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Trust in Management and Grit Among Employees in the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Ryan I. Almadin,MPA
Environmental Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Dipolog City, Philippines

Leo C. Naparota, PhD
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences and School of Criminal Justice Education, , Dipolog City, Philippines

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ABSTRACT: This study determined the level of trust in management and its relationship with the grit of employees in the Environmental Management Bureau IX of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources during calendar year 2025. It employed survey and descriptive-correlational research methods involving 113 regular and job order employees selected through complete enumeration. Data were gathered using structured questionnaire checklists on trust in management and grit. The data were analyzed using weighted mean, standard deviation, and Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient with JAMOVI as the statistical software. Findings revealed that the perceived level of trust in management was very high, particularly in terms of competency and management integrity, while working relationship was rated high. The perceived level of grit was also very high, with consistency obtaining a higher rating than persistence. The test of relationship showed a large/high positive and significant correlation between trust in management and grit (rho = 0.521, $p < 0.01$). The findings imply that employees who report stronger trust in management are more likely to demonstrate perseverance, diligence, and consistency in pursuing work-related goals. It is recommended that the Environmental Management Bureau, through the Human Resource Management Office, use the findings as input for training and development programs that strengthen relational trust, managerial support, and employee grit.

KEYWORDS: Trust in management, grit, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Trust in management among employees refers to employees' willingness to rely on and be vulnerable to management decisions because they believe leaders are competent, ethical, and will act in ways that do not harm employees (Karhapää et al., 2022; Rai et al., 2025). It is important because trust functions as a key organizational resource that supports positive work relationships and strengthens employee well-being and confidence in the organization's direction (Czerw et al., 2025; Pisarska et al., 2025). Its impact is evident in how higher trust is associated with more positive employee outcomes (e.g., stronger commitment and constructive behaviors) and improved organizational functioning, particularly when leadership practices encourage openness and reduce counterproductive silence or withdrawal (Kulachai et al., 2025; Rai et al., 2025). Employees' trust in management assessed through perceptions of managerial competency, integrity, and the quality of the working relationship was not significantly associated with employees' grit, indicating that trust did not significantly predict grit's core dimensions of persistence and consistency of interest (Abun et al., 2025).

Trust in management is essential for creating a positive and productive workplace environment. It improves employee engagement, increases productivity, and promotes open communication and innovation. Employees who trust their supervisors are more likely to be engaged, devoted, and loyal, which leads to improved organizational outcomes. In both personal and professional spheres of life, trust is essential. Employee trust has been shown to reduce overhead and improve the happiness experience with regard to organizational citizenship behavior (Sunil Kumar & Sumitha, 2023).

Grit is an important employee attribute in organizational settings because it helps individuals remain effective despite career-related demands. Defined as the sustained passion and perseverance to pursue long-term goals, grit has been found to predict strong achievement across various domains of individual performance (Subebe & Naparota, 2025). Employees think that management will never do anything that would hurt them, but instead, management acts in a way that benefits workers (Mubashar et al., 2022).

Although trust in management has been extensively studied, there are few studies examining how it affects employees' grit. A study found that employees' faith in management and grit were highly regarded, with no significant relationship between the two. Some relationships were slightly negative, suggesting that increased trust in management does not inevitably improve employees' long-term tenacity or consistency (Abun

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et al., 2025). It must be acknowledged that the performance of employees depends not only on approaches to leadership, and employees' knowledge, abilities, and motivation, but also on employees' grit and management trust (Zyl et al., 2022).

The researcher examined several characteristics related to the human element, particularly focusing on trust in management and employees. Although existing studies acknowledge the importance of these constructs, limited research has investigated the relationship between trust in management and employee grit, including its antecedents and implications. Current literature provides insufficient evidence to fully establish the impact of these variables on organizational trust and performance. This study seeks to address this gap by exploring the relationship between trust in management and grit within the cultural context of the Environmental Management Bureau. Moreover, further research is warranted to determine how situational factors influence the interplay between trust in management and employee grit in work-related contexts.

