

Dispute Resolution System and Community Institutional Trust in Barangay San Jose

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100400584>

Received: 25 April 2026; Accepted: 01 May 2026; Published: 19 May 2026

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the level of the Dispute Resolution System and Community Institutional Trust among residents in Barangay San Jose, Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed to determine the relationship between the two variables. The respondents of this study were the 351 residents of Barangay San Jose, selected through a random sampling technique. Two sets of adapted questionnaires were used to obtain information from the respondents regarding local governance and mediation processes. The findings revealed that the overall level of the Dispute Resolution System in terms of disposition of cases, timeliness, communication, and documentation, and resolution of the case was high. The results indicated that the dispute resolution system effectively utilizes its procedural mandate to manage local conflicts. Similarly, the investigation found that the level of Community Institutional Trust in terms of settlement of filed cases, satisfaction of clients involved, and referral of cases was also high. This suggests that residents demonstrate confidence in the fairness and integrity of their local mediators. Furthermore, the results showed that communication and documentation received the highest mean within the dispute resolution system, while timeliness received the relatively lowest mean. In terms of institutional trust, the settlement of filed cases garnered the highest mean, while referral of cases was the lowest. A significant relationship was found between the effectiveness of the dispute resolution system and the level of community institutional trust. Crucially, the study found a significant difference in perceptions of both dispute resolution and institutional trust when respondents were grouped by age and length of stay, whereas gender showed no significant difference. Therefore, it is hoped that this study provides valuable insights for the Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) to optimize its mediation strategies through targeted legal literacy and inclusive governance, ultimately fostering long-term social cohesion and peace within the community.

Keywords: dispute resolution system, community institutional trust, Barangay San Jose, descriptive-correlational design, quantitative research

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Community institutional trust refers to the confidence that individuals have in their local governing institutions. This includes organizations such as the local employment agency, the ruling political party, primary schools, and elderly care services (Abdelzadeh & Lundberg, 2024). These institutions play a crucial role in fostering social cohesion and ensuring that community needs are addressed effectively. In the barangay setting, the conciliator plays a crucial role in settling disputes among residents within its jurisdiction. However, building strong levels of trust among communities remains challenging despite the availability of dispute resolution procedures designed to settle disputes quickly and peacefully. The lack of cooperation from certain parties, the increasing number of disagreements, and other factors that impede the successful settlement of disputes are several challenges that the conciliator continues to face (Delfino et al., 2025).

The willingness of the community to accept and abide by the decisions made by local and community institutions is directly influenced by the community's institutional trust. This means that the higher levels of trust are regularly linked to more cooperative behavior and voluntary compliance, which enhances the viability and efficacy of locally delivered policies and services (Chen et al., 2024). When trust is strong, residents are more likely to engage in local initiatives and collaborate to improve their surroundings. If the local community feels that their interests are taken into consideration and that decisions are made considering their needs, they become

more active in governance and development processes (Kuzmuk, 2024). According to Lounsbury (2023), trust also serves as a source of legitimacy. When institutions are considered by the community as trustworthy, their decisions have normative weight and encounter less opposition by the public, which reduces the administrative and social costs of implementation and contributes to the perception that dispute-resolution procedures are just and legally binding. Moreover, ensuring and strengthening community institutional trust is vital, as it not only supports effective dispute resolution by increasing legitimacy and use of mechanisms at the local level but also underpins broader policy goals such as social cohesion, service uptake, and resilient governance (Peters, 2024).

Further, Republic Act No. 9285, also known as the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Act of 2004, enables individuals to choose mediation, arbitration, or negotiation to resolve disputes (Rosyadi et al., 2020). In addition to that, the authority to exercise local autonomy is granted to local government by the supreme law of the land, the Local Government Code of 1991 of the Philippines (Republic Act 7160). It established the Katarungang Pambarangay Law as an extrajudicial mechanism to uphold the long-standing custom of resolving interpersonal conflicts within a community without recourse to the formal legal system (Barcellano, 2025). Through the provision of easily accessible, culturally appropriate, and equitable procedures for settling disputes outside of formal courts, dispute resolution systems have been demonstrated globally to be essential in fostering institutional trust. The Katarungang Pambarangay (KP) fosters a climate of confidence and collaboration within the community by enabling local leaders to assist mediation and arbitration (Noveloso et al. 2024). By exhibiting fairness, responsiveness, and accountability, the efficient and transparent dispute resolution process strengthens public trust in local institutions.

In the Philippine context, barangay officials serve as the frontline authorities that play a crucial role in local governance. Among their duties and responsibilities are maintaining peace and order, implementing local policies, and addressing various community issues and disputes (Cereneo et al., 2021). In handling disputes, they act as facilitators and mediators, providing a forum for parties to discuss their issues and seek amicable solutions. Moreover, the Katarungang Pambarangay Law (Presidential Decree No. 1508) describes the steps involved in repudiation of arbitration rulings and settlements, together with procedures for enforcement.

Furthermore, the success of the dispute resolution system is measured not only by the number of settled cases but also by its ability to serve as a genuine judicial gatekeeper. Katarungang Pambarangay serves as the most convenient and localized source of government-backed justice, which has a direct impact on community institutional trust. The Lupong Tagapamayapa acts as a fundamental pillar of local democratic governance and legal validity by functioning outside of the formal and frequently intimidating judicial system. In essence, the study by Balbada and Seuba-Balbada (2023) emphasized that building and preserving trust in local governance organizations depends on constructive interactions within the dispute resolution process. This study enhances existing research by offering recommendations to improve the ability of Barangay officials in utilizing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes.

