 to 400 respondents is appropriate when building models that involve multiple predictors, as it reduces estimation error and improves model stability.

The researcher employed a stratified random sampling method, there was a distribution of

respondents, where the 400 respondents were divided into the 10 school divisions, based on the number of public school elementary teachers. Davao region consists of 10 divisions: Division of Davao City, Division of Tagum City, Division of IGACOS, Division of Davao del Norte, Division of Davao del Sur, Division of Davao Oriental, Division of Digos City, Division of Panabo, Division of Mati and Division of Davao Occidental. In stratified random sampling, the sample was selected using certain techniques within each stratum after the population had been divided into strata (Simkus, 2023). Due to the size of the population, a sampling technique was selected to concentrate on particular data within the population, aligning with the sample size utilized throughout the data gathering procedure.

Likewise, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were followed in this study. In the inclusion criteria, only the elementary public-school teachers in Davao Region were included as participants of the study. In certain instances, the elementary public school teachers tended to withdraw before or during the conduct of the study; the researcher replaced the teacher of the same school but with the act of voluntariness, and no coercion was done. For the exclusion criteria, elementary school teachers from other regions, private schools, and secondary teachers in public schools were excluded.

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

Instruments

This study used 5 instruments specifically designed to address the research objectives. The first questionnaire focused mainly on transformational leadership adopted from Metcalfe and Metcalfe (2000), consisting of 15 items. It comprises of three indicators namely: *vision building*, *individualized consideration* and *intellectual stimulation*. This scale was designed to assess the level of transformational leadership of school heads. Second questionnaire was the Strategic Planning Practices Questionnaire from the works of (Aziz & Rahman, 2019) consisting of 25 items and and five (5) dimensions: *preparing for strategic planning*, *defining future trends*, *quadratic strategic analysis*, *implementation of the strategic plan and evaluation and strategic oversight*. This scale was developed to assess the level of strategic planning.

The third questionnaire was Internal Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire adopted from (Vercic, Coric, & Vocic, 2021). The said tool consists 32 items and has eight (8) indicators namely: *satisfaction with feedback*, *satisfaction with communication with immediate superior*, *satisfaction with horizontal communication*, *satisfaction with informal communication*, *satisfaction with information about the organization*, *satisfaction with communication climate*, *satisfaction with communication media*, and *satisfaction with communication in meetings*. This scale was developed to measure the level of internal communication satisfaction. Fourth was the Organizational Justice Questionnaire consisting of 15 items and three (3)

indicators namely: *distributive justice*, *procedural justice*, and *interactional justice*, (Al-Zu'bi, 2010). Finally, the fifth questionnaire was taken from Celek and Yilmaztruk (2012). It consists of 15 items and three (3) dimensions: *trust to work team*, *trust to work setting*, and *trust to management*.

Below are the scales used to interpret the mean score for transformational leadership, Strategic Planning Practices, Internal Communication Satisfaction, Organizational Justice and Organizational Trust of public school elementary teachers. For the range of the mean of 4.20-5.00, indicate a very high, and an interpretation of the measures is consistently evident among public school teachers. The range of the mean of 3.40-4.19, reflects a high level, indicating that these practices are often evident among public school teachers. The range of the mean of 2.60-3.39 represents a moderate level, meaning the practices are sometimes evident among public school teachers. Scores ranging 1.80-2.59 denote low level, indicating that the practices are rarely evident among public school teachers. Finally, mean scores ranging 1.00-1.79 reflect a very low level, and an interpretation of the measures is never evident among public school teachers.

The survey questionnaire were modified, refined, and contextualized to ensure their sustainability within the local setting. Six expert validators reviewed the instruments to establish their construct and content validity, and their feedback was carefully incorporated. The overall validity score

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

obtained was 4.31, indicating a very good validity. Following validation, the questionnaires were pilot tested with 50 respondents. The results showed acceptable reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients 0.725 for transformational leadership, 0.835 for strategic planning practices, 0.912 for internal communication satisfaction, 0.843 for organizational justice, and 0.843 for organizational trust. These values indicate that all instruments met the acceptable reliability threshold of 0.70 and above, confirming that the questionnaires were both valid and reliable (Taber, 2020). The validated and modified questionnaires, adapted from online sources, were employed

Design and Procedure

This study employed a non-experimental, quantitative, descriptive-correlational design using regression analysis to examine relationships among the variables, where several independent variables predict one dependent variable. In this study the variables were neither manipulated nor examined in a controlled setting (Kendra, 2023). Both exogenous variables (*transformational leadership of school heads, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction, and organizational justice*), and the endogenous variable (*organizational trust*), were treated as either measured variable, which are directly observed, or latent variables, which are not directly observable. Additionally, the primary objective of the analysis was to determine the extent to which the theoretical model was supported by sample data (Crossman, 2019).

for data collection. Before administration, the research adviser already reviewed the instruments and provided feedback and suggestions. The questionnaires underwent both internal and external validation processes conducted by experts in the field. After revisions, the pilot test involving 50 respondents was administered. The collected data were then submitted to a statistician for evaluating reliability and validity, as measured by the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient, which should fall within the normal range of 0 to 1. Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 and above was reliable and demonstrates good internal consistency among the items in the scale (Taber, 2020).

