

## The Impact of Department Heads' Leadership in Fostering a Culture of Trust at University: Perception on Organizational Fairness

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to create a strategy for advancing organizational fairness. It investigates potential influences on a university's organizational fairness using trust culture as the independent variable and department head leadership as a variable. Data were put together via an online survey sent to academics and personnel at Gyeonggi-do's 4-year E-University from October to November 2021. One hundred eighteen samples were used in this investigation. To validate multicollinearity and verify the validity of the relationships between the variables, frequency analyses, descriptive statistical evaluation, and correlational analysis were performed as part of the analysis approach. Furthermore, a hierarchical regression analysis was carried out to confirm the importance of department head leadership and the university's trust culture in the perception of organizational fairness. Furthermore, a four-step analysis method was suggested to verify the department head leadership's mediating influence. The study's findings, which looked at the department head's mediating role as a parameter among trust culture and organizational fairness perception of universities, revealed that trust culture had a significant association with organizational fairness and department head leadership. Furthermore, it was established that there was a significant association among organizational fairness and the department head's perceived leadership. Examining the connections among trust culture, department head leadership, and organizational fairness, it was established that perceptions of organizational fairness increased with trust culture.

### KEYWORDS

Trust culture, Organizational fairness, Department head leadership, Perception

### 1. Introduction

According to the columnist's commentary, "A healthy organizational culture, fairness is the key," fairness is a crucial component of conflict in a workplace. "The payment is not just." The chances are not equal. There is an unfair distribution of facts with the leader. Members who experience a fairness crisis become less motivated and more likely to express anger (Song, 2019). Anger can show itself in several ways, including conflict, gossip, and an uncooperative attitude. The most significant issue in this regard affects the members who doubt fairness and the organization's culture. All social science disciplines are very interested in the question of organizational fairness. This is because members' attitudes and conduct are significantly influenced by their perception of organizational fairness. Over the last fifteen ages, local studies on organizational fairness have focused on organizational fairness in a variety of settings, including personnel appraisal, compensation, and organizational change. Although there has been significant growth in research on organizational fairness in Korea, university research on the topic still needs to be improved, given the recent emphasis on the university's responsibility and fairness and its recognition as an educational institution. Founding and running a university-level organization that empowers colleges to independently oversee the caliber of learning provided using government-funded initiatives like university basic skill diagnostics and university modernization helps projects emphasize organizational fairness.

Today's academic organizations are carrying out their mandated duties of developing highly skilled individuals and inspiring members to further education. Furthermore, university organizations effectively use innovation to accomplish organizational goals (Shin, 2010). However, with fewer people of school age entering the workforce and the birth rate dropping recently, institutions face more

competition to survive. Sometimes, when the admission quota is not reached, the university faces the possibility of closure. Universities are developing a crisis management plan that aligns with creating an "appropriate sizing plan" for each organization to produce an independent modernization proposal for the university modernization support project between 2021 and 2023. Because it believes that its members are ultimately responsible for the organization's success or failure, the university strongly emphasizes the character that professors and personnel in control of administration play in the institution. Their position is significant since they carry out support duties in various management domains, including personnel and academic management, as well as the acquisition, upkeep, and administration of facilities inside the expansive institution known as a university. Furthermore, from the standpoint of organizational diversity, a culture where students can trust one another and feel at ease sharing their opinions is essential. There must also be active contact between the staff and the professors for organizational development.

The management of universities is changing, as are the roles played by universities, due to the recent and rapid social development. Members of a university organization are eclectic and varied, representing both internal departmental and academic area interests and external interests like those of the surrounding community. An organization that has more intricate relationships than just apparent internal relationships is a university organization. Therefore, university academics and administrative staff must exhibit professionalism, autonomy, voluntarism, and public awareness to determine the effectiveness of departments' responsibilities. Affiliates of the university society so benefit from exceptional learning and study opportunities. To head the university society, individuals need to possess the necessary skills. Organizations that engage in educational activities, like universities, typically place more emphasis on the "process" of doing work and the "values" the organization upholds than other types of social organizations (Han, & Bae, 2019). These educational organizations have the trait that when value and process are prioritized over performance and profits, organizational fairness may be impacted by the trust culture among members. The behavior of organizational members, or the department heads' leadership, can therefore be used to forecast organizational fairness.