Despite the existing studies and literature affirming the Katarungang Pambarangay's role in dispute resolution and its general benefit to community harmony, a significant gap remains in the quantifiable relationship between the effectiveness of the dispute resolution system and the community's institutional trust in local governance. Umengan (2023) highlighted that, although the Lupong Tagapamayapa's efficiency and compliance metrics are often evaluated, the community institutional trust dimension is still understudied, despite its crucial role in validating barangay justice processes. This gap suggests the need for further research to explore how public trust influences participation and outcomes in these local justice systems. The urgency of this study lies in the growing need to rebuild and sustain public trust in local governance, especially as communities increasingly depend on barangay-level institutions to settle disputes fairly and efficiently. The Innovations for Poverty Action (2023) claims that strengthening community-based dispute resolution processes directly increases community trust in local government and keeps minor disputes from turning into serious conflicts. Hence, the researchers opted to conduct this study to find out how the effectiveness of dispute resolution and community institutional trust are related and how that knowledge could help them make timely improvements that promote peace, accountability, and democratic involvement in local communities.

Moreover, the integration of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 16 ((Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), is central to this study, as it underscores the global imperative to promote peaceful and

inclusive societies by providing universal access to justice and building effective, accountable institutions. By evaluating the relationship between the efficacy of the Katarungang Pambarangay's dispute resolution and community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose, this study directly aligns with SDG 16's mission to strengthen local governance and ensure that justice is accessible, equitable, and culturally appropriate

Statement Of The Problem

The study aimed to evaluate the Dispute Resolution System and Community Institutional Trust in Barangay San Jose.

Specifically, this sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of dispute resolution in terms of:
 - 1.1 disposition of cases;
 - 1.2 timeliness;
 - 1.3 communication and documentation; and
 - 1.4 resolution of the case?
2. What is the level of community institutional trust in terms of:
 - 2.1 settlement of filed cases;
 - 2.2 satisfaction of clients involved; and
 - 2.3 referral of cases?
3. Is there a significant relationship between dispute resolution and community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose?
4. Is there a significant difference between the dispute resolution and community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose when grouped according to age, gender, and length of stay?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Ho1. There is no significant relationship between dispute resolution and community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose.

Ho2. There is no significant difference between the dispute resolution and community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose when grouped according to age, gender, and length of stay.

Theoretical Framework

The Procedural Justice Theory by Tyler (1990) serves as the main foundation for this study, which assesses the dispute resolution system, serving as the independent variable in this study. According to this theory, public acceptance of a government process depends critically on its integrity and transparency. According to Morales (2025), the efficiency of Katarungang Pambarangay is hampered by procedural problems such as inadequate documentation and inconsistent methodologies. The effectiveness of the system, measured by indicators such as the disposition of cases, timeliness, communication and documentation, and resolution of the case, directly determines the perception of fairness (Barcellano, 2025; Torres & Gaballo, 2020). In line with this, when the Katarungang Pambarangay adheres to transparent and efficient procedures, it validates the system's legitimacy, a necessary precursor to trust, as supported by studies showing a link between fair procedures and public acceptance (Rosyadi et al., 2020). Hence, when the public perceives the Katarungang Pambarangay as procedurally just, it fosters positive regard.

The Social Exchange Theory, developed by Blau (1964), explains the favorable public perception produced by an efficient procedure, which the dependent variable of this study is anchored to. According to this theory, people base their interactions with the state on a calculation in which they balance the advantages and disadvantages of collaboration. The community's willingness to provide legitimacy and compliance based on the belief that the institution would continuously provide high-quality services and operate in the public interest is reflected in trust (Chen et al., 2024). Indicators of this community's institutional trust include the rate of settlement of filed cases, the overall satisfaction of clients involved, and the referral of cases, which signifies sustained confidence (Peters, 2024). When the perceived benefits of engagement outweigh the costs, citizens are more likely to trust institutions. Community institutional trust, the dependent variable, is thus acquired via proven performance.

The effective implementation of the dispute resolution system in Barangay San Jose is crucial for enhancing community institutional trust. The strong connection between the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust is further illuminated by the Social Capital Theory of Coleman (1988). Coleman's definition of social capital is frequently linked to the rational choice approach, which holds that people build networks and ties as long as the advantages last and that their actions benefit the entire community. Balbada & Seuba-Balbada (2023) highlighted that the Katarungang Pambarangay's consistent ability to settle disputes amicably turns interpersonal trust into institutional trust. Moreover, the quality of local governance's decision-making procedures determined the level of community trust. The transparent, inclusive, and efficient decision-making promotes community satisfaction and trust, which enhances social cohesion and general quality of life (Torres & Gaballo, 2020). Hence, the effective dispute resolution system in Barangay San Jose significantly enhances community institutional trust by promoting efficiency, respect, and fairness.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between independent and dependent variables in the paradigm Figure 1.