Objective of the Study

The study aimed to determine the perceived level of trust in management and its relationship with the grit of employees in the Environmental Management Bureau IX of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources during calendar year 2025.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the trust in management and how it affects the grit of employees in the Environmental Management Bureau IX of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources during the calendar year 2025.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the respondents' perceived level of trust in management in terms of competency, management integrity, and working relationship?
2. What is the respondents' perceived level of grit in terms of persistence and consistency?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the perceived level of trust in management and the perceived level of grit?

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the perceived level of trust in management and the perceived level of grit.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Trust in Management

Employees' trust in management, also known as organizational trust, refers to employees' collective faith in their managers, which is defined by judgments of dependability, honesty, and fairness. Trust in management can improve organizational performance and employee engagement. However, in circumstances when trust is continually low, external factors may impede progress. In circumstances when trust is not regarded practicable, performance can be increased by applying traditional approaches such as delivering training and performance incentives, as well as developing a well-defined system for monitoring and managing performance (Wang & Cheng, 2020).

The level of trust in management reflects the general impression that management is consistent and equitable. When a substantial proportion of employees hold the same perspective in management, it reflects the organization's practices and becomes a distinguishing feature of the organization (Schreurs et al., 2015). Trust in management refers to the shared belief among employees that the future behavior of the management team is both predictable and positive. This fosters a perception of autonomy among employees regarding the future of the workplace, potentially mitigating the influence of subjective jobinsecurity on anxiety related to work (Wang et al., 2020). Management must address the responsibility of fostering collective trust, which means establishing a shared belief in the trustworthiness and consistency of groups. Interpersonal trust serves as the basis for collective trust, which is essential in determining the efficacy of an organization (Gray, 2016).

Trust in Management Competence

Competencies are essential for organizational performance and are created through a combination of knowledge, skills, and experience. Therefore, a lack of these skills may limit the organization's success (Tyranska, 2016). Competency refers to the manager's capacity to efficiently handle tasks and make well-informed decisions, while integrity encompasses the display of sincerity, honesty, and adherence to ethical values. Establishing trust necessitates comprehending and engaging employees in resolving issues, while also possessing technical, operational, and political expertise (Hill & Lineback, 2019). Competencies are qualities that individuals possess to perform activities exceptionally and successfully. Managerial competencies are essential to ensure that people, organizations, and society as a whole can achieve high-quality work and life. These competencies aim to enhance individuals' effectiveness and competitiveness, develop their professional abilities for self-fulfillment, support their families, and maintain dignity in all aspects of their lives. Additionally, competencies need to be adaptable to changing needs, which necessitates individuals to continuously improve their qualifications (Tyranska, 2016).

Trust in Management Integrity

Integrity is demonstrating sincerity, honesty, and ethical ideals (Tyranska, 2016). Shahid and Azhar (2013), integrity plays a vital role in establishing and sustaining employee trust. Yohana and Akbar (2020), when integrity and moral values are demonstrated by all levels of management, employees are encouraged to perform more effectively in their respective positions. Integrity promotes adherence to ethical principles in both individuals and organizations, leading to the preservation of customer service, trust, and satisfaction (Betchoo, 2016). The term "integrity" is derived from the Latin word "integer," which means wholeness. This state of completeness can be defined as the harmony between one's beliefs, words, and actions. The term 'honesty' originates from the Latin word 'honestas', which signifies 'quality' or 'honor'. Similarly, 'integrity' is derived from the Latin word 'integra', which means 'wholeness'. Integrity pertains to the quality of being honest and truthful. Integrity encompasses maintaining coherence between one's actions and words. Integrity encompasses the qualities of truthfulness and consistency in both words and actions. These qualities are closely associated with honesty and ethical behavior (Yohana, 2020).

Trust in the Working Relationship

Trust in the Working Relationship employees demonstrate trust in management by actively engaging in discussions about work-related issues and sharing information about their backgrounds (Cumlat et., 2024). Zak (2017) stated that individuals who work in organizations characterized by trust tend to exhibit higher levels of performance, productivity, and lower levels of stress compared to those in environments characterized by

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distrust. Dirks (2022) highlights the significant importance of trust in initiating, sustaining, repairing, and improving social relationships within the workplace. Creating a culture of trust necessitates providing credible evidence to support decision-making. The degree of trust within various groups exerts a substantial impact on the overall reliability and efficacy of an organization (Bucero, 2012).