Further, it offers a multivariate statistical framework used to model complex relationships between directly and indirectly observed (latent) variables. The study was visualizing a graphical path diagram showing the relationship between transformational leadership of school heads, strategic planning practice, internal communication satisfaction, and organizational justice on organizational trust among public elementary schools in Region XI. This path diagram will be set up with the use of software that specifies the model in matrix form, which was derived from the results of survey questionnaires as a tool in collecting the primary data. The analysis focused on examining the influence of transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction, and organizational justice on organizational trust.

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

The necessary data were collected in a systematic procedure. First, the researcher sent a letter requesting permission to conduct the study to the Department of Education Regional Director of Region XI. Subsequently, separate letters were addressed to the ten division superintendents of the different divisions covered in this study to allow the researcher to conduct the study to the teachers in their respective divisions. Upon receiving approval, survey questionnaires were administered to the public elementary school teachers in Region XI on January 2024 to May 2024. The researcher personally visited the different schools to distribute questionnaires to the respondents.

The researcher collected the completed questionnaires one week after the distribution to allow respondents sufficient time to answer the questions. All distributed questionnaires were successfully retrieved, resulting in a 100 percent response rate. The accomplished questionnaires were then checked and tallied. Finally, the data were analyzed and interpreted in accordance with the objectives of the study

Furthermore, Pearson's r was used to determine the significance of the relationships between the exogenous variables and the endogenous variable. Linear regression analysis was also employed to identify which exogenous variables best predicted and influenced the endogenous variable. Mean was used in determining the levels of transformational leadership of school heads, strategic planning practice,

internal communication satisfaction, organizational justice and organizational justice. The study determined which independent variables was the strongest predictor of organizational trust.

Meanwhile, the researcher strictly adhered to the ethical standards by following the procedural assessments and standard criteria established by the University of Mindanao Ethics and Review Committee (UMERC). Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and respondents were given the freedom to contribute without any form of cost and in accordance with Data Privacy Act of 2012, which ensured that all personal information of the respondents was kept confidential and protected. Overall, the researcher observed all UMERCC ethical guidelines during the study. In addition, the administration of the research questionnaires was carried out with the consent of the Division Superintendents of the different divisions in Region XI. Informed Consent Form from the respondents with explanation on the purpose of conducting the study will be explained and assured with the confidentiality and safety of their voluntary participation and full cooperation.

This study showed no trace or evidence of plagiarism or misinterpretation of others' work as its own. The manuscript was subjected to a plagiarism detector like Turnitin Software, and yielded no indication of intentional misinterpretation, data fabrication, or falsification of results. The study also avoided drawing inaccurate or exaggerated conclusions, misrepresenting findings to fit a particular model or

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

theoretical expectation, or overstating results. Furthermore, the respondents were not misled at any point during the study, and

the purpose of the research was clearly explained to prevent confusion or misunderstanding in answering the survey questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presented in this section are the data and findings based on the responses of public elementary school teachers in Region XI on the transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction, organizational justice and organizational trust. The discussions are organized according to the following sub-headings: level of transformational leadership, level of strategic planning practices, level of internal communication satisfaction, level of organizational justice and level of organizational trust. It also covers the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational trust, strategic planning practices and organizational trust, internal communication satisfaction and organizational trust, organizational justice and organizational trust.

Transformational Leadership of School Heads

Table 1 presents the level of transformational leadership of school heads among public elementary school teachers in Region XI. The results show an overall mean score is 4.48 with a standard deviation of 0.210, which is interpreted as very high. This indicates that transformational leadership practices are consistently demonstrated among the school heads. Specifically, the mean ratings of the indicators of transformational leadership are disclosed as follows: *intellectual stimulation* attained a mean rating of 4.60 or very high; *vision building* obtained a mean score of 4.48 or very high; *individualized consideration* has a mean rating of 4.36 or very high.