A university organization's constituent parts interact with one another rather than operating independently of one another (Barnett, 2014; Strange & Banning, 2015). Consequently, multidimensional settings, including the physical, organizational, and cultural contexts, may have an impact on university organization when examining it from an ecological systemic point of view (Strange & Banning, 2015). The degree to which the university's representative social interaction and reciprocity-based organization is fair can be influenced, particularly by the trust culture among its constituents (Mintzberg, 1979). There have been studies on organizational fairness in school settings, such as those conducted by Ham (2008) on the impact of organizational fairness perception on standard of service administration with an emphasis on elementary and secondary school organization; studies on the connection among organizational fairness and school efficiency conducted by Koh (2009); studies on the association among organizational effectiveness and perceptions of fairness by elementary school teachers (Shin, 2010); and studies on contentment at work and dedication to the organization based on the perceptions of fairness held by school professional counselors (Park, 2017).

Consequently, there needs to be more academic study on fairness in organizations. The study aims to improve an approach to advance organizational fairness in higher education.

The succeeding research questions will be used to accomplish these goals.

Research Questions1. What is the university's level of understanding regarding organizational justice, department head leadership, and trust culture?

Research Question2. What connections exist among department head leadership, organizational fairness, and the university's trust culture?

Research question3. Did department head leadership serve as a moderating factor as a boundary among the university's culture of trust and the sense of organizational fairness?

## **2. Theoretical Background**

The distributive fairness of compensation was the center of early study on organizational fairness. Yet, as curiosity about society has increased, worries about opportunity-related procedural fairness, interpersonal fairness linked to a leader's approach, and information fairness related to the suitability of the facts. The first researchers to apply fairness to organizations were Homans (1961), who first concentrated on distributive fairness; Adams (1965), who introduced the concept of fairness; and Stouffer et al. (1949), who introduced the idea of comparative deficiency. Organizational fairness is based

on Adams' fairness thesis (Homans, 1961; Adams, 1965; Stouffer et al., 1949).

When social psychology techniques were used in the workplace environment in the latter part of the 20th century, fairness in society started to draw consideration. Organizational justice, which is broken down into compensation distribution, method, and interaction, is a member's opinion of how fair remuneration is inside the organization (Colquitt et al., 2005). Interactional justice is defined as the "perception of fairness of superiors' treatment methods and contents during the compensation process" (Bies & Moag, 1986). Distributive justice is "the individual's perceived fairness of the organization's reward results" (Price & Mueller, 1986). Procedural justice is "perceived fairness of the procedures and rules applied to compensation distribution [14]." Fairness is not an objective metric; instead, it is the subjective opinion of a person or group.

Distributive fairness, a subset of organizational justice, is the level at which an individual feels that the organization's reward outcomes are fair (Folger & Konovsky, 1989). Recipients should anticipate receiving a reward proportional to their degree of effort when a third party gives it. Distributive fairness is the term for this. The distributive fairness theory was developed on the foundation of Adams' (1965) fairness theory. Distributive fairness describes how one feels about something being fair or unfair based on whether they believe each person's contributions in an exchange relationship should be fairly compensated. Members of an organization experience tension in the workplace when they perceive injustice. To address this tension, people alter their contributions or the comparison point in their psychological reactions (Walster et al., 1976). Compensation in distributive justice discusses to having intrinsic worth. The fairness of the prize was acknowledged when the recipient meets a fair trust in what has inherent value. Members of the organization may engage in constructive civic activities in exchange for their salary if distributive justice is met (Lee, 2011).