Grit

Grit is an employee's persistence and consistency in pursuing long-term goals, which influences performance. According to research, grit is influenced by a variety of elements, including leadership and a supportive environment. Individuals' ability to consistently and persistently carry out duties and responsibilities to attain long-term goals, despite adversities, is influenced by external influences (Abun et al., 2025).

The Grit Theory developed by Angela Duckworth (2016) offers the foundation for understanding grit as a non-cognitive trait characterized by both passion and perseverance for long-term goals. Duckworth emphasized that the ability to sustain effort and maintain consistent interest over time is a stronger determinant of success than talent or intelligence. In education and other goal-oriented domains, grit, comprising consistency of interest or passion and perseverance of effort, has become a crucial construct in predicting achievement and resilience.

Persistence

This describes a person's drive to attain long-term goals through interest and persistence. Persistence and interest in a purpose can be demonstrated by not abandoning it, even when other pursuits may be more enticing. Psychologists define grit as a noncognitive attribute that describes someone's persistence for a particular interest and persistence in endeavor to attain it even under difficult circumstances. It differs from related psychological traits such as conscientiousness, resilience, work ethics, achievement, industriousness, hardiness, and self-control (Datu, 2021).

Consistency

Consistency of interest refers to an individual's capacity to maintain their original level of interest across time. It refers to an individual's capacity to focus on a certain interest and objective for an extended length of time until success is attained (Datu, 2021). Consistency is also necessary for cultivating a positive work atmosphere. When everyone in the company is consistent in their performance, behaviour, and attitude, it fosters a sense of stability and predictability, which can assist to reduce stress and boost productivity. It enables employees to better plan their work, become more efficient, and achieve better results (Price, n.d).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is presented in Figure 3. First, trust in management with indicators categorized into competency, management integrity and working relationship. Lastly, grit with indicators categorized into persistence and consistency.

Independent Variable: Trust in Management (competency, management integrity, and working relationship).

Dependent Variable: Grit (persistence and consistency).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The study included survey and descriptive-correlational research methods. The survey method was employed since the researcher gathered data through a questionnaire checklist of trust in management and level of grit. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) defined a survey as a research method used for collecting data from a predefined group of respondents to gain information and insights on various topics of interest. On the other hand, correlational research is a type of non-experimental research method in which a researcher measures variables, understands, and assesses the statistical relationship between them with no influence from any extraneous variable. A correlational analysis was performed to determine the significant relationship between trust in management and level of grit.

Research Environment

The study was conducted in the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Zamboanga Peninsula, Philippines. The study limited its distribution of respondents to three offices, namely the Pagadian Regional Office, Zamboanga Sibugay Office, and Zamboanga del Norte Office, to ensure focus, manageability, and representativeness of data: a methodological decision to maintain the feasibility and scope of the study. These offices were selected because they are directly under the administrative and operational jurisdiction of the Environmental Management Bureau in Region IX, which makes them strategically relevant to the objectives of the study.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the one hundred thirteen (113) regular and job order employees of the Environmental Management Bureau during the calendar year 2025. The researcher employed complete enumeration to determine the sample.

The Pagadian Regional Office serves as the central coordinating body for DENR programs and policies in the region, making it an essential source of data for managerial perspectives and regional-level implementation strategies. Meanwhile, the Zamboanga Sibugay Office and the Zamboanga del Norte Office represent the provincial level where actual program execution, community engagement, and ground-level operations are carried out. Including these two provincial offices ensures that the study captures diverse viewpoints from both administrative (regional) and operational (provincial) contexts.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire composed of three parts. Part I covered the profile of the respondents, which included variables such as gender, age, civil status, monthly income, educational attainment, years in service, and type of employment. Part II measured the level of trust in management using the Trust in Management Scale (TMS) adopted from Abun et al. (2025). This scale consisted of twenty-three (23) items categorized into three (3) indicators: Competency, Management Integrity, and Working Relationship. Part III assessed the respondents' grit through the Grit Scale, also adopted from Abun et al. (2025). This section consisted of seven (7) items, grouped into two (2) indicators: Persistence and Consistency.

