



## Trust, collegiality, and communication between teachers and librarians to support student learning

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This paper investigates the trust, collegiality, and communication between teachers and librarians to support student learning at three senior high schools in Surabaya, Indonesia. The conceptual research framework uses Montiel-Overall's Model B Cooperation/Partnerships from the Teacher and Librarian Collaboration (TLC) model. The research approach is descriptive/quantitative and is based on 36 respondents consisting of 31 teachers and 5 librarians. The findings indicate that regarding trust, the indicator most depicted is benevolence. In terms of collegiality, teachers, and librarians care for each other, and in the communication aspect, teachers and librarians often communicate with each other.

**Keywords:** Education, Teachers, Librarians, Trust, Collegiality, Communication, Secondary School

### Introduction

Collaboration between teachers and librarians is significant for the students' learning process. However, the strong collaboration between teachers and librarians is still not common. Teachers do not see librarians as their academic partners<sup>1,2</sup>. Librarians are not considered a partner in supporting students learning as they are merely seen as documents and facilities providers from the school library<sup>3</sup>. The concept of collaboration is not yet understood to support the learning process. The cooperation between teachers and librarians is generally good but has not been maximally harnessed for the benefit of the students<sup>4</sup>.

Cooperation between teachers and librarians is expected to impact students' reading interest, independence in learning, information literacy, students' achievement, etc. Some research results on the cooperation between teachers and librarians state that collaboration is essential. The more collaboration, the higher the utilization of the library<sup>5</sup>.

Observations at the Senior High Schools that follow a semester credit system (SKS) in Surabaya showed that the school library is never empty, especially during school break. This study's objective is to describe the performance of the cooperation model between teachers and librarians at semester credit system-based high schools in Surabaya.

### Review of literature

Collaboration is central for creativity, innovation, and assessment<sup>6</sup>. According to Montiel-Overall<sup>6,7</sup>, there are four models of collaboration in the learning field, namely Model A: Coordination, Model B: Cooperation/Partnerships, Model C: Integrated Instruction, and Model D: Integrated Curriculum. These collaboration models are known as the Teacher and Librarian Collaboration Model (TLC).

*Model A:* Coordination involves managing and coordinating schedules, activities, or events, but this model does not discuss student learning.

*Model B:* Cooperation/Partnerships explains that cooperation or partnerships are about shared objectives, shared collection, and instructional support; however, in this model, there is no shared teaching.

*Model C:* Integrated Instruction requires co-planning, teaching, and evaluation.

*Model D:* Integrated Curriculum involves planning, teaching, and evaluating lessons across the school curriculum.

This study looks only at Model B—Cooperation/Partnerships (Fig. 1). Teachers and librarians work together to carry out their shared vision and mission, share collections, and give instructional support. The Cooperation/Partnerships

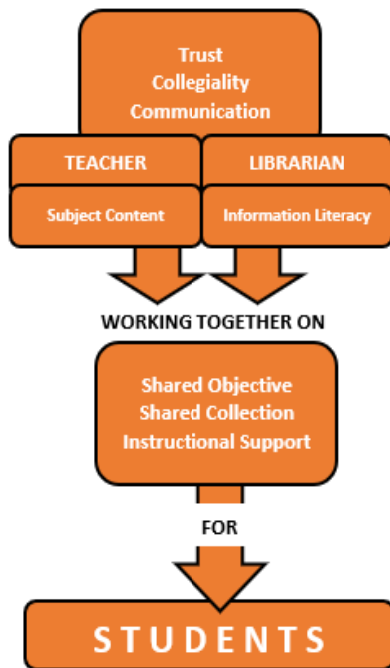


Fig. 1 — Cooperation/Partnerships Model (Source: Montiel-Overall, 2005)

model includes trust, collegiality, and communication between teacher and librarian.

The model explains that teachers and librarians need trust, collegiality, and communication in furthering cooperation. This model emphasizes the division of responsibilities, in which each party performs tasks according to the job responsibilities. Teachers have a responsibility to teach while the librarians provide information. If teachers and libraries teach, students will benefit from having two perspectives on the same topic. Teachers and librarians work together to share objectives, shared collections, and instructional support. This cooperation reflects the collaborative efforts of teachers and librarians in finding sources of information to be used in the students learning process<sup>8</sup>.

**Objective of the study**

- To investigate the collaboration between teachers and librarians based on trust, collegiality, and communication dimensions to support student learning.