Individuals' perceptions of the fairness of the strategies and guidelines governing the allocation of rewards inside an organization are known as procedural fairness (Folger & Konovsky, 1989). It is a person's opinion of how fair the method used in decision-making is; it relates to how fair the means and process of distributing rewards are (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Stated differently, procedural fairness is the procedure through which judgments about distribution are decided (Konovsky, 2000). Leventhal et al. proposed six components for procedural justice: representativeness, ethics, consistency, bias elimination, correctness, and correctability. A decline in achievement efforts may result from an unjust procedure (Leventhal, 1976; Leventhal, 1980; Leventhal et al., 1980). As a result, social psychology research that highlights procedural and distributive fairness as a distribution process has been active since the 1990s (Kim, 2009).

Interactional fairness is "the quality of interpersonal treatment between superiors and employees that takes place in executing the pay distribution process" (Bies & Moag, 1986). Greenberg and Lind (2000) describe interactive fairness as the potent contemporary examples of organizational fairness, with beneficial impacts on the perception of receiving care with respect and dignity by superiors (Ham, 2008), while impolite treatment shows that it has a solid potential to convey an impression of disparities. Interaction fairness is another significant factor studied about the impact of superiors' roles on corporate citizenship behavior. Workers treated relatively by their managers can better deal with stress from job overload and unhappiness with distribution (Greenberg, 2006; Judge & Colquitt, 2004). Additionally, a sense of oneness and belonging with the business is created by the superior's polite demeanor and genuine concern during the rewarding process, enabling the individual to demonstrate active participation (Tyler, 1999). Moreover, these people demonstrate a higher degree of organizational citizenship behavior by acknowledging their esteem inside the organization (Kamdar et al., 2006; Tepper & Taylor, 2003; Wayne, 2003). The conception of fairness, which recognizes the theoretical autonomy of distributional, procedural, and interaction equality, is based on the fairness theory.

### **3. Research Method**

#### ***3.1 Features of Participants***

The professors and employees of a four-year E-University in Gyeonggi-do are the subject. A systematic random sampling procedure was employed to pick the sample for this study, using things like attendance books to choose teachers or students as subjects in the classroom. Intentional activity is not involved in systematic random sampling. After that, samples are taken regularly, and the population is sorted numerically or in a line from small to large. One hundred eighteen samples were used in this investigation. Table 1 displays the overall features of the learning individuals. All of the instructors and personnel in this study were the subjects. Two hundred-five professors and 125 workers work at University E. Furthermore, in compliance with research ethics guidelines regarding the protection of

personal data and the need for previous permission were obtained from research participants through online surveys administered by the participants. Consent forms were gathered and made accessible in electronic format.

**Table 1.** Main features (N=118)

Observational variable		Frequency	%
Sex	Male	72	61.0
	Female	46	39.0
Staff and professor classification	Professors	76	64.4
	staff	42	35.6
duration of employment	less than five years	49	41.5
	Over five years but under ten years	24	20.3
	Both over ten and under fifteen years	12	10.2
	Between fifteen and twenty years old	12	10.2
	over two decades	21	17.8
Spot	full-time academic staff	73	61.9
	non-full-time academic staff	3	2.5
	full-time employee	17	14.4
	part-time employee	25	21.2
Major field	liberal arts college	2	1.7
	humanities	2	1.7
	social	7	5.9
	education	5	4.2
	engineering	4	3.4
	natural science	33	28.0
	pharmaceutical	17	14.4
	Arts and Physical	5	4.2
With/without position experience	have position experience	55	46.6
	no position experience	63	53.4
Position title (If you have position experience)	Vice-Chancellor and above	1	0.8
	dean level	3	2.5
	director level	7	5.9
	Center director	16	13.6
	head of the department	25	21.2

### 3.2 Research tool

The "University Innovation Capacity Assessment (UICA)" tool has been in use at Sungkyunkwan University Education and Future Research Institute since 2019, was the measuring tool employed. Every year, over 70 universities engage in UICA, a national survey tool designed to assess university innovation capacities through an analysis of organizational climate, culture, and member behavior (Bae et al., 2021). The current survey data was collected in 2021. An online poll was used to gather 118 responses for this study between October and November 2021.