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Ethical Considerations

This study obtained consent from the Research and Ethics Committee in Environmental Management Bureau. The researchers reviewed the application of the principle of respect of persons by securing informed consent from the institution to distribute a research questionnaire free from technical terms that make it easier for the respondents to understand. The researcher also solicited consent from the individual respondent during the conduct of the study. Respondents' identities are protected, their active participation guaranteed. This research ensured confidentiality of the respondents, which means that the respondents' identity would remain anonymous to everyone. At the end of the research, essential information that can support further research was preserved by the researcher.

Data Gathering Procedure

A letter request, duly signed by the adviser, was sent to the Dean's office, Graduate School, Andres Bonifacio College, Inc., Dipolog City, requesting approval to field the study's instrument. Next, the researcher's letter, along with the Dean's endorsement letter, was sent to the Office of the Regional Director of Environmental Management Bureau, and the endorsement letter was forwarded to Research and Ethics Committee requesting ethics clearance to approve the study's instrument to be fielded out. Finally, the Ethics Clearance was sent to the Heads of Satellite Offices asking permission to administer the instrument.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

Presented below are the statistical tools utilized in the treatment and analysis of data gathered.

Weighted Mean. This is used to quantify the respondents' ratings on the trust in management and level of grit. Presented on the next page are the scoring guide in giving qualitative description and interpretation of the responses of the items in trust in management and level of grit.

Table A. Scoring Procedure for Trust in Management

Scale	Range of Values	Description	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	High
3	2.61-3.40	Somewhat Agree	Average
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Low
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

Table B. Scoring Procedure for Grit

Scale	Range of Values	Description	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	High
3	2.61-3.40	Somewhat Agree	Average
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Low
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

Standard Deviation. This is used to determine the homogeneity and heterogeneity of the employees scores where SD ≤ 3 is homogenous and SD > 3 is heterogeneous (Aiken & Susane, 2001; Refugio et al., 2019).

Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (Spearman rho). This is used to determine the correlation between trust in management and level of grit. The following guide in interpreting the correlation value suggested by Cohen et al. (2014) was utilized in this study:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perceived Level of Trust in Management

Table 1. Perceived Level of Trust in Management in Terms of Competency

A. Competency	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. My head of department shows confidence in task performance and administration.	4.63	0.57	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. The ability of my head of department is undeniable	4.50	0.60	Strongly Agree	Very High

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A. Competency	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
3. My head of department brings development to the department.	4.48	0.64	Strongly Agree	Very High
4 I have confidence in the ability of my head of department	4.51	0.58	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. My head of department can make quick decisions	4.45	0.67	Strongly Agree	Very High
6. My head of department is good at administration.	4.40	0.70	Strongly Agree	Very High
7. My head of department has a convincing appearance.	4.58	0.58	Strongly Agree	Very High
8. My head of department has great experience in performing his//her tasks.	4.51	0.60	Strongly Agree	Very High
9. My head of the department is capable of delegating tasks to his//her employees.	4.45	0.67	Strongly Agree	Very High
Overall	4.50	0.56	Strongly Agree	Very High

Note. *AWV = Average Weighted Value; SD = Standard Deviation.*

The data presented in Table 1 indicates a consistently very high perceived level of trust in management competency, with an overall mean score of 4.50 (SD = 0.56) where all individual item scores range from 4.40 to 4.63. This uniform "Strongly Agree" rating across all nine indicators spanning decision-making, administrative skill, experience, and delegation suggests a workforce that has strong confidence in the technical and managerial capabilities of its department heads. Such strong perceptions of leader competence are a critical foundation for organizational trust, as employees' belief in their leaders' ability reliably predicts their willingness to engage, follow direction, and commit to organizational goals (Fulmer & Ostroff, 2023). The low standard deviations further indicate a high degree of consensus among respondents, reinforcing that this positive assessment is widespread rather than polarized. This finding is a significant organizational strength, as competent leadership directly correlates with enhanced team efficacy and resilience in public sector environments (OECD, 2023). For the Environmental Management Bureau, this reservoir of trust in managerial competency can be leveraged to facilitate change management and drive complex environmental initiatives, provided this competence is perceived as being paired with integrity and benevolence, the other key dimensions of holistic trust.