The independent variable of this study was dispute resolution system with its indicators, namely: *disposition of cases*, refers to the efficiency in recording and handling case flow; *timeliness*, refers to the adherence to statutory deadlines and promptness of proceedings; *communication and documentation*, refers to the clarity and transparency in the process and record-keeping; and *resolution of the case* refers to the ability to achieve final, lasting, and enforceable settlements.

The dependent variable of this study was community institutional trust with its indicators, namely: *settlement of filed cases*, refers to the confidence that disputes will be handled justly and impartially; *satisfaction of clients involved*, refers to the level of contentment with the procedural fairness and respect shown during the process; and *referral of cases*, refers to trust in the conciliator's adherence to jurisdiction and proper escalation of cases to higher authorities when necessary.

The moderating variables of this study were age, gender, and length of stay.

Conceptual Framework

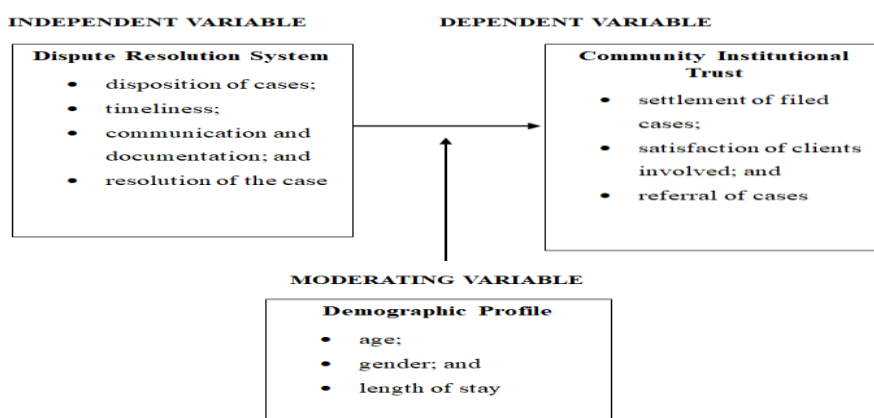


Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework of the Study

Significance Of The Study

The researchers believe that the study will provide a deeper understanding and valuable insights to a variety of individuals.

Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) Officials. The study offers data-driven feedback on the specific dimensions of the Katarungang Pambarangay that most significantly impact the community's institutional trust. Findings in the research can be beneficial to local government authorities, as they are those handling the management of dispute resolution systems in Barangay and similar communities. Officials can use the model to implement targeted interventions that strengthen the legitimacy and accountability of barangay-level governance as mandated by the Local Government Code of 1991.

Residents of Barangay San Jose. The research will directly identify and quantify the community's current level of trust in local governance as it relates to dispute resolution processes within the barangay. The findings of this study will empower residents by providing concrete evidence regarding how well the Lupon Tagapamayapa is serving as an accessible and fair judicial gatekeeper. It can catalyze community dialogue, encouraging residents to voice their needs regarding improving conciliation services for better outcomes. Ultimately, a better understanding of this relationship will support efforts to foster greater pace and communal harmony through effective, trusted local justice.

Future Researchers. The study will be beneficial to researchers and scholars in terms of theoretical contributions, specifically in the fields of sociology, political science, psychology, and public administration. It may serve as a guide in exploring the broader dynamics between local governance and community trust in other barangays or municipalities. It can serve as a foundation for future research on the relationship between justice, fairness, and trust in governance, particularly at the barangay level.

Definition Of Terms

The following terms, which the researchers used in the study, were defined conceptually and operationally to ensure a shared understanding of this study.

Dispute Resolution. It refers to the process of resolving disagreements or conflicts among different parties (University of Lincoln 2022). In the study, it refers to the overall performance and conduct of the Katarungang Pambarangay system as measured by its specific indicators: disposition of cases, timeliness, communication and documentation, and resolution of the case.

Disposition of Cases. It refers to the final and official authoritative action that resolves or finishes a dispute, such as reaching a mutually agreeable settlement, conciliation, arbitration award, or the official end of the case proceedings (Villamor and Dagohoy, 2021). In the study, it refers to the entire process of resolving disputes, including fact-finding, mediation, reaching mutually agreeable settlements, rendering unbiased judgments, and elevating unresolved cases to the Lupon Tagapamayapa for final resolution.

Timeliness. It refers to the commitment of institutions to handle and resolve matters quickly, effectively, and within required legal or procedural timeframes (Torres and Gaballo 2020). In the study, it refers to the methodical dedication to effective case flow, as demonstrated by the timely acknowledgment and filing of complaints, the prompt scheduling of sessions, the adherence to all legal deadlines, and the prioritization and prompt resolution of cases, particularly urgent ones.

Communication and Documentation. It refers to the consistent and transparent dissemination of information to all parties involved, as well as the careful and precise documentation of all agreements, procedures, and results (Morales, 2025). In the study, it refers to the practice of upholding transparency and integrity by clearly explaining procedures and outcomes, regularly updating all parties on case status, facilitating open communication during settlement, accurately documenting all proceedings, and safeguarding the confidentiality of all case records.

Resolution of the Case. It refers to the successful establishment of a mutually agreeable and enforceable agreement (amicable settlement) or arbitration award that ends the legal dispute and reestablishes harmony between the disputing parties (Balbada and Seuba-Balbada 2023). In the study, it refers to the demonstrated capacity to successfully conclude a high percentage of disputes at the local level through mediation, resulting in fair, legally sound, and respected decisions that minimize escalation to higher courts and prevent the recurrence of similar conflicts.