Four questions about the culture of trust, twelve about organizational justice, and five about department head leadership were utilized in this study's analysis. A 4-point scale was used to measure each variable (one being not at all and four being very much). The parameters for measurement, along with the dependability coefficients are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Survey and reliability coefficient

Variable	Item	Question Content	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Trust culture	TC1	Every student at our university will perform admirably on their allotted coursework.	.932
	TC2	My coworkers are someone I can trust and delegate significant jobs to.	
	TC3	My fellow students will assist me if I ask for assistance.	
	TC4	The choices and deeds our university's members will commit to will help the university grow.	
Organizational justice	OJ1	Our university pays its members fairly for their accomplishments and hard work.	.899
	OJ2	My pay is commensurate with the responsibility I bear for my work (wages, promotions, performance review).	
	OJ3	I am receiving fair compensation (wages, promotions, performance reviews) for my labor.	
	OJ4	Considering my career, my compensation (salary, promotion, and performance review) is fair.	
	OJ5	Given the stress and load I had at work, my pay, promotion, and performance review are all commensurate with my level of performance.	
	OJ6	Our university offers good welfare advantages to its faculty and staff.	
	OJ7	Our university uses uniform criteria to determine salaries, promotions, and performance reviews.	
	OJ8	Our university uses accurate information to make choices about pay, promotions, and performance reviews.	
	OJ9	Our university makes the departments that contributed to developing particular outcomes transparent.	
	OJ10	Members of our university are assured the chance to voice concerns about pay, promotions, and the outcomes of performance reviews.	
	OJ11	Our university actively considers the thoughts and recommendations of members when making decisions about pay, promotions, and performance reviews.	
	OJ12	Our university uses an open, impartial approach to decide on member compensation.	
Department head leadership	HL1	The director of our university department assists staff in discovering the purpose of their work.	.900
	HL2	The department heads at our university assist members in taking a fresh approach to difficulties.	
	HL3	The department head at our university supports students' personal growth.	
	HL4	Our university's department director evaluates each student by their performance.	
	HL5	Our university department's head behaves according to norms and values when faced with an issue.	

### 3.3 Data analysis

By IBM SPSS 26 version, the data gathered were examined based on the research topic.

First, the main feature of the study was examined using frequency and descriptive statistical study. The

following data were determined: minimum, maximum, skewness, kurtosis, frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

Second, the tolerance limit and VIF were investigated, along with correlation analysis, to evaluate multicollinearity and the validity of the relationships between the variables.

Third, a hierarchical regression analysis was carried out to confirm the impact of department head leadership and university trust culture on perceptions of organizational fairness. Furthermore, the four-step analysis process suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) was carried out to check if the department head's leadership functions as a mediator and to validate the statistical significance of the university's trust culture and the opinion of organizational fairness (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The Sobel test was used to define if the effect was present. Generally speaking, the popular analysis methods for confirming the effect are Baron and Kenny's (1986) way.

Fourth, an entire parameter is used to predict the dependent variable if both the independent and the parameter are entered, and the regression coefficient indicates that the independent variable's effect on the dependent variable is unessential.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Outcomes of a descriptive analysis of the organizational fairness perception, department head leadership, and trust culture at the institution

The mean and standard deviation of essential characteristics, including organizational fairness, department head leadership, and trust culture are detailed in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Values of the department head leadership, organizational fairness perception variables, and trust culture at the university in descriptive statistics (N=118)