Table 2. Perceived Level of Trust in Management in Terms of Management Integrity

B. Management Integrity	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. My head of the department is very sincere in performing tasks and in making decisions for the department.	4.54	0.63	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. My head of department is a disciplined person in task performance and administration	4.54	0.60	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. I like the ethical values of my head of Department	4.37	0.77	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. My head of department has high integrity.	4.48	0.61	Strongly Agree	Very High

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B. Management Integrity	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
5. My head of department always shows a good example to his/her employees	4.42	0.68	Strongly Agree	Very High
6. My head of department is a person with high principles	4.50	0.61	Strongly Agree	Very High
7. The management of my head of department is honest and truthful.	4.43	0.68	Strongly Agree	Very High
8. My head of department respects his/her employees.	4.54	0.61	Strongly Agree	Very High
Overall	4.48	0.59	Strongly Agree	Very High

Note. *AWV = Average Weighted Value; SD = Standard Deviation.*

The data in Table 2 demonstrate a consistently very high perceived level of trust in management integrity, with an overall mean of 4.48 (SD = 0.59) and all individual item scores, from sincerity and discipline to honesty and respect, firmly in the "Strongly Agree" range. This strong collective perception that department heads operate with high ethical principles and integrity is a critical asset, as integrity is the foundational dimension of trust that legitimizes authority and fosters voluntary compliance within public institutions (OECD, 2021). The high scores on items like showing a good example (4.42) and being honest and truthful (4.43) indicate that leadership is perceived as modeling the ethical behavior expected of all employees, which is essential for cultivating a culture of accountability, particularly in environmental governance where decisions have significant public impact (Huberts, 2024). When combined with the similarly high scores for competency from Table 9, this profile suggests that employees perceive their managers as both capable and principled. This powerful combination of ability and integrity creates a strong platform for psychological safety, organizational citizenship, and the effective implementation of complex policies, as staff are more likely to commit to directives from leaders they view as ethically reliable (Fulmer & Ostroff, 2023).

Table 3. Perceived Level of Trust in Management in Terms of Working Relationship

C. Working Relationship	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. My head of department has good knowledge of my background	4.02	0.94	Agree	High
2. My head of department spends time with his/her employees	3.96	0.89	Agree	High
3. My head of department understands me well	3.91	0.95	Agree	High
4. My head of the department always discusses work-related issues with his/her employees.	4.33	0.74	Strongly Agree	Very High
Overall	4.06	0.88	Agree	High

Note. *AWV = Average Weighted Value; SD = Standard Deviation.*

The data on working relationships reveal a moderate but positive perception, with an overall mean of 4.06 (Agree/High), which is notably lower than the very high scores for competency (4.50) and integrity (4.48). While employees strongly agree that management discusses work-related issues (4.33), items assessing personalized understanding, such as the head of department's knowledge of employee backgrounds (4.02), spending time with employees (3.96), and understanding them well (3.91), consistently receive lower "Agree" ratings. This pattern suggests a relational gap in the benevolence dimension of trust, indicating that while leadership is respected for its professional capability and ethics, the perceived personal investment and individualized consideration are less pronounced (Fulmer & Ostroff, 2023). Such a profile is common in public sector environments where managerial roles are often oriented toward tasks and formal procedures, potentially at the expense of deeper interpersonal connections (OECD, 2023). For a workforce with a significant proportion of young and contractually employed staff, strengthening

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this relational trust is crucial, as it directly influences psychological safety, engagement, and retention, ultimately affecting the bureau's capacity to leverage its highly qualified human capital effectively.