Table 1
Level of Transformational Leadership

	Indicator	SD	Mean	D.E.
	Vision Building	0.271	4.48	Very High
	Individualized Consideration	0.311	4.36	Very High
	Intellectual Stimulation	0.319	4.60	Very High
	Overall	0.210	4.48	Very High

The overall very high response of public elementary school teachers indicate that all domains of transformational leadership were

rated very high. This suggests that school leaders consistently communicate the implications of the school's vision in daily

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

practice, ensuring that the guiding principles are clearly translated into classroom instruction and various school activities. They are attentive to the challenges that teachers face when implementing innovations, offering support and practical solutions to address these obstacles. Moreover, the leader actively motivates teachers to seek out and engage in discussions about new information and ideas that align with and contribute to the school's ongoing development.

Effective school leadership requires not only articulating the school's vision but also embedding it into everyday teaching practices while supporting teachers through the challenges of innovation. Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2020) argue that successful leaders build shared direction and develop organizational capacity to align practice with vision. Similarly, Azorin, Harris, and Jones (2020) emphasize the importance of collaborative professionalism, where leaders promote collective problem-solving and continuous learning, especially when educators face difficulties implementing new strategies. In addition, Donohoo and Katz (2020) found that fostering a culture of inquiry and trust motivates teachers to seek, share, and apply new knowledge that advances school goals.

Strategic Planning Practices

The findings in Table 2 illustrate the level of strategic planning practices, which revealed an overall mean score of 4.44 and a standard deviation of 0.244. This signifies a very high level, which is always evident among school heads. It can also be viewed from the table the results of the following indicators: *implementation of the strategic planning* has a mean rating of 4.50 or very high, *evaluation and strategic oversight* obtained a mean score of 4.48 or very, *quadratic strategic analysis* has a mean score of 4.45 or very high, *preparing for the strategic planning* and *defining future trends* got the lowest mean of 4.39 or very high.

The results show that school leaders demonstrate a high level of strategic planning practices. They actively develop administrative leaders who support the planning process and identify key areas of activity to formulate a clear and shared vision. In addition, they examine the strength of interpersonal relationships and encourage collaboration among action groups, which are essential for the successful implementation of strategic goals. Furthermore, they adopt systems of rewards to motivate departments to strive for continuous improvement in outcomes. They also establish internal feedback and evaluation mechanisms to monitor and assess how effectively the strategic plans are being implemented.

Table 2
Level of Strategic Planning Practices

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
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¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

Preparing for Strategic Planning	0.353	4.39	Very High
Defining Future Trends	0.351	4.39	Very High
Quadratic Strategic Analysis	0.438	4.45	Very High
Implementation of the Strategic Planning	0.371	4.50	Very High
Evaluation and Strategic Oversight	0.364	4.48	Very High
Overall	0.244	4.44	Very High

This aligns to the idea of Baldoz and Guhao Jr. (2020) who emphasized the importance of cultivating authentic leadership and engaging in strategic management practices that enable the development of administrative leaders who actively support the planning process and help articulate a clear and shared organizational vision. Similarly, Guhao Jr. and Quines (2021) underscored the role of authentic leadership in enhancing teamwork attitudes and interpersonal relationships, which are crucial for fostering collaboration and integrating action groups necessary for achieving strategic goals. Furthermore, Millado, Guhao Jr., and Rodriguez (2021) demonstrated how the implementation of systematic reward mechanisms can motivate departments toward continuous improvement and how internal feedback and evaluation systems play a vital role in monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of strategic plan implementation. Collectively, these studies affirm that effective leadership, strong team dynamics, and robust evaluation processes are integral to successful strategic management.

Internal Communication Satisfaction

Table 3 displays the level of internal communication satisfaction, highlighting various indicators: satisfaction with feedback, satisfaction with communication with immediate superior, satisfaction with horizontal communication, satisfaction with informal communication, satisfaction with information about the organization, satisfaction with communication climate, satisfaction with the quality of communication media and satisfaction with communication in meetings. The result showed an overall mean of 4.47 and an average standard deviation of 0.212, interpreted as very high, implying that interpersonal support is always evident among elementary teachers.

Moreover, the indicator *satisfaction with the quality of communication media* gained the highest mean score of 4.57, which is described as very high. It is followed by *satisfaction with horizontal communication and satisfaction with communication in meetings*, both indicators have a mean score of 4.55, descriptively described as very high. *Satisfaction with communication with immediate superior* attained a mean score of 4.52 or very high. *Satisfaction with feedback and satisfaction with communicate climate*, both indicators obtained a mean score of

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

4.48 or very high. *Satisfaction with informal communication* with a mean score of 4.36 or very high. Lastly, *satisfaction with information about the organization* have a mean score of 4.24, implying a very high rating.