**Methodology**

This research applied quantitative methods with a descriptive approach. The population in this study included 177 teachers and five librarians belonging to three public high schools of Surabaya. Nonprobability

Component	Attribute	%
Ability: skills and positive experience	Communication skills	44.4
	Computer skill	2.8
	Information literacy skill	52.8
	Teaching skill	0
	Increase knowledge	58.3
	Helping routine task	11.1
	Increase confident	2.8
	Got benefit from collaboration	27.8
Benevolence: attention and dependency between teacher-librarian	Helping each other	77.8
	Always ready when someone needs it	13.9
	Spend time together	5.6
	Remind each other when making a mistake	2.8
Integrity: robustness and openness	Precision and accuracy in collaboration	2.8
	Responsible	44.4
	Mistake anticipation	52.8
	Keep the promise of collaboration	0

sampling was used the select the teachers and librarians. Out of the total population of 182, only 36 responded, consisting of 31 teachers and five librarians. According to Sugiyono, the sample size in the study fell in the range of 30 to 500<sup>9</sup>.

**Results and discussion**

*Trust*

Montiel-Overall states that trust, collegiality, and communication are needed in the teacher-librarian cooperation model. Cooperation requires trust in terms of working with one another<sup>10</sup>. There are three components for trust: ability, benevolence, and integrity<sup>11</sup>. Both teacher-librarian must have two aspects of ability (skills and experience) to support cooperation. The skills that they perceive as crucial for cooperation are communication and information literacy skills. Both parties agree that they need those skills to interact during the learning process at school. Every individual owns both skills, and they use them in daily activities. However, those skills need to be sharpened to achieve the goal. Librarians think that information literacy is an ordinary skill that all people have, but they do not recognize it. Experience also can build people's trust, the more experience, the more trust. Teachers and librarians claim that they attend many seminars, training, workshops, either in-house or external (Table 1).

The second component of trust for cooperation is benevolence, consisting of kindness, attention, and interdependency between teacher and librarian. Some degree of benevolence comes up in personal and professional relationships. We found that most of the respondents are willing to help each other when experiencing difficulties at work. Challenges at work are common and can be solved professionally by experts. However, a teacher or librarian is rarely available when one needs the other. They rarely spend time with each other or listen to their problems. They are reluctant to remind each other if they make mistakes or break the rules.

Investing time to listen and share feelings need a strong bond. However, the teacher-librarian relationship is professional, and they are likely to help each other only based on their tasks and responsibilities. Sometimes teachers feel they are superior to librarians as teaching is a core school activity, and the library is a supporting facility. Trust building on both parties relies on the shared work based on their responsibility.

The final component of trust is integrity. It is about openness, honesty, being responsible, being willing to admit a mistake, and working on a task accurately. Teachers and librarians carry out their respective tasks diligently. They work on their domains generally do not step into the other's area. However, both parties are also open to feedback, discussing their problems with colleagues or the school principal.

According to Solomon and Flores<sup>14</sup>, establishing a relationship is necessary to have trust between individuals. Peoples' actions can be trusted if, in a

relationship, they maintain open communication, reduce supervision, and have patience with each other<sup>15</sup>. Pendit<sup>13</sup> also states that cooperation requires initiatives from both parties.

#### *Collegiality*

Collegiality in this model refers to the cooperative relationship between colleagues. Such cooperation can improve working relationships and create a conducive environment for the teaching and learning process. Most respondents' attitudes in cooperating with colleagues are 'caring' (91.7%) and 'just to know' (8.3%). They are also enthusiastic about cooperation, distribute the task based on their expertise, and support each other. The impact of collegiality on cooperation are performance improvement (63.9%), knowledge and skills on teaching improvement and solve the difficult problem (16.7%), solve the problem on teaching and learning (11.1%), and increase interdependency (8.3%) (Table 2).