Variable		Minimum	Maximum	M	SD	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						M	SD	M	SD
Trust culture	TC1	0	60	46.10	14.909	-0.816	0.223	0.129	0.442
	TC2	0	60	44.75	14.245	-0.670	0.223	0.277	0.442
	TC3	0	60	42.88	15.084	-0.489	0.223	-0.338	0.442
	TC4	0	60	42.88	15.309	-0.484	0.223	-0.437	0.442
Overall Medium		0.00	60.00	44.15	14.89	-0.61	0.22	-0.09	0.44
Department head leadership	HL1	0	60	38.14	17.343	-0.537	0.223	-0.256	0.442
	HL2	0	60	38.47	16.775	-0.473	0.223	-0.273	0.442
	HL3	0	60	35.76	18.088	-0.341	0.223	-0.626	0.442
	HL4	0	60	37.97	18.001	-0.512	0.223	-0.438	0.442
	HL5	0	60	41.36	17.292	-0.859	0.223	0.317	0.442
Overall Medium		0.00	60.00	38.34	17.50	-0.54	0.22	-0.26	0.44
Organizational justice	OJ1	0	60	25.59	18.835	0.160	0.223	-0.901	0.442
	OJ2	0	60	24.58	18.381	0.132	0.223	-0.924	0.442
	OJ3	0	60	25.76	18.136	0.163	0.223	-0.775	0.442
	OJ4	0	60	24.07	18.776	0.274	0.223	-0.843	0.442
	OJ5	0	60	23.05	17.468	0.166	0.223	-0.857	0.442

	OJ6	0	60	22.71	16.520	0.112	0.223	-0.813	0.442
	OJ7	0	60	27.12	19.485	0.076	0.223	-1.000	0.442
	OJ8	0	60	28.64	18.761	-0.084	0.223	-0.902	0.442
	OJ9	0	60	31.53	18.748	-0.320	0.223	-0.771	0.442
	OJ10	0	60	25.08	18.524	0.060	0.223	-0.988	0.442
	OJ11	0	60	24.58	19.110	0.361	0.223	-0.770	0.442
	OJ12	0	60	25.93	18.362	0.047	0.223	-0.912	0.442
Overall Medium		0.00	60.00	28.15	18.20	-0.06	0.22	-0.73	0.44

Amongst the sub-items of trust culture, the mean of TR1, 'I feel that each member of our university will do well in their separate tasks', was 46.10 (SD=14.90). The total mean of trust culture, an independent variable, is 44.15 (SD=14.89), which was discovered to be the greatest. Out of the sub-items related to department head leadership, the typical parameter was 38.343 (SD=17.50), and the highest average was HL5, which measures how department heads at my university act by standards and principles when faced with challenges (SD=17.29). With an average of 31.53 (SD= 18.74) among all the sub-questions on organizational fairness, OJ9 'Our university explains which department contributed to the production of a certain performance' became the dependent variable, with a total mean of 28.15 (SD= 18.20).

After analyzing the primary variables' normalcy, the skewness and kurtosis were between -1.000 and 0.317 and -0.859 and 0.361, respectively. Kline (2005) examined skewness and kurtosis for the primary variables—trust culture, department head leadership, and organizational fairness. She discovered that if the kurtosis does not surpass the absolute values of 8 or 10, the skewness standard does not exceed the absolute value of 3. Based on the criteria that can be considered a normal distribution, it was verified that most of them satisfied the conditions for a regular dissemination.

#### *4.2 Results of correlation and multicollinearity verification among the organizational fairness perception, department head leadership, and university trust culture variables*

The association between the four questions about trust culture, the five questions about department head leadership, and the twelve questions about organizational fairness—the three primary variables of this study—is examined, and the results are displayed in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Trust culture, department head leadership, and perceptions of organizational justice are correlated (N=118).