The very high level of internal communication satisfaction stemmed from the very high levels of responses. This indicates that the communication within the organization provides a sense of appreciation for my work and acknowledges my potential, especially by my immediate superior. It also fosters a culture where colleagues are generally open to receiving critical feedback, reflecting a healthy professional

environment. While there is some awareness of the presence of gossip, it is weighed appropriately and does not overpower the overall communication climate. Teachers are well-informed about legal regulations that impact the organization’s operations, ensuring compliance and understanding of institutional guidelines. The flow of communication makes me feel like a valued member of the organization, enhancing my sense of belonging. Additionally, there are various modes of communication that staff members use to connect with one another, offering flexibility and inclusivity. Most importantly, teachers receive timely and relevant information needed to accomplish their tasks effectively.

Table 3
Level of Internal Communication Satisfaction

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
Satisfaction with feedback	0.348	4.48	Very High
Satisfaction with communication with immediate superior	0.352	4.52	Very High
Satisfaction with horizontal communication	0.371	4.55	Very High
Satisfaction with informal communication	0.465	4.36	Very High
Satisfaction with information about the organization	0.485	4.24	Very High
Satisfaction with communication climate	0.403	4.48	Very High
Satisfaction with the quality of communication media	0.353	4.57	Very High
Satisfaction with communication in meetings	0.346	4.55	Very High
Overall	0.212	4.47	Very High

This is consistent with the findings of Cuyab and Guhao Jr. 2020, who revealed that

effective communication significantly enhances employees’ sense of value and

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

work engagement especially when feedback and recognition come from direct superiors. Moreover, the organizational climate supports openness to constructive criticism, reinforcing a culture of professionalism and mutual respect. This aligns with the study of **Songcog and Guhao Jr. (2020)**, which emphasized that transparent communication practices contribute to job satisfaction and psychological empowerment. Teachers are also well-informed about legal policies and institutional regulations, ensuring alignment with organizational standards a point supported by **Nuñez and Guhao Jr. (2020)**, who highlighted the role of effective communication in promoting regulatory awareness and organizational trust. Furthermore, the availability of various communication platforms ensures inclusivity and facilitates the timely exchange of relevant information needed for teachers to perform their tasks efficiently, as also supported by **Bongcayat and Guhao Jr. (2020)**.

Organizational Justice

Table 4 shows the results on the level of organizational justice which was measured through distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice. It obtained a

4.53 overall mean and 0.192 standard deviation, with an interpretative rating of very high, which entails that the organizational justice of elementary teachers is very high and always evident. Meanwhile the results of the 3 indicators are always evident to elementary teachers. The highest mean is observed in interactional justice, recorded at 4.58 or very high. It is followed by procedural justice with a mean score of 4.52 or very high. Lastly, distributive justice yielded 4.49 or very high.

The overall very high response of public elementary school teachers revealed that all domains of organizational justice was rated very high also. The results show that job responsibilities are clearly communicated and managed with fairness and transparency. The school head ensures that teachers' feel that their concerns are are fully acknowledged and carefully considered before any job-related decisions are carefully made. This inclusive approach fosters mutual respect and promotes a collaborative working environment where educators feel genuinely valued. When decisions are made regarding teaching roles, the school head demonstrates sincere concern for the rights of employees, reinforcing a sense of trust and security.

Table 4
Level of Organizational Justice

Indicator	SD	Mean	D.E.
Distributive Justice	0.234	4.49	Very High
Procedural Justice	0.272	4.52	Very High
Interactional Justice	0.294	4.58	Very High
Overall	0.192	4.53	Very High

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

It has been demonstrated that the ethical and transformational leadership tenets reflected in the techniques discussed have a favorable effect on organizational commitment and teacher morale. According to research by Arar and Örüçü (2021), school administrators foster trust and support teachers' feeling of professional value when they fairly distribute tasks and actively involve them in decision-making. Similarly, Dussault, Frenette, and Fernet (2020) discovered that leaders who value open communication and show respect for employees' rights contribute to a healthier organizational climate, where educators feel secure, valued, and motivated to collaborate. These findings support the idea that inclusive and transparent leadership not only strengthens interpersonal trust but also promotes a culture of shared accountability and respect within educational institutions.

Organizational Trust

The findings in Table 5 illustrate the organizational trust levels of teachers relating to *trust to work team*, *trust to work setting*, and *trust to management*. The overall organizational trust is 4.58, with a 0.213 standard deviation. This signifies a very high level, which is always evident among teachers. Results in the study also indicated that the *trust to work setting* has a mean rating of 4.67 or very high, *trust to work team and trust to management* got the same mean of 4.53 or very high. The indicators trust to work setting, trust to work team and trust to management were arranged from highest to lowest. All indicators for organizational trust is at a very high level, which indicates that organizational trust is always evident among teachers.