On collegiality, it is seen that teachers and librarians care about each other. Caring and having a productive relationship will affect the student learning process. This goes in line with the statement of Hart<sup>16</sup>, that care is a crucial factor for collaborators in establishing their relation. This cooperation can be colleague support in the form of collegiality of teachers or librarians who can play an important role in increasing professionalism<sup>17</sup>, job satisfaction, commitment to school, school quality and student performance<sup>18,19</sup>, knowledge and skills of teachers and librarians as well as on teaching practices<sup>20,21</sup>. This cooperation also allows teachers and librarians to work together, share information, bring experienced

Table 2 — Collegiality Component

	Component	Attribute	%
Collegiality	Work Enthusiasm	Not enthusiastic	0
		Fair	16.7
		Enthusiastic	69.4
		Very enthusiastic	13.9
	Behavior among colleagues	Don't know	0
		Just to know	8.3
		Caring	2.8
		Very caring	88.9
	Dealing with task	Don't care	0
		Sharing task and responsibility	66.7
		Help each other	30.6
		Collaborative work	2.8
	Collegiality impact	Development of teacher & librarian performance	63.9
Problem-solving		11.1	
Increasing knowledge and skill		16.7	
Dependency between teacher-librarian		8.3	

and inexperienced teachers or librarians closer together and increase the competence and self-confidence of inexperienced teachers or librarians<sup>22</sup>. The motivation of teachers and librarians will increase with the cooperation, increasing the morale, thereby increasing the performance<sup>23</sup>.

**Communication**

Good communication between teachers and librarians is required to further the effectiveness of the learning process and other school literacy programs. The result shows that the face-to-face communication between teacher and librarian at minimum once a month by 30.6% respondents, every week (33.3% respondents), every day (27.8%), etc. Intensive communication is hard to achieve by all respondents due to lack of time and unmatched schedule. They usually meet in the library (91.7%) or the teachers' room (8.3%) (Table 3). They never meet inside the classes or outside the school. The results are in line Montiel-Overall's study<sup>24</sup> that librarians need to engage in casual activities in the library to create an open and trusting communication environment. Those help to build teachers' trust and make the librarians' role visible. These casual meetings held regularly will help the librarian in discovering the instructional needs of the teachers<sup>25,26</sup>.

Communication in informal settings is about students reading interests, information literacy, and library collection. They rarely discuss school subjects and

students' learning difficulties. The teachers can involve the librarian as their partner in addressing the students' learning problems. In the cooperation model, Montiel-Overall emphasizes the division of responsibilities. Teachers are responsible for tutoring subjects in classes while the librarians provide information. Librarians need to be proactive in cooperating with teachers<sup>27</sup>. Librarians must master and develop themselves more in information literacy and use their skills and expertise to work with teachers<sup>28</sup>. The cooperation between teachers and librarians in the learning process fulfills their shared objectives and provides teaching or instructional support. The aim is to divide responsibilities individually according to their respective expertise. Teachers and librarians cooperate to achieve. These objectives become the basis and benchmarks in preparing plans for implementing cooperation activities<sup>29</sup>.

Cooperation between teachers and librarians is important in maximizing the learning process. Assignments from teachers to students are expected to motivate students to look for collections in the library. That will make the library one of the contributors to the students' achievement<sup>30</sup>. A study also stated that a flexible schedule would integrate higher information literacy skills into classroom learning than a fixed schedule<sup>31</sup>.

Cooperation will succeed if trust, collegiality, and communication are well developed between teachers and students. However, this is not a person or two

Table 3 — Communication Component

	Component	Attribute	%
Communication	Discussion topic/information	School Subject	2.8
		Book collection	47.2
		Student assignment	8.3
		Student reading habit	41.7
	Communication media	Meeting	8.3
		Discussion	66.7
		Chatting	16.7
		Electronic media	8.3
	Meeting place	Library	91.7
		Classroom	0
		Teacher room	8.3
		Cafe	0
	Communication intensity	Once a week	33.3
		Everyday	27.8
		Everyday via chat	8.3
		Once a month	30.6
	Communication method	Direct communication	52.8
Third-party		0	
Use communicative language		44.4	
To the point		2.8	

parties' goal; it is a school goal to build those environments. The result is in line with the model that teachers and librarians are separate parts that cooperate to achieve their goals and support the learning process. However, it is good that the teacher-librarian is a more involved and fulfilling gap in each other tasks. That involvement needs high trust, strong bond and collegiality, and intensive communication.

### Conclusion

Teachers and librarians require trust, collegiality, and communication between each other to enable an effective learning environment. Regarding trust, the indicator most depicted in this dimension is benevolence, where they help each other when there is difficulty. In terms of collegiality, teachers and librarians are to care for each other, and in the communication aspect, teachers and librarians require to communicate more often in an informal setting. These three components should be maintained and promoted between teacher-librarian to achieve good collaboration and support student learning.

The results of this study can also be used as evaluation material for schools, indicating that they create a cooperative environment that supports learning. This research still needs to investigate which aspects have high and low influence on cooperation.

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