Table 4. Summary of the Perceived Level of Trust in Management

Trust in Management	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
A. Competency	4.50	0.56	Strongly Agree	Very High
B. Management Integrity	4.48	0.59	Strongly Agree	Very High
C. Working Relationship	4.02	0.87	Agree	High
Overall	4.33	0.67	Strongly Agree	Very High

Note. *AWV = Average Weighted Value; SD = Standard Deviation.*

Table 4 summarizes the perceived level of trust in management. The data reveal a strong but uneven trust in management, with exceptionally high perceptions of competency (AWV=4.50) and integrity (AWV=4.48) contrasting with a notably lower, though still positive, rating for working relationships (AWV=4.02). This pattern aligns with established trust models where cognitive trust (based on competence and reliability) is often established before, and more strongly than, affective trust (based on personal care and relationship quality) (Mayer et al., 2023). The very high scores on competency and integrity form a critical foundation for organizational effectiveness, as they directly influence employees' willingness to accept directives and believe in institutional fairness (OECD, 2021). However, the relative deficit in the relational dimension suggests a potential "benevolence gap," where employees perceive leaders as highly capable and ethical but less personally invested in their individual well-being or development. This is a strategic concern, as affective trust is a key driver of psychological safety, innovation, and discretionary effort, particularly among younger and non-permanent staff who constitute a significant portion of this workforce (Fulmer & Ostroff, 2023). To fully harness its human capital, the bureau's leadership should complement its evident professional strengths with deliberate efforts to foster more personalized engagement and empathetic communication.

Perceived Level of Grit

Table 5. Perceived Level of Grit in Terms of Persistence

A. Persistence	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. I often set a goal and pursue it	4.53	0.57	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. Even new ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones but I still maintain and pursue my ideas.	4.36	0.61	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project and pursue it	4.26	0.78	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. I always maintain my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete.	4.34	0.73	Strongly Agree	Very High
Overall	4.37	0.58	Strongly Agree	Very High

Note. *AWV = Average Weighted Value; SD = Standard Deviation.*

The data in Table 5 indicate a very high perceived level of grit in terms of persistence among respondents, with an overall mean of 4.37 (SD = 0.58). The consistently strong agreement across all items, particularly the highest score for proactive goal-setting and pursuit (4.53), suggests a workforce characterized by determination and a strong goal-oriented mindset. This high level of self-reported persistence is a significant psychological asset for the bureau, as grit defined as perseverance and passion for long-term goals is a strong predictor of success and resilience in challenging work environments, including the public sector (Duckworth, 2024). The slightly lower, yet still very high, score for maintaining focus on multi-month projects (4.34) compared to initial goal-setting may reflect the natural challenges of sustaining effort over extended periods, a common focus area in perseverance research (Credé et al., 2023). For an institution tasked with long-term environmental management, where outcomes often require sustained effort beyond political or project cycles, this collective trait of persistence is crucial. It complements the previously identified high trust in management, potentially creating a synergistic environment where a determined workforce is supported by leadership perceived as competent and ethical, thereby enhancing organizational capacity to achieve complex, long-term objectives.

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Table 6. Perceived Level of Grit in Terms of Consistency

B. Consistency	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. I finish whatever I begin	4.66	0.53	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. Setbacks don't discourage me	4.45	0.61	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. I am a hard worker.	4.68	0.54	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. I am diligent.	4.66	0.53	Strongly Agree	Very High
Overall	4.60	0.50	Strongly Agree	Very High

Note. *AWV = Average Weighted Value; SD = Standard Deviation.*

The data in Table 6 reflect an exceptionally high perceived level of grit in terms of consistency, with an overall mean of 4.60 (SD = 0.50), the highest composite score among all measured constructs. Respondents show resounding agreement, particularly in identifying as hard workers (4.68) and being diligent (4.66), which indicates a powerful collective self-perception of reliability, diligence, and resilience in the face of setbacks (4.45). This high consistency, a core facet of grit defined as steadfast effort and finish orientation over time, is a critical organizational strength (Duckworth, 2024). When integrated with the similarly high scores for persistence (Table 13), it reveals a workforce with a strong dual-component grit profile, combining sustained passion with a consistent work ethic. This is particularly valuable in public sector environmental management, where long-term policy implementation and regulatory enforcement demand unwavering procedural diligence and resilience against bureaucratic or stakeholder challenges (Credé et al., 2023). For the DENR, this internal culture of grit among employees, when supported by the previously identified high-trust leadership, forms a formidable foundation for achieving steadfast commitment to long-term environmental goals despite inherent complexities and potential obstacles.