Table 5
Level of Organizational Trust

Indicator	SD	Mean	D.E.
Trust to Work Team	0.327	4.53	Very High
Trust to Work Setting	0.264	4.67	Very High
Trust to Management	0.270	4.53	Very High
Overall	0.213	4.58	Very High

The very high level of organizational trust can be attributed to the consistently high levels of responses. This indicates that teachers in this school feel that their achievements are genuinely appreciated, contributing to a positive and motivating work environment. Most teachers believe they will receive support from their

colleagues when needed, fostering a strong sense of teamwork and professional solidarity. Ideas and opinions are valued within the school, which encourages open communication and allows teachers to express their thoughts without hesitation. Additionally, the school's management is

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

perceived as responsive and capable, offering realistic and practical solutions to problems.

This collaborative and respectful culture strengthens trust and engagement among staff. This supports the assertions of Celek and Yilmaztruk (2022), who found that a trustworthy work setting fosters employee confidence and enhances overall organizational commitment. A positive work environment, therefore, plays a key role in sustaining high levels of trust and well-being among educators. Similarly, Wilson Heenan et al. (2023) emphasized that transformational leaders build trust through integrity, consistency, and individualized consideration. When teachers trust both their peers and school heads, collaboration

improves, and conflicts are minimized, leading to a more cohesive and productive school climate.

Significance on the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organizational Trust

Table 6 presents a detailed analysis of the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational trust. It can be seen from the table that the overall r-value attained by the aforesaid measures is 0.240 with a p value less than 0.05 hence, significant thereby rejecting the null hypothesis of no significant relationship.

Table 6

Significance on the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organizational Trust

Transformational Leadership	Organizational Trust			
	Trust to Work Team	Trust to Work Setting	Trust to Work Management	Overall
Vision Building	.242* (0.000)	.252* (0.000)	.289* (0.000)	.351* (0.000)
Individualized Consideration	.124* (0.013)	.067 (0.184)	.018 (0.714)	.093 (0.063)
Intellectual Stimulation	.080 (0.112)	.025 (0.614)	.096 (0.055)	.088 (0.077)
Overall	.206 (0.000)	.151* (0.003)	.182* (0.000)	.240* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

Presented in Table 6 is the correlation between transformational leadership and organizational trust. Each relationship between indicators of transformational leadership is presented. It can be seen from the table that vision building, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation as indicators of transformational leadership when correlated to organizational trust, vision building shows an overall r-value of 0.351 with $p < 0.05$ hence, significant. In contrast, **individualized consideration, overall r value of 0.93 with a p-value of 0.06 and intellectual stimulation with the overall r-value of 0.88 and p-value of 0.07**, demonstrated weaker or non-significant correlations with organizational trust. This implies that among the transformational leadership dimensions, vision building plays the most influential role in fostering trust within the organization.

The data clearly indicate that **vision building** is significantly correlated to organizational trust since vision building shows the strongest correlation with organizational trust, suggesting that when school leaders effectively communicate a clear and inspiring vision, it enhances trust throughout the organization. This aligns with Kouzes and Posner's (1987) leadership framework, which highlights the importance of inspiring a shared vision as a key factor in mobilizing people and fostering commitment. This finding also resonates with **Millado, Guhao Jr., and Rodriguez (2021)**, who emphasized that transformational leaders who articulate a compelling vision and demonstrate consistency in their values strengthen trust among employees. Similarly,

Al-Husseini and Elbeltagi (2021) affirmed that transformational leadership behaviors—especially vision sharing and inspirational motivation—cultivate a culture of trust, collaboration, and organizational confidence.

Moreover, data revealed that the cumulative transformational leadership score has significant relationships with all dimensions of organizational trust as the indicators revealed the following r-values: trust to work team with 0.026, trust in the work setting with 0.151, and trust in management with 0.182; and the $p < 0.05$. These findings reinforce the notion supported by Dirks and Ferrin (2022) and Wilson Heenan (2023) that transformational leadership is foundational to building organizational trust, particularly when leaders consistently model transparency, fairness, and a compelling strategic direction. Thus, the data underscores that among the various leadership traits, vision building emerges as the most critical driver of trust, highlighting its central role in shaping a trusting, cohesive, and high-performing educational environment.