Community Institutional Trust. It refers to the community's belief in the capacity of local institutions to make wise decisions that fully take into account the interests of the public (Wang et al., 2023). In the study, it refers to the community members' assessed level of confidence and positive expectation regarding the local barangay's dispute resolution system, as specifically measured by the quantifiable indicators of settlement of filed cases, satisfaction of clients involved, and referral of cases.

Settlement of Filed Cases. It refers to the successful resolution of a dispute through conciliation or mediation that leads to a mutually agreed-upon, legally recognized outcome that the parties willingly agree to follow (Khan et al. 2020). In the study, it refers to the consistent practice of resolving disputes with impartiality and honesty, guaranteeing fairness in mediation, conducting peaceful arbitration, adhering to the due process of law, and ultimately settling cases without favoring either party.

Satisfaction of Clients Involved. It refers to the disputing parties' favorable assessment of the decision-making process's openness, inclusivity, and effectiveness (Torres and Gaballo 2020). In the study, it refers to the community's positive evaluation of the barangay's procedural fairness, which is exemplified by employing culturally appropriate settlement procedures, guaranteeing equal opportunity for both parties, respecting privacy and non-judgment, and upholding acceptance of the arbitration decisions made by the Lupong Tagapamayapa.

Referral of Cases. It refers to the required procedural step whereby the Lupong Tagapamayapa formally moves a dispute to the next level of the judicial hierarchy, either after confirming the case is exempt from the barangay's jurisdiction or after all local conciliation and mediation efforts have been exhausted, or after failure to settle (Umengan 2023). In the study, it refers to the methodical and courteous process of directing disputes to the appropriate external authority. This process is exemplified by respecting parties' requests for external referral, appropriately endorsing cases outside of its jurisdiction, giving priority to urgent medical cases, formally forwarding unresolved disputes to the prosecutor's office, and adhering to all legal requirements for documentation and submission.

METHODOLOGY

The chapter included the research design, research subject, research instrument, data gathering procedure, statistical analysis methods, and the ethical consideration employed to gather data and information relevant to the level of dispute resolution system and community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose.

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative type of research, applying a descriptive-correlational research design to systematically collect data to understand a phenomenon (Siedlecki, 2020). As stated by Gul (2023), quantitative research is a type of research that emphasizes solving problems in numbers. Quantitative techniques enable the measurement of relationships, patterns, and trends that can be applied to larger populations (Vijayendra & Fantone, 2023). The approach allows for the systematic assessment of the current state of dispute resolution effectiveness and institutional trust, and the subsequent determination of the significant relationship and predictive power between the identified variables, and it focuses on gathering numerical data and analyzing it using statistics. The data were collected through surveys, questionnaires, and already-existing records. A computer-based tool was then used to process and refine the data. The objective is to collect and interpret numerical data from a particular population, sometimes known as a sample population (Creswell, 2020).

Moreover, this study utilized a descriptive-correlational method to analyze the dispute resolution and community institutional trust, with results presented using numerical data. The correlational research examines how different

factors are related and whether changes in one factor influence another (Tan, 2020). This descriptive-correlational study aims to characterize a relationship between variables without attempting to infer a causal relationship (Devi et al. 2022). As added by Pallugna & Valle (2023), a descriptive-correlational design is a scientific technique that requires passively viewing and summarizing a subject’s activity. The main objective of a descriptive-correlational method is to describe correlations between variables rather than to signify a causal relationship. Hence, the principles guide the present study in determining the relationship between the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose.

Moreover, the importance of using a quantitative, descriptive-correlational design lies in its capacity to provide an objective and evidence-based understanding of existing conditions while identifying significant patterns among variables. The researchers enabled to analyze real-world problems through measurable evidence and derive practical implications from the observed relationships. Additionally, the descriptive-correlational study supports data-driven decision-making by identifying areas for improvement. In the study, identifying the relationship between the dispute resolution system effectiveness and community institutional trust will help determine specific areas needing enhancement, guiding the development of programs and strategies to strengthen institutional confidence in Barangay San Jose.

Research Subject

The respondents of the study were the residents of Barangay San Jose with a total population of 3,949, as reported by the Barangay San Jose Nutrition Scholar. They are the main source of information needed in the fulfillment of this study, wherein the level of their trust was evaluated. From this population, 351 individuals were selected using the Raosoft Calculator. The study used this calculator to calculate the proper sample size, taking into account a 50% response rate, a 95% confidence level, and a 5% margin of error (Salman et al., 2023). The calculator was an essential tool for determining the minimum sample size required for a desired degree of accuracy in survey research, taking into account factors like confidence level and margin of error. Moreover, the study utilized a simple random sampling technique, a widely used method in quantitative research involving survey instruments. Simple random sampling is a probability-based technique that allows researchers to select participants purely by chance, effectively eliminating selection bias by ensuring every individual in the population has an equal opportunity to be included (Noor et al., 2022). Hence, the sample from the population provided sufficient data to draw meaningful conclusions regarding the relationship between the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose.

Distribution of Respondents

Table 1

Respondents	Population	Sample	Percentage
Residents in Barangay San Jose, Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte	3, 949	351	100%

Research Instrument

The study used two adapted-modified questionnaires for the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust to determine the relationship between the two variables in Barangay San Jose.