	TC1	TC2	TC3	TC4	HL1	HL2	HL3	HL4	HL5	OJ1	OJ2	OJ3	OJ4	OJ5	OJ6	OJ7	OJ8	OJ9	OJ10	OJ11	OJ12
TC1	1																				
TC2	.587**	1																			
TC3	.636**	.540**	1																		
TC4	.731**	.627**	.719**	1																	
HL1	.573**	.479**	.583**	.574**	1																
HL2	.502**	.345**	.596**	.523**	.848**	1															
HL3	.515**	.384**	.509**	.538**	.857**	.846**	1														
HL4	.480**	.238**	.525**	.567**	.754**	.771**	.782**	1													
HL5	.525**	.432**	.483**	.579**	.772**	.714**	.784**	.778**	1												
OJ1	.511**	.282**	.484**	.584**	.472**	.557**	.532**	.528**	.470**	1											
OJ2	.484**	.360**	.458**	.536**	.531**	.522**	.563**	.524**	.518**	.785**	1										
OJ3	.488**	.356**	.476**	.568**	.524**	.501**	.502**	.518**	.509**	.736**	.874**	1									
OJ4	.485**	.400**	.489**	.565**	.485**	.465**	.514**	.450**	.467**	.718**	.798**	.884**	1								
OJ5	.427**	.326**	.472**	.529**	.470**	.506**	.496**	.509**	.462**	.800**	.808**	.840**	.848**	1							
OJ6	.446**	.293**	.462**	.537**	.400**	.459**	.439**	.444**	.430**	.742**	.713**	.666**	.692**	.753**	1						
OJ7	.426**	.296**	.407**	.515**	.394**	.379**	.406**	.393**	.438**	.654**	.720**	.647**	.705**	.689**	.715**	1					
OJ8	.433**	.306**	.419**	.543**	.386**	.422**	.411**	.427**	.459**	.704**	.717**	.656**	.695**	.722**	.729**	.906**	1				
OJ9	.395**	.357**	.377**	.491**	.445**	.426**	.397**	.374**	.394**	.610**	.709**	.718**	.652**	.654**	.627**	.634**	.677**	1			
OJ10	.469**	.348**	.510**	.575**	.445**	.443**	.463**	.421**	.459**	.721**	.734**	.685**	.707**	.723**	.737**	.742**	.758**	.706**	1		
OJ11	.393**	.384**	.523**	.562**	.449**	.417**	.452**	.425**	.467**	.726**	.757**	.732**	.748**	.757**	.783**	.747**	.756**	.710**	.851**	1	
OJ12	.416**	.310**	.493**	.571**	.422**	.418**	.426**	.420**	.448**	.714**	.709**	.656**	.673**	.711**	.735**	.798**	.813**	.723**	.845**	.867**	1

\*\*\* $p < .001$ 

When the relationship among the department head leadership, organizational fairness opinion, and sub-items of the university's trust culture was looked at, the coefficients  $r = .238$  to  $r = .906$  displayed a strong association at .01. After verifying the multicollinearity among each variable by looking at the size and acceptance boundary of the variance increase factor of the independent variables, the acceptance limit was .591 and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was 1.692. Regression analysis uses the tolerance limit as a measure of multicollinearity. If the tolerance limit is less than one and the coefficient of variance expansion (VIF) is more significant than 10, multicollinearity is considered an issue. As a result, this study's regression analysis's fundamental premise has been met.

#### 4.3 An examination of how trust cultures impact how people see organizational fairness under the direction of university department heads

Table 5 detailed the effects of the hierarchical analysis directed to ascertain the influence of department head leadership and trust culture of organizational fairness.

**Table 5.** Findings from the hierarchical regression study about the organizational fairness and trust culture (N=118)

Variable	Organizational Fairness			Department head leadership			Organizational Fairness			Organizational Fairness		
	B	$\beta$	p	B	$\beta$	p	B	$\beta$	p	B	$\beta$	p
trust culture	.763	.606	.000	.802	.640	.000				.505	.401	.000



department head leadership						.57 9	.57 7	.000	.3 2 2	.32 0	.000
a constant	-7.952*		2.920*		3.522*		-8.892*				
R <sup>2</sup>	.367		.048		.332		.426				
F	67.168***		80.302***		57.785***		42.912***				

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

It was determined by examining the findings of the study of trust culture and organizational fairness in Model 1 that there is a statistically significant association between the two. Its explanatory power was determined to be 36.7%. This indicates that organizational fairness increases with a higher trust culture ( $\beta=.606$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