Significance on the Relationship between Strategic Planning Practices and Organizational Trust

Table 7 provides a detailed analysis of the relationship between strategic planning practices and organizational trust. As indicated in the table, when strategic planning practices is correlated with the measures of organizational trust, the overall r-value of 0.188 with a p-value less than 0.05,

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

indicated a statistically significant therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

The data showed that strategic planning practices is correlated with organizational trust as the indicators revealed the following r-values: preparing for strategic planning with 0.186, quadratic strategic analysis with

0.144, evaluation and strategic oversight with 0.223; and the p values is less than 0.05. Conversely, implementation of the strategic plan with the r-value of 0.002 and p-value of 0.963 and defining future trends with a r-value of .050 and p value of 0.317 hence, not significant.

Table 7
Significance on the Relationship between Strategic Planning Practices and Organizational Trust

Strategic Planning Practices	Organizational Trust			
	Trust to Team	Trust to Work Setting	Trust to Work Management	to Overall
Preparing for Strategic Planning	.120* (0.017)	.113* (0.024)	.187* (0.000)	.186* (0.000)
Defining Future Trends	-.019 (0.705)	.127* (0.011)	.020 (0.696)	.050 (0.317)
Quadratic Strategic Analysis	.062 (0.216)	.117* (0.019)	.148* (0.003)	.144* (0.004)
Implementation of the Strategic Plan	-.019 (0.708)	-.042 (0.402)	.070 (0.162)	.002 (0.963)
Evaluation and Strategic Oversight	.215* (0.000)	.141* (0.005)	.128* (0.010)	.224* (0.000)
Overall	.110* (0.028)	.141* (0.005)	.172* (0.001)	.188* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

The results emphasize the importance of regularly monitoring progress, reviewing outcomes, and making data-informed decisions to ensure transparency and accountability in school leadership. Such processes foster an environment of trust, as employees perceive that leaders are committed to fairness and continuous improvement. This aligns with the study of Baldoz and Guhao Jr. (2020), who highlighted that participatory and transparent strategic planning strengthens employee confidence in institutional decisions. In the same way, Wahab, Ismail and Idris (2021) affirmed that effective strategic planning characterized by clear communication, shared goals, and consistent evaluation cultivates organizational trust and enhances institutional effectiveness.

On the other hand, implementation of the strategic plan did not show any significant relationship with trust in any of the organizational trust domains. This result is notable, as it may suggest that implementation alone, without transparency, communication, and feedback, may not be enough to influence trust. The findings reflect a broader conclusion: **strategic planning practices that emphasize inclusion, monitoring, and accountability are more likely to build trust than mere execution of plans.** As highlighted in transformational leadership literature (Heenan, Lafferty &

McNamara 2023), trust is strengthened not just by what leaders do, but by how they engage others and sustain alignment between words and actions.

Significance on the Relationship between Internal Communication Satisfaction and Organizational Trust

Table 8 provides a detailed analysis of the relationship between internal communication satisfaction and organizational trust. The overall r-value of 0.397 with a p-value of 0.000 proved that the null hypothesis was rejected. Internal communication satisfaction has a statistically significant and positive relationship with organizational trust.

Furthermore, the result reveals that the indicators of internal communication satisfaction namely: satisfaction with feedback, satisfaction with horizontal communication, satisfaction with informal communication, satisfaction with information about the organization, satisfaction with communication climate, satisfaction with the quality of communication media and satisfaction with communication in meetings indicated a statistically significant and positive relationship with organizational trust with all three domains, trust to work team, trust to work setting and trust to management.

Table 8
Significance on the Relationship between Internal Communication Satisfaction and Organizational Trust

Organizational Trust	
Internal Communication	

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
* Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

	Trust to Work Team	Trust to Work Setting	Trust to Work Management	Overall
Satisfaction with feedback	.240* (0.000)	.204* (0.000)	.248* (0.000)	.316* (0.000)
Satisfaction with communication with immediate superior	.062 (0.219)	.140* (0.005)	.000 (0.997)	.089 (0.074)
Satisfaction with horizontal communication	.079 (0.114)	.047 (0.349)	.134* (0.007)	.114* (0.023)
Satisfaction with informal communication	.210* (0.000)	.078 (0.121)	.068 (0.177)	.168* (0.001)
Satisfaction with information about the organization	.286* (0.000)	.068 (0.176)	.163* (0.001)	.244* (0.000)
Satisfaction with communication climate	.316* (0.000)	.220* (0.000)	.089 (0.077)	.292* (0.000)
Satisfaction with the quality of communication media	.162* (0.001)	.296* (0.000)	.267* (0.000)	.319* (0.000)
Satisfaction with communication in meetings	.179* (0.000)	.164* (0.001)	.065 (0.195)	.185* (0.000)
Overall	.364* (0.000)	.269* (0.000)	.234* (0.000)	.397* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

On the other hand, satisfaction with communication with immediate superiors, while positively correlated with some domains, showed limited or no significant relationships in others highlighting that informal and formal structures must both be strategically developed to enhance trust. For instance, communication with

immediate superiors had a significant but modest effect on trust to work setting with an r-value of 0.140 and p-value of 0.005, but not on management or work team trust. This indicates that hierarchical clarity alone is insufficient without fostering relational and emotional trust, especially through informal channels.