The study used an adapted-modified survey questionnaires as a tool for the data gathering procedure. The research instrument includes questions aimed at assessing the dispute resolution system, based on the research titled “Administration of Punong Barangays in the Implementation of Katarungang Pambarangay Law in the Province of Albay” by Barcellano (2025). The questionnaire consisted of 20 items covering the following indicators: disposition of cases (5 items), timeliness (5 items), communication and documentation (5 items), and resolution of the case (5 items), which were used to evaluate the dispute resolution system of Barangay San Jose.

In the study, the researchers employed a 5-point Likert Scale that allows the participants to convey their feelings in relation to a provided statement. According to McLeod (2008), the Likert Scale is typically presented by five

response options for a statement, with the options being 5-Strongly Agree, 4-Agree, 3-Neutral, 2-Disagree, and 1-Strongly Disagree, which served as the basis for the questionnaires.

The parameters below were used to measure the dispute resolution system in Barangay San Jose.

Scale	Range of Means	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	Very High	This indicates that the Dispute Resolution System is always evident.
4	3.40-4.19	High	This indicates that the Dispute Resolution System is oftentimes evident.
3	2.60-3.39	Moderate	This indicates that the Dispute Resolution System is sometimes evident.
2	1.80-2.59	Low	This indicates that the Dispute Resolution System is rarely evident.
1	1.00-1.79	Very Low	This indicates that the Dispute Resolution System is not evident.

The final section of the survey questionnaire included items designed to assess community institutional trust, adapted from the work of Gonzales (2022), with a title, *“Implementation of Barangay Justice System and Community Satisfaction in the Municipality of Calauan, Laguna: Basis for Intervention Program.”* The community institutional trust was evaluated using the questionnaire that consisted of 15 items covering the following indicators: settlement of filed cases (5 items), satisfaction of clients involved (5 items), and referral of cases (5 items). The questionnaire was also be anchored on a 5-point Likert scale.

The parameters below were used to measure the community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose.

Scale	Range of Means	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	Very High	This indicates that the Community Institutional Trust is always manifested.
4	3.40-4.19	High	This indicates that the Community Institutional Trust is oftentimes manifested.
3	2.60-3.39	Moderate	This indicates that the Community Institutional Trust is sometimes manifested.
2	1.80-2.59	Low	This indicates that the Community Institutional Trust is rarely manifested.
1	1.00-1.79	Very Low	This indicates that the Community Institutional Trust is not manifested.

Data Garthering And Procedure

The study determined the relationship between the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose. The researchers followed the steps in gathering relevant data that proved useful for the research.

Seeking Permission to Conduct the Study. The data collection began with the modification of the questionnaires, which were designed to capture information on the key variables of the Dispute Resolution System and Community Institutional Trust in Barangay San Jose. The questions were based on validated scales and adapted from existing literature to align with the research objectives. Then, the researchers requested approval and validation from the research adviser, panelists, and external validator to ensure the clarity and relevance of the questions to the study. Feedback from the validators was carefully considered, and necessary revisions were incorporated to improve the instrument’s content validity and alignment with the research objectives. Moreover, the researchers sought permission from the Research Director to allow them to conduct

the study and gather data from the residents of Barangay San Jose. The researchers also asked permission from the Barangay Captain of Barangay San Jose to conduct the study.

Distribution and Retrieval of the Questionnaires. The researchers wrote a letter to the respondents before the questionnaires were distributed to request their cooperation in answering the questionnaire. The researchers introduced themselves to the respondents, stated the title of their study, and described its objectives. The researchers ensured that the participation is voluntary. Each respondent was asked to sign the Informed Consent. The researchers then personally distributed the research instrument to the respondents to guarantee a one-hundred percent retrieval rate of the questionnaire. Following that, the acquired data were assembled and structured in accordance with the study's goals and purposes.

Collection and Analysis of Data. The researchers gathered and double-checked the participants' answers, then organized the information. After everything was sorted, the researchers sought assistance from the designated statisticians for further analysis. The results were analyzed and interpreted by the statistician based on the aims of the study.

Statistical Treatment Of Data

The following statistical tools were used in the computation of data and testing to analyze, summarize, and interpret the overall trends and patterns in the gathered responses.

Mean. It is an important statistical analysis technique that provides a standard measure of central tendency by presenting the typical data. It can be calculated by adding all the values in a data set and dividing the total by the number of items in the set, providing a measure of central tendency (Hurley & Tenny, 2023). The Mean was used to assess the level of institutional trust in the community and its dispute resolution system.

Standard deviation. It is used to assess the data dispersion. It is a metric that quantifies the degree to which individual values vary from the mean, offering a clear measure of response variability (Andrade, 2021).

Pearson r. It is the most widely used method for measuring linear correlations. It quantifies the strength and direction of the relationship between two continuous variables with a number ranging from -1 to 1 (Turney, S. 2022). This tool was used to test the primary inferential hypothesis of the study. Specifically, it will analyze the relationship between the overall mean score of the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust.