Table 7. Summary of the Perceived Level of Grit

Grit	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
A. Persistence	4.37	0.58	Strongly Agree	Very High
B. Consistency	4.60	0.50	Strongly Agree	Very High
Overall	4.49	0.49	Strongly Agree	Very High

Note. *AWV = Average Weighted Value; SD = Standard Deviation.*

The summary data reveals an overall very high perceived level of grit (AWV=4.49), characterized by exceptionally strong consistency (4.60) and strong persistence (4.37). This indicates that employees possess a powerful psychological profile of passion and perseverance, with a particular strength in the "finishing" aspect, diligence, hard work, and resilience against setbacks which is slightly more pronounced than their capacity for long-term, focused passion. This internal trait is a significant organizational asset, as grit is a critical non-cognitive predictor of employee performance, adaptability, and retention, especially in demanding public sector roles requiring long-term project commitment (Jachimowicz et al., 2023). The pronounced consistency score suggests a workforce culture that highly values reliability and task completion, which is essential for the procedural and regulatory functions of environmental management. When integrated with the earlier findings of high trust in leadership, this grit profile creates a synergistic potential: a determined and resilient workforce is more likely to effectively translate trusted leadership's vision into sustained action, thereby enhancing the bureau's capacity to achieve its long-term environmental mandates (Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2024).

Table 8. Test of Relationship Between the Levels of Trust in Management and Grit

Variables	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
Trust Management and Grit	0.521	< 0.01	Large/High Positive Correlation Significant

Note. *rho = Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient.*

Table 8 articulates the test of the relationship between the levels of trust in management and grit. Utilizing the Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (Spearman rho), the analysis reveals a statistically significant, large positive correlation (rho = 0.521, $p < 0.01$) between the perceived level of trust in management and the level of grit among respondents. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This strong relationship indicates that employees who report higher trust in their leaders' competency and integrity are also significantly more likely to report higher levels of perseverance and consistency in their work. This finding aligns with contemporary organizational research establishing that trust in leadership is a critical psychological enabler, creating a secure environment where employees feel supported to exert sustained effort and commit to long-term goals, thereby enhancing their inherent grit (Jachimowicz et al., 2023). The correlation suggests a virtuous cycle for the bureau: a competent and ethical leadership (as previously measured) fosters the psychological safety necessary for employees to fully engage their passion and diligence, while a gritty workforce is more capable of reliably executing the long-term missions directed by that trusted leadership. This synergistic

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relationship is a substantial strategic asset, indicating that interventions aimed at strengthening managerial trust particularly by addressing the identified gaps in relational benevolence could have the compounding effect of further mobilizing the workforce's considerable resilience to achieve demanding environmental objectives.

Practical and Theoretical Implications

The findings provide practical implications for human resource development in the Environmental Management Bureau. Since trust in management and grit were both rated very high and were significantly related, leadership development programs may prioritize strengthening managerial competence, integrity, and working relationships. Theoretically, the findings support the view that trust-based leadership may serve as an important organizational condition that encourages employees to sustain effort, remain diligent, and pursue long-term work goals despite challenges.

Limitations

This study was limited to 113 regular and job order employees of selected Environmental Management Bureau IX offices during calendar year 2025. Since the study used a descriptive-correlational design, the findings establish association but do not claim causal influence between trust in management and grit.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that employees of the Environmental Management Bureau IX perceived trust in management as very high, especially in terms of competency and management integrity, while working relationship was rated high. The employees also demonstrated a very high level of grit, particularly in consistency and persistence. The significant large/high positive correlation between trust in management and grit indicates that employees who have greater trust in management tend to show stronger perseverance, diligence, and consistency in work. These findings contribute to organizational and human resource management literature by showing the value of trust-based leadership in strengthening positive employee attributes in a public environmental management setting.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The Environmental Management Bureau, through the Human Resource Management Office, may use the findings as basis for training programs that sustain managerial competence and integrity while further improving working relationships. Department heads may strengthen relational trust through regular consultation, mentoring, open communication, and individualized support for employees. Future researchers may examine other organizational factors that influence grit, such as leadership style, work engagement, psychological safety, and employee well-being, using broader samples or mixed-method approaches.

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