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

* Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

This finding underscores the importance of open, timely, and constructive feedback in cultivating an environment of trust, as employees perceive that their voices are heard and their contributions are valued. This is aligned with the findings of Vercic, Coric, and Vocic (2021) who emphasizes that feedback is a vital component of internal communication that strengthens organizational cohesion and clarity. Similarly, Men and Yue (2021) highlighted that transparent and two-way internal communication systems encourage dialogue rather than mere information, dissemination, employees develop stronger sense of belonging and confidence in the organization.

It also emphasizes that structured, participatory communication channels reinforce collective trust, suggesting that

effective and reliable communication platforms contribute to organizational stability and professionalism. These findings also support Dirks and Ferrin's (2002) Trust in Leadership Framework, which posits that trust is built through leaders' competence, integrity, and relational transparency.

Significance on the Relationship between Organizational Justice and Organizational Trust

Table 9 shows the significance of the relationship between organizational justice and organizational trust in public school elementary teachers. The analysis revealed that the overall r-value was 0.480 with the p-value of 0.000. The findings indicate that most of these relationships are statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis.

Table 9
Significance on the Relationship between Organizational Justice and Organizational Trust

Organizational Justice	Organizational Trust			
	Trust to Work Team	Trust to Work Setting	Trust to Management	Overall
Distributive Justice	-.028 (0.570)	.054 (0.280)	.302* (0.000)	.136* (0.006)
Procedural Justice	.269 (0.000)	.322* (0.000)	.417* (0.000)	.447* (0.000)
Interactional Justice	.322* (0.000)	.386* (0.000)	.228* (0.000)	.421* (0.000)
Overall	.281*	.367*	.435*	.480*

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

(0.000) (0.000) (0.000) (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

The results show that organizational justice significantly influences organizational trust, with its dimensions varying in impact. Distributive justice is mainly linked to trust in management and overall trust, while procedural and interactional justice strongly affect trust across all levels, including work teams and work settings. These findings align with Colquitt, Lepine, Wesson, and Gellatly (2021) and Bakhshi, Kumar, and Rani (2021), who emphasize that fair procedures, respectful interactions, and equitable outcomes are key to fostering trust. Procedural and interactional justice, in particular, play the most substantial role in building a trustworthy organizational culture, reinforcing the importance of fair processes and respectful communication in sustaining workplace trust (Colquitt, Scott,

Rodell, Long, Zapata, Conlon & Wesson, 2021).

Influence of Predictor Variables on Organizational Trust

Table 10 presents the extent of the influence of the predictor variables on organizational trust of public elementary school teachers in Region XI. This analysis revealed that the predictor variables – transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction and organizational justice yielded a combined F value of 36.324 with a p-value less than 0.05. This indicates that the predictor variables were found to have a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable, organizational trust.

Table 10

The extent of Influence of Predictor Variables on Organizational Trust

Organizational Trust (Dependent Variables)				
Independent Variables	β (Standardized Coefficients)	B (Unstandardized Coefficients)	t	Sig.
Constant	1.603	.274	5.843	.000
Transformational Leadership (TL)	.143	.144	3.147	.002
Strategic Planning Practices (SPP)	-.085	-.074	-1.680	.094
Internal Communication Satisfaction (ICS)	.126	.126	2.278	.023
Organizational Justice (OJ)	.417	.461	6.911	.000

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

* Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

R	.519
R²	.269
F	36.324
p	.000

The overall R² value of 0.269 indicates that 26.9% of the variance in the dependent variable, organizational trust, is explained by the independent variables—transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction and organizational justice. The table of standardized beta coefficients further illustrates that the levels of transformational leadership, strategic planning practices, internal communication satisfaction and organizational justice significantly contribute to the organizational trust of public elementary teachers, with a p-value of 0.000.

The independent variable, transformational leadership, has a t-value of 3.147 and a p-value of 0.002; strategic planning practices has a t-value of -1.680 and a p-value of 0.094; internal communication satisfaction has a t-value of 2.278 and a p-value of 0.023 and organizational justice shows a t-value of 6.911 with a p-value of 0.000. Among these, organizational justice exerts the most significant influence on organizational trust, with a B value of 0.461, indicating that for every unit increase in organizational justice, there is a corresponding 0.461-unit increase. This is followed by transformational leadership, with a B value of 0.144, meaning that each unit increase in transformational leadership leads to a 0.144 rise in organizational trust. Internal communication

satisfaction, with a B value of 0.126, suggesting that a unit increase in internal communication satisfaction results in a 0.126-unit increase in organizational trust. Interestingly, strategic planning practices showed a negative B value of -.074, meaning strategic planning practices did not significantly predict organizational trust.