It was determined by examining the findings of Model 2's research on trust culture and department head leadership that there was a statistically significant association between the two. Its explanatory power was discovered to be 4.9%. This indicates that department head leadership perception increases with a higher trust culture ( $\beta=.640$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

It was verified by looking at the findings of Model 3's analysis of the department head's leadership and organizational fairness that there was a significant association among the department head's leadership perception and organizational fairness. It was discovered to have a 33% explanatory power. Accordingly, the perception of organizational fairness increases with the department head's leadership recognition level ( $\beta=.577$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

When trust culture and departmental leadership were examined simultaneously in Model 4, 42% of the explanatory power was revealed. In social science research, such as surveys, Cohen (1988) states that if the coefficient of determination is 13% or above, it is considered that there is some effect. As indicated by the findings, the study's 42% explanatory power is noteworthy for a social science study. Furthermore, it was discovered that the sense of organizational fairness increased with a higher trust culture ( $\beta=.401$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Put differently, it is evident that trust culture directly impacts corporate justice. Furthermore, it was discovered that the perception of organizational fairness increased with the department head's leadership level ( $\beta=.320$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

Additionally, Table 6 displays the investigation findings into whether department head leadership mediates organizational fairness and trust culture.

**Table 6.** The role that department head leadership plays as a mediator among organizational fairness and trust culture

Model	independent variable	Parameter	Dependent variable	$\beta$	SE	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>
1	trust culture	-	Organizational Fairness	.60 6	.093	8.196***	.000	.367
2	trust culture	department head leadership	-	.64 0	.090	8.961***	.000	.049
3	-	department head leadership	Organizational Fairness	.57 7	.076	7.602***	.000	.333
4	trust culture	department head leadership	Organizational Fairness	.40 1	.116	4.364***	.000	.427
				.32 0	.092	3.490***	.000	

\*\*\* $p < .001$

The study's dependent variable, organizational fairness, has a value of  $\beta=.606$ ,  $p<.001$  for the independent variable of trust culture. This was discovered by looking at the findings of a hierarchical research that examined the relationship among organizational fairness and trust culture and the mediating role of department head leadership. In Model 4,  $\beta=.401$ ,  $p<.001$  showed a statistically significant decline. This translates to a partial mediating impact byper the analysis approach by Baron and Kenny (1986).

This study examines the character of department head leadership among organizational fairness and trust culture. The Baron and Kenny (1986) approach was used to verify the mediating impact. The Sobel-test results, which confirm the importance of mediating effects, are displayed in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Outcomes of the Sobel-test statistical significance verification of the department heads' mediating leadership effect

Path	Z	p
Trust culture → Department head leadership → Organizational Fairness	5.791***	.000

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

The effect is significant if the Sobel-test result is more than +1.96 or less than -1.96.  $Z=5.790$  ( $p<.001$ ) for the department head's leadership in the association between trust culture and organizational fairness confirmed the importance of the department head's mediating role.

## 5. Discussion

This research aims to confirm that department head leadership mediates the association among university trust cultures and perceptions of organizational justice. This study examined one hundred eighty-eight faculty members' and staff members' responses to the "University Innovation Capacity Assessment (UICA)."

First, the average score on the sub-item of trust culture, "I believe that each member of our university will do their job well," was discovered to be the most important when reviewing the study findings question 1. The item "The head of our university department acts according to principles and standards when faced with a problem" had the most significant mean of the department head leadership criteria. Among the sub-items of organizational fairness, this is the dependent variable, the item 'Our University clearly identifies the department that worked on a particular achievement?' displayed the utmost mean.

Second, a high positive association was found in the results of research question 2, which looked at the association among organizational justice, the department head's leadership, and the university's trust culture.

Third, it was established that trust culture had an important association with department head leadership and organizational fairness when examining the findings of research question 3, which asked if the sense of organizational fairness and the trust culture were mediated by department head leadership as a metric. Furthermore, it was established that there was significant association among organizational fairness and the department head leadership's level of perception. Stated differently, the impression of organizational fairness positively correlates with the degree of acknowledgment of the department head's leadership. Finally, the association among trust culture, department head leadership, and organizational fairness were studied by concurrently analyzing trust culture and department leader leadership.