T-Test. It is a statistical test used to compare the means of two groups. Additionally, it was used in hypothesis testing to determine whether a process affects the population of interest or whether two groups differ from one another (Bevans, R. 2022). This tool was employed to compare the mean scores of the two main variables based on the respondents' gender. This will determine if males and females significantly differ in their perception of the system's effectiveness and their trust in local governance.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). It is a collection of statistical models used to analyze the differences among group means in a sample. It is an extension of the T-test used when comparing the means of three or more independent groups (Pallant, 2020). This tool will be utilized to test the significant difference in the level of dispute resolution and community institutional trust across the different categories of respondents' age and length of stay in Barangay San Jose.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presented and discussed the findings and results from the data gathered. The researcher also tested the null hypotheses formulated in the study.

Level of Dispute Resolution System in Barangay San Jose

Presented in the Table 2 is the summary of the level of dispute resolution system in Barangay San Jose. It can be seen from the table that the overall mean was 4.19 with an overall standard deviation of 0.709, with an average descriptive equivalent of high. It means that the level of the dispute resolution system was oftentimes evident.

The high rating suggests that leadership programs should provide more beneficial initiatives that will contribute positively to the continuous growth of these leaders.

Out of all the items, disposition of case and timeliness had the highest mean of 4.22 with a descriptive equivalent of very high. This means that the dispute resolution system was always evident. On the other hand, the resolution of the case had the lowest mean of 4.16 with a descriptive equivalent of high. Although ranked as the lowest, this also means that the dispute resolution system in term resolution of the case was oftentimes evident in Barangay San Jose.

Table 2 Summary on the level of dispute resolution system in Barangay San Jose

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
1. Disposition of the case	4.22	0.641	Very High
2. Timeliness	4.22	0.868	Very High
3. Communication and documentation	4.17	0.673	High
4. Resolution of the case	4.16	0.653	High
Average	4.19	0.709	High

The results indicated that Barangay San Jose demonstrate their high level of leadership competency through their administrative proficiency within the dispute resolution system. The findings are significant as Guia & Manugbat (2021) highlighted that the dispute resolution system, or the Katarungang Pambarangay, serves as a localized, community-driven framework in the Philippines, established to facilitate the resolution of minor legal disputes and grievances within the grassroots level. This includes the proper application of legal procedures, which remains a cornerstone of the system. This ensures that the mediator's influence in conflict management does not surpass legal boundaries, but rather reinforces (Araña et al., 2024).

Moreover, according to Noveloso et. al. (2024), effective dispute resolution facilitates a restorative process where both parties can rebuild mutual trust and understanding. In addition, a comprehensive awareness of the Katarungang Pambarangay functions is essential in ensuring that disputes are resolved efficiently and fairly. Consequently, the barangay must embody the specific traits and professional characteristics required of a mediator to successfully facilitate settlements.

Level of Community Institutional Trust in Barangay San Jose

Table 3 shows the summary of the level of community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose. It could be seen from the table that the overall mean was 4.09 with an overall standard deviation of 0.652, with an average descriptive equivalent of high. It means that the level of community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose was oftentimes manifested.

Out of all the items, the referral of cases had the highest mean of 4.20, with a descriptive equivalent of very high. This means that the referral of cases in Barangay San Jose was always manifested. On the other hand, settlement of filed cases had the lowest mean of 3.95 with a descriptive equivalent of high. Although ranked as the lowest, this also means that the community institutional trust in terms of settlement of filed cases was oftentimes manifested in Barangay San Jose.

Table 3 Summary on the level of community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
1. Settlement of filed cases	3.95	0.614	High

2. Satisfaction of clients involved	4.12	0.632	High
3. Referral of cases	4.20	0.712	High
Average	4.09	0.652	High

The results indicated that Barangay San Jose demonstrated trust in the dispute resolution system. This finding is supported by the study of Dawam et al. (2024), if the dispute resolution system is viewed as both equitable and procedurally efficient, it fosters greater institutional trust and higher satisfaction among community members. When people believe that their dignity is respected, it creates a foundation of trust and safety (Ikre, 2024).

Moreover, the cornerstone for peace and order in a given society is justice, as no society can remain peaceful if its members feel their rights are ignored (Pajimola and Salom 2023). Hence, trust must be sustained so that residents can perceive that local leaders prioritize procedural fairness and impartiality. Ultimately, this community institutional trust acts as the social glue that encourages citizens to participate in local governance, knowing that the systems designed to protect them are rooted in integrity and consistent ethical standards.

Summary on the Significance of the Relationship between the Dispute Resolution System and Community Institutional Trust

Shown in Table 4 is the significant relationship between the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust. It can be derived from the table that the overall *r*-value of 0.729 with a *p*-value of <0.001, which was less than 0.05, signified the rejection of the null hypothesis. This means that there is a significant relationship between the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose. It further implies that the dispute resolution system in Barangay San Jose had a significant impact on the level of community institutional trust. This means that the higher or lower the level of the dispute resolution system, the higher or lower the level of community institutional trust of the residents.

Table 4 Summary on the significance of the relationship between the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust

Variables Correlated	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i> -value	Decision on Ho	Decision on Relationship
<i>Dispute resolution and community institutional trust</i>	0.729 ***	<0.001	Rejected	Significant

The findings suggest that the level of community institutional trust is directly influenced by the perceived effectiveness and reliability of these dispute resolution mechanisms. When community members perceive the system as both efficient and fair, their level of satisfaction significantly increases. This perception is crucial for fostering trust in local leadership and enhancing the overall functionality of the dispute resolution framework (Dawam et al., 2024). Furthermore, when individuals feel that their personal dignity is respected during these processes, it fosters a deeper sense of trust and safety. This approach eventually leads to the development of peaceful communities and more successful conflict settlements (Ikre, 2024). As a result, the dispute resolution system serves as a primary driver of residents' trust in local governance.