The results are supported by recent studies showing that organizational justice positively influences organizational trust, as fairness in procedures and interactions strengthens employees' confidence in their organization (Kim and Beehr, 2020). Research also confirms that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on organizational trust by fostering ethical behavior, enhancing motivation, and strengthening supportive leader-follower relationships (Buil, Matinez, & Matute, 2021). Moreover, internal communication satisfaction has been found to enhance organizational trust, as transparent, timely, and open communication strengthens credibility and confidence within organizations (Men, Yue and Liu, 2020).

Prediction Model on Organizational Trust

$$Y = 0.274 + 0.144 X_1 + 0.126 X_2 + 0.461 X_3$$

Where Y = Organizational Trust

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
 *Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

X_1 = Transformational Leadership
 X_2 = Internal Communication Satisfaction
 X_3 = Organizational Justice
 Constant 0.274 is the Unstandardized Beta Coefficient

The equation $Y = 0.274 + 0.144 X_1 + 0.126 X_2 + 0.461 X_3$ shows a linear model where Y represents Organizational Trust as the dependent variable predicted by the contributions of three independent variables, namely: Transformational Leadership (X_1), Internal Communication Satisfaction (X_2), and Organizational Justice (X_3). Each independent variable has an associated coefficient, which determines the

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study's findings showed that organizational trust is shaped by a combination of leadership, communication, planning, and fairness-related factors. Taken together, these elements meaningfully explain how trust is formed and sustained within an organization. The results suggest that trust is not built by a single practice alone, but through the overall experience employees have with the leaders, the way information is shared, and how fair and just the organization feels in everyday interactions.

The analysis reveals that transformational leadership, internal communication

weight or influence of that variable on Organizational Trust.

X_1 , X_2 , and X_3 are the independent variables or predictors. Each variable represents a different factor or characteristics affecting Organizational Trust. Coefficients 0.144, 0.126, and 0.461, are the weights associated with each predictor variable. X_3 has a weight of 0.461, which has a strong impact on Y, X_1 has a weight of 0.144 which has a positive and modest influence on Y and X_2 has a weight 0.126 also reflects a positive contribution to the prediction of Y.

The equation model signifies that for every one (1)-unit increase in Transformational Leadership (X_1), Internal Communication Satisfaction (X_2), and Organizational Justice (X_3), there is a corresponding increase 1.005-unit increase in Organizational Trust (Y).

satisfaction, and organizational justice are positively associated with organizational trust. When leaders inspire, support, and guide employees with a clear sense of purpose, trust tends to grow. Likewise, open and satisfying communication strengthens confidence in both leadership and the organization. Among all the factors, organizational justice emerged as the most influential, highlighting the importance of fairness, transparency, and respectful treatment in building trust. On the other hand, strategic planning practices did not show a meaningful relationship with organizational trust, suggesting that planning efforts alone may not foster trust unless

¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer
 *Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

employees experience them as inclusive and fair.

The results substantiate the use of Social Exchange Theory (Blau 1964), which emphasizes the role of leaders in inspiring shared vision, fostering openness, and nurturing individualized support. The strong loading of transformational leadership and organizational justice aligns well with Dirks and Ferrin's (2002) Trust in Leadership Framework, reinforcing the idea that leaders earn trust through consistent behavior, fairness, and integrity. Meanwhile, internal communication satisfaction emerged as a distinct yet interconnected factor, validating the theoretical contribution of Vercic, Coric, and Vocic (2021), who asserted that communication quality directly influences employees' emotional and cognitive trust in their institution. The fact that strategic planning did not load significantly as a trust-building factor may indicate a

disconnect between planning processes and teachers' day-to-day perceptions of institutional integrity.

Based on the results, school administrators and DepEd leaders must encourage and prioritize fairness in decision-making and interpersonal interactions, as this has the strongest impact on trust. Leaders should continue to develop transformational leadership practices that motivate and support employees, while strengthening communication systems that promote openness, clarity, and dialogue. Although strategic planning was not found to directly influence trust, organizations may revisit how planning processes are carried out to ensure they are participatory and transparent, thereby making them more meaningful to employees and potentially enhancing trust over time.

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*Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com

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¹Corresponding Author: Jhallibee M. Baer

* Corresponding Email: baerjhallibee@gmail.com