Based on the study's results, the following tactics were discussed to increase the understanding of organizational justice and enhance the trust culture of academic institutions and departmental leadership.

First, through a sense of cohesion and shared understanding among members of the organization, organizational trust culture influences employees' desirable behaviors for the organization's advancement. It impacts the drive for achievement and commitment to the company to raise performance. Individuals and organizations depend on one another to achieve their objectives and perform as a whole, and this interdependence needs to be built on trust (Mayer et al., 1995).

The acts that members conduct on behalf of the organization by the organizational trust culture are referred to as organizational trust activity. Confidence can be broken down to behavioral, emotive, and cognitive bases to create a trust culture (Mishra, 1996). Positive attitudes that result in expectations based on personal judgments, such as a preference for or hate for reliable objects, as opposed to facts and knowledge, are referred to as affective-based trust. Behavior-based trust encompasses the desire to take proactive measures and the willingness to take risks based on the trustee's favorable expectations. Hence, the organization's members should be given the drive to achieve self-realization through sharing the organization's mission, offering suitable compensation, and implementing fair personnel management. Furthermore, it is imperative to proactively foster reciprocal communication among university members to enhance the culture of corporate trust.

Second, the university department head is an intermediate manager who links the top and bottom of the

company and has direct communication with the department heads that oversee the job. The existence of an indirect effect is evident. As a result, the department head ought to persuade the organization's members to willingly and actively assist in accomplishing the organization's objectives. Members should also be urged to participate actively and collaborate to complete the organization's objectives. According to Kang (2013), staffs become more engaged and obsessive about their job when their manager demonstrates inspiring drive, such as by assisting each member in discovering the purpose of their work or by providing an appealing vision. Members of the organization can perform better and move freely due to the department head's effective leadership. The conduct of university administrators is more obviously skewed toward a method of peaceful cooperation than that of for-profit corporate entities.

Third, to improve the degree to which organizational fairness is acknowledged in higher education, the evaluator must first address any unfairness resulting from the feedback process by giving continual feedback to the evaluator. It will be easier for the evaluator to accept a low grade with feedback if the evaluation method yields such a result. Still, the backlash against unfairness can be reduced if there is no improvement. Both the evaluator and the organizational level can expand the feedback process. The most significant choice is made when changes, like those involving personnel systems and appointments, are planned for and prepared for. However, because it is viewed as an unexpected outcome, it could feel unjust to the majority of acceptable opinions. While it is impossible to convey every process individually, providing some "sign" indicates acceptance of change and allows for psychological preparedness is essential.

Additionally, creating a procedural environment should come first, even though distributive fairness initiatives are essential for advancing justice within the company. Depending on how well the organizational culture is doing, there are large and small barriers to overcome in the communication process to improve procedural fairness. Achieving great "fairness" is unquestionably "right." Furthermore, fairness cannot be discussed in terms of "growth" or "distribution." On the other hand, equity provides a basis for just competition and long-term growth, acting as a "condition" for growth. Stated differently, revamping the organizational fairness criteria fosters a competitive atmosphere that, once created, allows for constructing strong future development engines.

## **6. Conclusion**

The following are the study's weaknesses and next steps.

Prior research is required to inspect additional mediating effect components beyond the leadership of the department head's mediating effect in the process where trust culture impacts organizational fairness.

Secondly, this study's survey response rate could have been higher. With only 118 questionnaires, it could not corroborate everything, so a subsequent empirical investigation with a higher questionnaire response rate is required.

Third, there's the issue of extrapolating conclusions based on research subjects' limitations. The sample objective could only accurately represent some organizational aspects of the complete university because it was limited to the employees of a four-year university in Gyeonggi-do due to regional limits. Consequent research should focus on universities across the nation.

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