Significance of the Difference in the Dispute Resolution System when grouped according to Age

Illustrated in Table 5 is the significance of the difference in the dispute resolution system when grouped according to age. The findings revealed a significance value of .001, which is less than the established alpha of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference in the dispute resolution system in Barangay San Jose when grouped according to age.

Table 5 Significance of the difference in the dispute resolution system when grouped according to age

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Between Groups</i>	6.25	4	1.564	4.52	.001
<i>Within Groups</i>	119.81	346	0.346		

Moreover, the findings aligned with the study of Araña et al. (2023), which suggests that age is a pivotal factor in the conciliation process, affecting both the interpretation of disputes and the subsequent response. Because values and communication preferences evolve across different life stages, an individual's age can significantly shift their openness to and participation in formal mediation efforts. Moreover, it should adapt its approach to fit different age groups to ensure everyone feels heard and included.

Significance of the Difference in the Community Institutional Trust when grouped according to Age

Illustrated in Table 6 is the significance of the difference in community institutional trust when grouped according to age. The findings revealed a significance value of .017, which is less than the established alpha of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference in community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose when grouped according to age.

Table 6 Significance of the difference in community institutional trust when grouped according to age

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Between Groups</i>	3.91	4	0.978	3.04	.017
<i>Within Groups</i>	111.21	346	0.321		

In addition to that, by rejecting the null hypothesis, the findings suggest that generational differences play a measurable role in how residents perceive and trust local governance. This indicates that age-specific experiences or expectations may be driving variations in institutional confidence within the barangay (Araña et al. 2023). Hence, to maintain broad institutional trust, the barangay must ensure its governance and service delivery models are responsive to the diverse needs of every age differences.

Significance of the Difference in the Dispute Resolution System when grouped according to Gender

Shown in Table 7 is the significance of the difference in the dispute resolution system when grouped according to gender. The findings showed that data on the dispute resolution system, which has a significance value of .122, failed to reject the null hypothesis as it is greater than the alpha of 0.05. This shows that gender does not create a significant difference in the level of dispute resolution system in Barangay San Jose.

Table 7 Significance of the difference in dispute resolution system when grouped according to gender

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Dispute Resolution	Male	189	4.24	4.30	0.605	0.0440
	Female	162	4.14	4.15	0.591	0.0465
<u>95% Confidence Interval Difference</u>						
Statistic	df	p	Mean difference	SE difference	Lower	Upper
1.55	349	.122	0.0995	0.0641	-0.0266	0.226

The findings suggest that the opinions and experiences of residents regarding local justice and mediation are consistent across both male and female respondents. This supports the idea that the dispute resolution mechanisms currently in place are perceived uniformly, regardless of gender. Similar to the findings of Manfei et al., (2020) regarding public trust, these results imply that there is no immediate need to develop gender-specific strategies for the implementation of dispute resolution processes. This ensures that administrative procedures remain standardized, promoting consistent and equitable service delivery for all residents of Barangay San Jose.

Significance of the Difference in the Community Institutional Trust when grouped according to Gender

Shown in Table 8 is the significance of the difference in the community institutional trust when grouped according to gender. The findings showed that data on the community institutional trust, which has a significance value of .211, failed to reject the null hypothesis as it is greater than the alpha of 0.05. This shows that gender does not create a significant difference in the level of community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose.

Table 8 Significance of the difference in community institutional trust when grouped according to gender

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Community Institutional Trust	Male	189	4.12	4.20	0.560	0.0407
	Female	162	4.04	4.03	0.588	0.0462
95% Confidence Interval Difference						
Statistic	df	p	Mean difference	SE difference	Lower	Upper
1.25	349	.211	0.0768	0.0614	-0.0438	0.198

Significance of the Difference in the Dispute Resolution System when grouped according to Length of Stay

Shown in Table 9 is the significance of the difference in the dispute resolution system when grouped according to length of stay. The findings showed that the data on the dispute resolution system, which has a significance value of .022, means that the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates a statistically significant difference in the dispute resolution system in Barangay San Jose when grouped according to length of stay.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.09	4	1.023	2.90	.022
Within Groups	121.98	346	0.353		

Moreover, according to Jacob (2025), public trust in local government is primarily driven by the quality of administrative processes rather than residency duration. This suggests that procedural quality, not length of residence, is the primary driver of institutional trust. Implementing these processes consistently across all resident groups ensures that trust-building efforts remain inclusive and equitable for everyone.

Significance of the Difference in the Community Institutional Trust when grouped according to Length of Stay

Shown in Table 17 is the significance of the difference in the community institutional trust when grouped according to length of stay. The findings showed that data on the level of community institutional trust has a significance value of .689 that failed to reject the null hypothesis, as it is greater than the alpha of 0.05. This shows that the length of stay does not create a significant difference in the level of community institutional trust in Barangay San Jose.

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Between Groups</i>	0.746	4	0.186	0.564	.689
<i>Within Groups</i>	114.377	346	0.331		

The findings imply that a well-functioning local governance mechanism can be consistently effective regardless of how long a person has lived in the area. Moreover, the inclusive and transparent community systems promote equal participation and trust (Wampler and Hart, 2021). This indicates that when government processes are clear and open to everyone, they help both old and new residents feel equally supported. This creates a shared sense of confidence in the local system, regardless of how long a person has lived in the community.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presented the summary and displays the conclusions and recommendations.

Summary Of Findings

The major findings of the study were as follows:

1. The Level of Dispute Resolution System in terms of: disposition of cases got a total mean of 4.22 and a standard deviation of 0.641; timeliness got a total mean of 4.22 and a standard deviation of 0.868; communication and documentation got a total mean of 4.17 and a standard deviation of 0.673; and resolution of the case got a total mean of 4.16 and a standard deviation of 0.653.
2. The Level of Community Institutional Trust in terms of: settlement of filed cases got a total mean of 3.95 and a standard deviation of 0.614; satisfaction of clients involved got a total mean of 4.12 and a standard deviation of 0.632; and referral of cases got a total mean of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.712.
3. The relationship between dispute resolution system and community institutional trust showed a positive correlation with an r-value of 0.729**, with a p-value of <0.001 which was lower than the level of significance 0.05. Moreover, the result indicated the rejection of the null hypothesis.
4. The overall profile of the respondents based on age and length of stay shows a significant difference in the perception of the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust. Since the level of significance of the difference between dispute resolution system and community institutional trust when grouped according to age (p=.001 and .017) and the level of significance of the difference in dispute resolution system when grouped according to length of stay (.022) are below 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests that residents' views on local justice and governance are influenced by their life stage and how long they have lived in the community. Moreover, the overall profile of the residents based on gender shows no significant difference in the level of dispute resolution and community institutional trust. Since the levels of significance (p=.122 and .211) are above 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. This consistency suggests that these perceptions develop similarly regardless of whether a resident is male or female.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following statements were concluded:

1. The level of the dispute resolution system was high, indicating that the system is oftentimes evident in the community. The results showed that disposition of cases and timeliness tied for the highest mean of 4.22, suggesting that the barangay is highly efficient in acknowledging complaints and conducting mediation proceedings. On the other hand, the resolution of the case obtained the lowest mean of 4.16. Although it was the lowest, it still indicates that the Lupong Tagapamayapa effectively settles disputes through mediation, preventing unnecessary escalation to higher courts

2. The level of community institutional trust was high, suggesting that residents have confidence in their local governing institutions. Referral of cases obtained the highest mean of 4.20, indicating that the community trusts the barangay's methodical process of directing disputes to appropriate external authorities when necessary. However, settlement of filed cases got the lowest mean of 3.95. This implies that while trust is oftentimes manifested, there is still room to enhance the perceived impartiality and honesty in the mediation and arbitration process.

3. There was a significant positive relationship between the dispute resolution system and community institutional trust. This confirms that as the effectiveness of dispute resolution increases, residents' trust in their local institutions also strengthens. This relationship is supported by Procedural Justice Theory, which posits that public acceptance and trust in a government process depend critically on its integrity, transparency, and fairness. Furthermore, the Social Exchange Theory asserts that favorable public perception and institutional trust are acquired via proven performance and high-quality services.

4. The evidence indicates that although specific demographic factors, such as age and length of stay, require tailored engagement strategies for conflict mediation, the overall consistency in trust and gender-based perceptions reflects a standardized governance framework. Consequently, Barangay San Jose's administrative processes appear to be effectively internalized by the community as inclusive, providing a stable environment for participatory governance regardless of most individual background characteristics."

Recommendations

To further enhance the dispute resolution system and strengthen community institutional trust, the following recommendations were proposed:

1. The Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) may shift its policy focus from the mere speed of disposal to the long-term sustainability of agreements. It is proposed to formalize a "*Quality Assurance Protocol*" mandating a 60-day follow-up mechanism for all settled cases. By conducting post-settlement evaluations, the institution could ensure that high levels of trust were not eroded by recurring conflicts, transforming the system into one that prioritizes reconciliation over simple administrative closure.

2. The Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) may enact a "*Barangay Mediation Excellence Ordinance*" requiring members of the Lupong Tagapamayapa to undergo annual certifications in active listening, empathy, and perceived neutrality. By professionalizing the mediator's role, the barangay could better address concerns regarding impartiality and ensure that residents perceived the process as fair and free from political influence.

3. The Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) may integrate a specialized "*Legal Literacy and Public Trust*" campaign into its annual Barangay Assembly to address the significant differences in perception identified across different age groups and residency durations. Since the study concluded that awareness of procedural functions is essential for effective resolution, this initiative should involve the distribution of simplified "Citizens' Charters" and procedural flowcharts translated into the local dialect. The assembly may incorporate interactive orientations and digital infographics that explain the limits and steps of the mediation process. By making the dispute resolution system more accessible and less intimidating through these targeted educational efforts, the BLGU can encourage a more inclusive utilization of the dispute resolution system, ensuring that peaceful conflict resolution is equally understood by all members of the community, regardless of their age or tenure.

4. Future researchers may explore the relationship between local governance and community trust on a wider scale. Conducting in-depth interviews was suggested to deeply understand the lived experiences of disputing parties. This would allow for a more nuanced understanding of how local justice systems affect the long-term psychological resilience of community members beyond mere statistical correlations.

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